CONCENTRATION AND DIFFUSION   
NO. 3174

A SERMON   
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**Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment.   
John 12:3.**

YOU will notice, if you read the narrative attentively, that the two sisters and the brother who made up the favored household at Bethany, though all most truly loving Jesus, had each one a different way of showing that love. Even so, true children of God do not always feel moved to serve the Lord Jesus in the same fashion, or to express their love to Him in precisely the same manner.

Martha served. She was the housekeeper and with much diligence made Him a supper. It would have been a sad omission had there been no table spread for so blessed a Guestand who could prepare it as well as Martha? Sometimes we have heard people speak disparagingly of Martha, but truly they mistake the Lord, who never chided her for serving but for being on one occasion so cumbered by it as to think harshly of her sister. Martha, in this instance did not fall into the fault which her Lord once so gently chidedshe did her part quietly and well and, thereby, set forth her attachment to Jesus in the most commendable manner. We have Sisters in the Church whose way of serving Christ is in the household, or by caring for the sick and the poor. Like Dorcas, they make garments for them, or like holy women of old, they minister to the Lord of their substance. Their work is with

temporal things, but they are none the less approved of their loving Master. Brothers, too, as deacons, may better honor the Lord by serving tables than they could by attempting to edify saints when the gifts suitable for that work are denied them. Each man and woman must labor according to his or her ability and calling.

As for Lazarus, he was one of them that sat at the table. We might hastily imagine that by sitting there he did nothing, but, my Brothers and Sisters, the people had come together very much to see Lazarus who had been raised from the dead and for him to sit there and to show himselfand especially to eat and to drink, was to do the best thing to convince onlookers that he was, indeed, alive! Our blessed Lord, Himself, when He rose from the dead, found it necessary to convince His disciples that He was really alive and in a real body and, therefore, He took a piece of a broiled fish and of a honeycomb and ate before them all. When they saw Him eat, then they were sure that He lived! So, when Lazarus ate at the table, skeptics could not say, It is merely his corpse, set upright to look like life, or a mere phantom to deceive. Lazarus eating and drinking was a testimony for Jesus and I would that we all knew how even to eat and drink to the Glory of God! There are some Christians who cannot do much or say much, but their godly lives, their patient suffering, their quiet holiness are good witnesses to Jesus. I have looked at the lilies and the roses in the garden and I have thought, You toil not, neither do you spin. You preach not, neither do you sing, and yet you praise my Lord simply by being beautiful and by unconsciously shedding abroad the perfume which He gives you. May not some saints be glorifying God most truly though they can do no more than this? Besides, someone of the family was needed to keep the Master company and preside as host at the tableand who could do this but Lazarus, the master of the house? Anywhere else, Lazarus might have been out of place, but to me it appears most seemly that Lazarus should sit at the tableand if he modestly declined to take the head of it and sat with others, he was still bound to be there!

But what shall Mary do? She need not be at the table, Lazarus was there. She is, perhaps, of small use in the kitchenher abilities are slender in that direction. What shall Mary do? Her heart was very warm and she felt she must do something. She did not ask anybody, however, for her own mind was inventive. She knew that it was a usual custom with honored guests to anoint them with ointment. She perceived that this had not yet been done, or if done, not in the royal style which her love suggested. Perhaps she was very lovely and had been somewhat fond of adorning her person. Her long hair may have been much cherished and she may have been profuse in the use of perfume upon it. The thought strikes hershe will consecrate that hair to Jesus and that pound of fragrant salve which she had stored up for the beautifying of herself shall be spent upon Him. It was very costly, but it had not cost a penny too much, now that it could be used upon Him. There was a pound of it, but there was none too much for Him. It was very sweet, but none too sweet for Him. She brings the pound of ointment and pours it upon His feet as He lies reclining at the tableand then begins to wipe His feet with the hairs of her head, consecrating her personal beauty as well as her valued treasure to Him whom she both loved and adored! She had found something to do and that something not the least of the three works of love!

The service of the three members of that elect family made up a complete feast. Martha prepared the supper, Lazarus conversed with their honored guest and Mary anointed the Masters feet. Judge not one another, my Brothers and Sisters! Do, each one, what you feel you can do, and what the Lord expects of youand look not on anothers work with ungenerous eyes. Neither Martha, nor Lazarus, nor Mary complained of each other, but together they made the service complete! All members have not the same office, but each one must lovingly supplement the office of the rest and emulation and jealousy must never enter among us.

We will now forget the others and look alone at Mary. We are struck with the service which she performed for Christ. It was somewhat singular, it was very demonstrative and it proved her love to be of no common kind. Other women besides Martha had made Him a supper. Other hosts besides Lazarus had sat at the table with Him. But no other had anointed His feet exactly in her fashion, though perhaps some may have come near to it. Mary was inventive, demonstrative, patient, ardent, enthusiastic. What she did was the deed of a soul all on firethe deed of a woman filled with deep devotion and reverent love. There is an old proverb that still waters run deep. Mary had these still waters within her heartshe sat at Jesus feet and heard His Words! She was a woman of few words, but of many thoughts. She considered, she pondered and she adored. Mary among women is the counterpart of John among men and, perhaps, at this time she had even outrun the Beloved disciple in quick discernment of the Lords true Nature. It seems to me that she had perceived His Godhead and understood more of what He was and what He was about to do than any other of the disciples did. At least I can, on that theory, better understand her deed of love. She devised a homage for Him which she would not have dreamed of presenting to any other than such an One as she perceived the Lord to be. Pondering many things within her soul and remembering what He had done for her, personally and for her dear brother, Lazarus, whom she loved so wellshe determined that a special mark of reverential homage should be paid Him. And she carried out the resolve. Deep thought led to burning love and burning love led to immediate action!

Beloved Friends, the Church of Christ needs a band of men and women full of enthusiasm who will go beyond others in devotion to the Lord Jesus. We need missionaries who will dare to die to carry the Gospel to regions beyond. We need ministers who will defy public opinion and, with flaming zeal, burn a way into mens hearts. We need men and women who will consecrate all that they have by daring deeds of heroic selfsacrifice. Oh, that all Christians were like this, but we must at least have some! We need a bodyguard of loving champions to rally around the Savior, the bravest of the brave, Immortals and Invincibles, who shall lead the van of the armies of the Lord! Where are we to get them? How are they to be produced? The Holy Spirits way to train men and women who shall greatly serve Christ is to lead them to deep thought and quiet contemplation. There they obtain the knowledge and vital principle which are the fuel of true zeal. You cannot leap into high devotion, neither can you be preached into it, nor dream yourself into it, or be electrified into it by revivalism! It must, through the Divine energy of the Holy Spirit, arise out of hard, stern dealing with your soul and near and dear communion with your Savior! You must sit at His feet, or you will never anoint them! He must pour His Divine teaching into you, or you will never pour out a precious ointment upon Him!

This is a rather long introduction, but we will now leave it all and crave your attention for a little time to a short parable which appears to me to grow out of this incident.

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Mary took a pound of ointment and poured it all on Christs feetthat concentration. When she had poured it all out on Christs feet, the

whole house was filled with the odor of the ointmentthat is diffusion. And the surest way to effective diffusion is perfect concentration.

I. Let us speak a little first upon this CONCENTRATION. You desire, my Friend, to do something before you die which may prove a blessing to your family connections. The desire is good, but do not begin with diffusioncommence with concentration and let Mary be your model. She brought out all her ointment, the whole pound without reserve. Even so, consecrate to the Savior all that you haveevery faculty, power, possession and ability! Half the pound of spikenard would not have sufficed. That half pound in reserve would have spoiled the deed. Perhaps we should never have heard of it at all if it had been less complete. Half a heart given to Christ? Tell it not in Gath, whisper it not in the streets of Askelon! Half a life given to Christ? Half your faculties, half your powers given to Christ? It is an unworthy gift! He gave you all and He claims all of you. O dear Soul, if you would fill the house with sweet odor, bring in your whole self and pour out your heart at His feet!

Note that as she brought all, so she poured it all upon Jesus. She had no fear of the black looks of Judas, for the act was not meant for Judas it was all for Jesus. I do not think she gave a thought to Martha, or Lazarus, or to any of them. The whole pound was for Jesus! The highest way of living is to live for Jesus and altogether for Jesus, not caring what this man says or how the other judges, but feeling that as He has bought us with His blood and we are His from the crown of our head to the sole of our feet, we, therefore, acknowledge no master but our Redeemer! Brothers and Sisters, do you live for Jesus in that fashion? Do we not perform many actions under the impulse of secondary motives? I like, for my part, sometimes to do an act of which I feel, I do not consider whether this will benefit my fellow men. I am doing it only for Jesus. What comes of itwhether a soul shall be saved or not is not my main careI am speaking this good word in His honor and if God accepts it, and it glorifies Jesus, my end is served. Oh, it is a blessed thing to feel that you are living, not as a servant of man, nor of the Church, nor of a sect, or party, but of Him whose precious blood has bought you!

Concentrate all your faculties upon the Lord, Himself, and then consult not with flesh and blood. Mary did not wait for any advice about the matter. There is Jesus and there are His blessed feet inviting her to anoint them! She will not stop to enquire what Martha thinks, much less what Judas murmurs, but her heart tells her to do it. All her powers of love say to her, Do it. And she brings out the costly perfume and pours it all on Him. When the criticism is given about the wasteful deed, she cares not to make an apologyand she needs not to do so. If for the moment the grumbling grated harshly upon her ears, her Masters look of love and that kind word, Let her alone; against the day of My burying has she kept this, are quite enough for her. She did not aim at pleasing Judas and so, if Judas is not pleased, she is not disappointed! She did it for Jesus and Jesus, being pleased, she has gained all that she sought! Ah, Brothers and Sisters, this is what we must try to dowe must not always remain in leading-strings, asking other people what they think about our actionsif we know that a certain course is right, let us follow it and let others think and say what they choose!

This concentration of everything upon Jesus is the only way of worthily serving Him. When we give Him all, we do not give Him a thousandth part of what He deserves! But to give Him halfto give Him a tithe, to give Him what we can easily spareis a poor way of expressing our love to Him. Who else deserves a part of your service? If you have been redeemed from death and Hell, who else can claim a portion of your heart? Look at Him in His life of labor. Look at Him on the Cross and look at Him still remembering you before the Throne of God. Does He not engross your affections? Say, does He not throw another cord of love around you and bind you as a sacrifice to the horns of the altar?

I will not linger longer on that point. Enough is as good as a feast. Concentrate, concentrate, concentrate, concentrate all on Jesus!   
II. Now, consider what will come of itnamely, DIFFUSION. The house was filled with the odor of the ointment.   
Mark that the house was not filled with the odor of the ointment through Marys seeking. She did not run into every chamber and drop a little on the floor, so that every room might smell of it. She did not care whether the house was perfumed or notshe only wanted to anoint her Lord and, therefore, she poured all the ointment on His feet! The result was that the rooms were perfumed, but that was not her main objective. She did not tell everybody that she had precious ointment in store, but they knew it by her pouring it out. Whenever you hear a man boast that he is holy, remember that good scent needs no proclaiming! The only cart I ever meet with that rings a bell is the dust cart. If jewels and diamonds, or the bullion of the Bank of England are carried through the streets, no bell is rung. Great cry and little wool is a proverb which has had a new exposition in this country of latea wonderful cry about holiness and wonderful little holiness to cry about, but a great deal to be wept over and lamented before the living God! To stand in every room and cry, Spikenard! Spikenard! Wonderful spikenard! would have been idle. Pour it on Jesus feet and you will not have to say anything about it, for every room will be sweet with the smell thereof! We need, nowadays, dear Friends, to have a little less talk about what men are and much more actual living unto Jesus. The Lord work it in us by His Spirit!   
Why was it that Marys spikenard perfumed all the house? And how is it that if there is true Grace in a mans life, it is sure to be felt and recognized without his saying much about it? We reply, because it is real. Real religion is always influential. Sham religion has but sham power. You cannot get influence by saying, I mean to influence So-and-Soas well hope to stop the sun and moon without Joshuas miraculous power! The power of religion within yourself will be very much the measure of the power which you exercise over others. Artificial flowers may be made so exactly like the real plants that you can scarcely detect them, but they lack the perfume of our garden favoritesand so also the mere professor has not the fragrance of real Grace and, consequently, no attractive and sweetening influence upon others! But where religion is real, true, heartfelt, deepwhere there is strong, all-absorbing love to Christthe sweet perfume of Divine Grace will give the man influence over his fellow men! I cannot tell you how it is that a man who lives near to God has this influence, but I know he has it. The camphor tree is full of camphor in all parts of itbranch, bark, root and flower are all full of camphorand the man who really lives for Jesus is full of gracious influence in all places and times. May you and I be so!   
How was it that the rooms became filled with the odor? There is a law of Nature which chemists call the law of transfusion. If two gases of an entirely different nature are brought into contact, they commence at once to mix with one another and continue to unite till they are thoroughly intermingled. Thus flavors and odors diffuse themselves in the air. It is so with good and evil in the world. Insensibly, every man is the worse for coming in contact with a vicious example and, consciously or unconsciously, every man is swayed to some degree for good by the presence of a virtuous life. The law of transfusion enters into moral and spiritual matters as well as into the realm of chemistryand if you walk with God, endeavor to preserve a blameless life and glorify Christinfluence will be yours without your seeking it! How far it will extend, God alone knows. It may reach far beyond what you suppose to be its sphere and may even teach some who are yet unborn who shall hear from others how you lived and how you glorified Christ!   
Besides, dear Friends, true piety is a very powerful essence and possesses great energy. There are perfumes in Nature like the attar of roses, of which the smallest drop will make a chamber smell for many a day. True holiness is such a mighty, pervading essence that if you possess it, it cannot be hiddenit will make itself known as a sweet savor even as far as Heaven! The life of God is in it and it must operate. In everything that is good, God lies hidden. The Spirit of God dwells in every gracious word, godly thought, holy deed and He is sweetness itself! The name of Jesus is as ointment poured forthwhat must His Spirit be? Yet that Spirit is to be found in every true Believer!   
I want to close by asking you, dear Friends, how far, as yet, you have concentrated your love upon Christ and thus have influenced those who dwell in your house? I will only ask about your own house. Has your house been filled with the odor of the ointment? You do pray, but have your prayers been so mighty with God that they have brought down a blessing upon your family? You seek to avoid sin, you try to make your conversation pure, gracious, kind, cheerful, loving and Christlikedo you think that some in your house have been blessed thereby? I do not ask, Have all been converted? for though all the house was the better for Marys ointment, yet Judas remained a traitor! I should not wonder if some in your house may have even disliked you the more for your piety but still, the Lord frequently blesses godliness and makes it the means of conversion. O Woman, you may gain your husband by your piety! If he will not hear sermons, he will hear that quiet, loving life of yours! O Sister, you may win your brother by your love! He will not read pious books, but those letters of yours, those sweet words of tender rebuke and invitationhe does read them and he feels them, too, though you fear he does not! Father, those boys of yours are not yet what you could wish, but they must feel your godly example. Perhaps when you lie beneath the sod, they will recollect what you used to be. Fill the house with the odor of true religion! Fill the parlor and the drawing room, the bedchamber and the kitchen with hallowed conversation! I say again, not with mere talk and Pharisaic pretense, but with real holy living and true godly communion! And depend upon it, you are doing for your children and your servants the best thing in your power to do! Give them teaching, give them warning and entreaty, but still, the actual perfuming with godliness must arise from your own holy livingit must be begotten of the ointment poured on Jesus feet!   
Ah, dear Friends, I wish that not only the house in which we may happen to dwell, but the workshop where we labor, the shop where we trade, the place of business where we associate with others might all be perfumed with Divine Grace! Christians are not to glide out of the way of their fellow creatures and shut themselves up in order to be pious any more than a soldier may hope to win the battle by running away! No, mix with your fellow men! If there are offices of trust to discharge, do not leave them to the lowest of the low to discharge them, but be willing to do public service for your country! But so do this that you shall spread abroad in every office the savor of honesty and integrity and make the rogue and the cheat ashamed of themselves. I would to God that every Christian Church were a living protest against all the evil of the times, a gracious disinfectant to stop the abounding corruption. There is an evil smell of sin perpetually reeking towards Heavenand it needs that you Christians should live Christlike lives in public as well as in private until you fill this country with a healthier savorand until England shall become a Christian country in fact, as well as in name. Would to God that the example of Christians might yet become so potent that all nations might feel its power, that wars might cease, that cruelties of every kind might come to an end and that the sweet savor of Jesus name, manifested through His people, might perfume the whole world as though God had showered upon it ambrosia, essences and fragrances from the flowers of Heaven to sweeten it against the time when Christ Himself shall come and make it a marriage chamber for His chosen bride! God grant that the perfume of your holiness may reach the stars! That your lives may be so sweet that beyond these fogs and clouds, the sweet aroma of your Divine Grace may rise acceptable to God through Jesus Christ, for we are always a sweet savor unto Him if we live unto the Lord!   
I fear, however, that I may be addressing some whose lives are not a sweet perfume at all. Ah, take heed to yourselves! If you are living without God and without Christif you are living in any secret sintake heed to yourselves! You may think that you will be able to conceal the ill savor of your sin, but you will not. How wonderfully does evil tell its own secret! The intolerable odor of many a secret sin has forced its way to notice. Beware you who would cover your sin! Beware, I pray you! For the task is hopeless. Dig, dig, dig, dig deep and in the dead of night cover up the sin, but like the blood of Abel, it cries from the ground! Be sure your sin will find you out. If you are living now in sin and yet pretend to be virtuous, remember that if your hypocrisy is never found out in

this life, it will confront you at the Last Great Day! How terrible will be the resurrection of buried sins to men who know not Christ! They will wake up in the next world and find their sins howling around them like grim wolvesinsatiable, fierce and terrible! Any one sin is able to destroy the soul, but what must it is to be surrounded by thousands, howling with terrible voices and eager to drag you down and tear you in pieces?   
It will be so with you, Sirs! It must be so with many of you unless you lay hold, now, upon the great salvation! Jesus Christ can drive away those wolves, can stop the ill savor of your sins! If you will trust Him, if you will yield your hearts to Him, He will deliver you! But if you will not, on your own heads be your blood!

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 12:1-43.**

Verse 1. Then Jesus, six days before the Passover, came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom He raised from the dead. The days Christ was to spend upon the earth were getting to be very few so He paid another visit to that Bethany home where He was always so welcomeand more so than ever since He had raised Lazarus from the dead!

2, 3. There they made Him a supper, and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with Him. Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment. All the members of the re-united family were presentMartha busy as usual with the domestic duties which fell to her share. Lazarus in close attendance upon the Master who had worked so great a miracle upon him and Mary, in her own sweet and gracious way, pouring out the wealth of her affection in honor of the Master.

4-6. Then said one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simons son, which would betray Him, Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and took what was put therein. The question of Judas was a most unworthy one, but the motive that prompted the question was still worse. Little did he care for the poor, but if he could have had the proceed from the sale of that very costly ointment of spikenard, he would have made that an opportunity of enriching himself.

7, 8. Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of My burying has she kept this. For the poor you always have with you: but Me you have not always. Christ was Himself always caring for the poor, so He would not discourage any effort on their behalf, but just then one of His most devoted disciples desired to render to Him special honorand He would not let her be rebukedon the contrary, He pointed out the deep symbolical meaning of her loving action.

9. Many people of the Jews knew that He was there: and they came not for Jesus sake, only, but that they might see Lazarus, also, whom He had raised from the dead. Their curiosity was but natural, for few of them could have seen anyone who had been raised from the dead! It is well when a saved soul, who has been spiritually raised from the dead, becomes a center of attraction together with the Lord who has worked such a miracle of mercy upon him!

10, 11. But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus, also, to death; because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away and believed on Jesus. They would have committed a double murder if it had been possible, and would have put to death both Jesus and Lazarus, who was a living witness to the wonder-working power of the Christ whom they would not receive as the promised Messiah. When men hate Christ, they also hate those whom He has blessedand will go to any lengths in seeking to silence their testimony.

12, 13. On the next day many people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet Him and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that comes in the name of the Lord. It is significant that John is the only one of the four Evangelists who mentions the palm fronds that were carried by the people in this triumphal procession in honor of Christ. And it was to John that the vision was given of the great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, who stood before the Throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands, and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

14-16. And Jesus, when He had found a young donkey, sat thereon; as it is written, Fear not, daughter of Zion: behold, your King comes, sitting on a donkeys colt. These things understood not His disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of Him, and that they had done these things unto Him. It is strange that Christs own disciples did not at once remember this plain Prophecy when it was so literally fulfilled, yet, before we condemn them, let us remember how slow of heart we also have been to believe all that the Prophets have spoken.

17. The people therefore that were with Him when He called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record. They could not help testifying in His favor after they had seen Him work such a notable miracle as the raising of Lazarus from the dead!

18, 19. For this cause the people also met Him, for that they heard that He had done this miracle. The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive you how you prevail nothing? Behold, the world is gone after Him! When they saw our Lord riding in state through the streets and the people waving palm branches and shouting in His honor, they said, The world is gone after Him. That was only very partially true, and for a very short timebut the day will come when the whole world shall go after Him! Christs Divine attractions shall be felt throughout the earth and all the Pharisees then in the world will not be able to prevent the people from going after Him! And

*Come what may   
To stand in the way   
That day the world shall see.*

20, 21. And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast: the same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and asked him, saying, Sir, we would like to see Jesus. They were proselytes who had learned to worship Jehovah. Something more than mere curiosity must have moved them to want to see Jesus! Having heard of His raising the dead, they had a desire and a very proper desire, to know more of Him, so they asked to be introduced to Him by one who, though not a Greek, had a Greek name, and who might have, therefore, served as a kind of bridge for these Greeks to reach the Savior.

22, 23. Philip came and told Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip told Jesus. And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified. Christs passion and death were getting very near when these Gentiles came to Him and He saw, in that company of Greeks, the vanguard of that great army that shall yet come to Him out of every nation under Heaven. In the prospect of that great ingathering, He looked beyond the impending shame and suffering and spoke even of the hour of His death as the time when He should be glorified!

24. Verily, verily, I say unto you. Except a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone: but if it dies, it brings forth much fruit.   
[See Sermon #3024, Volume 53CHRISTS DEATH AND OURSRead/download the entire sermon,

free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] This was Christs way to Glory, and it must be our way to Glory, too. The grain of wheat must fall into the ground and die, or else it cannot bring forth fruit. Just so must it be with you and with meand in proportion as we learn to die to self, we shall live to the glory of God!

20. He that loves his life shall lose it. If you keep yourself to yourself, you will lose yourself.   
20. And he that hates his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. Brothers and Sisters in Christ, if we are really to glorify Christ on the earth, we must be willing to lose our reputation, our good name, our comfort and, indeed, everything that we have for Christs sake! This is the only way to truly live. If for your own sake you begin to keep back anything from Christ, that is the way to die. You would then be like the grain of wheat that is laid by and preserved and which, therefore, can never grow or multiply. Surrender yourself! Be willing to be nothing! Be willing to die if only the Truth of God may live! Care nothing about honor and glory for yourselfcare only about the honor and glory of your Master! Learn the meaning of the Masters paradoxas you bury yourself, you will multiply yourself. As you are put out of sight, like a grain of wheat that is sown in the ground, you have your only opportunity of growth and increase! Heavily-laden ears of corn shall spring up from the grain which has been buried in the earth.   
26-28. If any man serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there shall also My servant be. If any man serves Me, him will My father honor. Now is My soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify Your name.

[See Sermon #1391, Volume 24A GOLDEN PRAYERRead/download the entire sermon, free of

charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] In the 27th verse, our Savior asked Himself the question, What shall I say? here He gives His own answer, Father, glorify Your name. When you know not what to pray for, you can always safely pray, Father, glorify Your name. As you stand where the crossroads meet and you ask, Which way shall I choose? pray, Father, glorify Your name. This incident seems like a rehearsal of Christs passion. Here we see that natural fear of death which came across the Saviors mind because He was so really and truly Man. If His pains had not been real pains, but had been pleasant and congenial to Him, there would have been no self-sacrifice in His suffering. But the fact that they cast upon His spirit the dark shadow of death only proves to us what sharp pains they werebut instead of asking for a way of escape from them, He surrendered Himself to them, gave Himself up as a willing Victim with this prayer upon His lips, Father, glorify Your name. And now see what happened.

28, 29. Then came there a voice from Heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again. The people, therefore, that stood by and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spoke to Him. This was one of the three occasions on which testimony was openly borne to Christ by His Fatherfirst at His Baptism, then at His Transfiguration, and now here at the rehearsal of His great Sacrifice. [In Sermon #909, Volume

16VOICES FROM THE EXCELLENT GLORYRead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org, Mr. Spurgeon speaks of those three testimonies to Christ.] Verily,

He is the Son of God, and He is always well-pleasing to God! And God has glorified His name and will continue to glorify it through Jesus Christ His Son! We learn from this narrative that the voice of God is not understood by everybody. Some of those that stood by said that it thunderedand others said that an angel spoke to Him. It is necessary that you should be a child of God if you are to know your Fathers voice! Though God is speaking at this moment in the clearest tones, none will recognize His voice, or understand His words, but those who are taught by His Holy Spirit.

30, 31. Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of Me, but for your sakes. Now is the judgment of this world. [See Sermon #2338, Volume  
39THE CRISIS OF THIS WORLDRead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at

http://www.spurgeongems.org.] Now shall the ruler of this world be cast out. See how the eyes of faith reads things differently from the eyes of sense! You and I would have said, Now is Christ coming to His lowest point. Now is His name to be cast out from among men and His cause to be crushed as the result of His death. But Christ reads the signs of the times very differently. Now, He said, in the hour of My shame, suffering and death, is the judgment of this world. Now shall the ruler of this world be cast out. It was only by Christ being apparently conquered that Satan could be really vanquished! And there is often no way of victory for a saint except through defeat. When self is slain, then do we truly live!

32, 33. And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples unto Me. This He said signifying what death He should die. [See Sermons #139, Vo  
lume 3CHRIST LIFTED UP; #775, Volume 13THE GREAT ATTRACTION and #1717, Volume 29 THE MARVELOUS MAGNETRead/download the entire sermons, free of charge, at

http://www.spurgeongems.org.] The Pharisees said, The world is gone after Him, but Jesus says, No, not while I am riding in state through the streets of Jerusalem. But when I am lifted up and hung upon the Cross, then shall it, indeed, be true, I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples unto Me. The crucified Christ of Calvary is the mighty magnet that is to attract multitudes of trembling, doubting, ruined sinners who by Grace shall be drawn unto Him and find eternal life in Him!

34, 35. The people answered Him, We have heard out of the Law that

Christ abides forever: and how say You, The Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man? Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walks in darkness knows not where he goes. What a sad condition to be into not know where you are going! Are there not some of you whom I am now addressing who do not know where you are going? Yet if you would but take the trouble to look, you might easily know that as long as you continue in the paths of sin, you are going down to the chambers of death! Oh, that Gods Holy Spirit would give you sufficient light to enable you to see where you are going! You surely do not want to take a leap in the dark. Oh, that you may have the Grace to turn from the downward way and to seek the heavenward road!

36-41. While you have light, believe in the light, that you may be the children of light. These things spoke Jesus and departed, and did hide Himself from them. But though He had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on Him: that the sayings of Isaiah the Prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke, Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Isaiah said again, He has blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Isaiah, when he saw His Glory and spoke of Him. [See Sermons

#2413, Volume 41DESPISED LIGHT WITHDRAWN and #1844, Volume 31ISRAEL AND BRITAIN A NOTE OF WARNINGRead/download the entire sermons, free of charge, at

http://www.spurgeongems.org.] You know that wonderful Sixth Chapter of Isaiahs prophecy, and you know how wonderfully he has spoken there of the Glory of Christ. But what a terrible thing it is that even Christ should be driven to blind mens eyes, to take the light away from them because they proved themselves unworthy of it! May that never be the case with any of us, but while we may see, let us seeand may God give us more light!

42, 43. Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on Him; but because of the Pharisees, they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. What a shameful thing that was! Yet you will still find that there are many persons who, even though they believe the Truth, dare not proclaim it, but must hide in obscurity until the times grow easier. However, Christs death fetched out many who had been His disciples in secret. Joseph of Arimathaea and Nicodemus could not stay in the background any longer and, doubtless, the thoughts of many other hearts were then revealed.

Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #3024 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

CHRISTS DEATH AND OURS   
NO. 3024

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, JANUARY 24, 1907.

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

**And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone: but if it dies, it brings forth much fruit. John 12:23-24.**

CERTAIN Greeks desired to see Jesus. They informed Philip of their desire, Philip consulted with Andrew and the two disciples together informed their Master of what seemed to them to be a very important matter. As wise men from the East once came to see Jesus, so now would these Gentiles from the West do the same! Probably Philip and Andrew expected that Christ would display His miraculous power before the eyes of these enquirers, but our Lord, instead of going on from His triumphal procession and the hosannas of the multitude to something outwardly grander, began at once to speak about a glorification far other than either His disciples or these Greeks desireda glorification which was to follow upon death and burial!

Is it not very noteworthy how our Lords mind was always dominated by the anticipation of that Baptism of His, that immersion in grief and suffering, that decease which He was to accomplish at Jerusalem? This was the main thought of His whole life and nothing could make Him forget it. In His heaviest moments of trial and in His brightest moments of joy, His heart was equally at the CrossHe was longing to complete His atoning Sacrifice for the salvation of His people. O brave, loving heart of Christ, so firmly fixed in love, so resolute to be pierced for the Belovedwe admire and love You in return!

Surely we make too little of our Redeemers death. I fear that even we, who preach most concerning it, dwell too little upon it. That we who pray, plead it too little. That we who sing, praise our Lord too little for His wondrous death and that we who live upon His Grace, yet think too little of the channel by which it flows to us! Christs death is His Glory and it ought also to be ours. All other topics in Holy Scripture are important and none of them are to be cast into the shade, but the death of the Son of God is the central sun of all these minor luminaries! It is the great Alpha and Omega, the first and the last! It is not only eminent, it is preeminent with us. I could almost wish that we had broken every other string of our souls harp but that which resounds the music of His Love. Silence, you other voices, and let the voice of His blood be heard in our souls! If we were bound down to this one subjectchained to it and never allowed to take another, but compelled simply to stand and incessantly cry, Behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the worldit would be an enlargement, rather than a narrowing of our ministry! Here is a theme fit for seraphs! Yes, Michael the archangel might find this subject too vast even for his exalted intellect. While we are musing on this text, no other topic shall intrude. Our mottoes shall be, All for Jesus, and, None but Jesus. May the blessed Comforter, whose work it is to glorify Christ and to take of that which belongs to Him and apply it to us, give us the power of Christs death in our hearts!

The verses on which we are to meditate speak of two thingsfirst, Christs view of His death and, secondly, Christs view of the necessity and the results of that death.

I. First, we are to consider CHRISTS VIEW OF HIS DEATH. He says, The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified.   
Now, I freely grant that this passage may refer to Christs glorification in His Resurrection, in His Ascension and in all His triumph beyond the skies, but, from its connection with the allusion to the grain of wheat, which is cast into the ground to die, it is clear that our Lord was mainly thinking of His death and that He spoke of it as being, in a certain sense, the hour of His Glory. Certainly, to spiritual eyes, the Christ of God was never more glorious than when He was nailed to the Cross of Calvary not even yonder where the lamps of Heaven glow with supernal splendor, where the harps of angels pour forth matchless music and where Christ, Himself, sits upon the Throne of the Highest, King of kings, and Lord of lords. A Glory never equaled shone around the Conqueror of death and Hell when He bowed His head and said, It is finished, and gave up the ghost!

Mark well that Christ said that, the Son of Man should be glorified not the Son of Godfor He was speaking here concerning His human nature. This teaches us that Christ, as Man, was glorified by enduring bravely, patiently and to the end, what no other man has ever borne. Without a murmur, He willingly endured all the agony and ignominy that were heaped upon Him. He marched boldly through the tremendous deeps of physical, mental and spiritual suffering which the Atonement demanded. It may be that in some of His bodily pangs, our Lords anguish has been equaled by that endured by some of the martyrs, yet I greatly question whether that has ever been the case. Rather do I believe that His peculiarly sensitive body which had never lost any of its delicacy of tone through indulgence or impurity, and which was originally of the finest mold, seeing that He was that Holy Thing which was born of Mary through the overshadowing power of the Highestfor these reasons it appears to me that Christ may have borne physical pains such as, in their intensity, have not been known by any other son of man! But as for His mental and spiritual griefs, they were an unknown abysswho can measure or conceive what His holy soul endured? Harts lines, though very strong in expression, do not go beyond the Truth of God even when he says that Christ, in Gethsemane   
*Bore all Incarnate God could bear,   
With strength enough, and none to spare.*

Yet how gloriously He endured it all even to the bitter end! The gold was tried in the furnace, but no dross was discovered. Mightier than Atlas, Christ bore a world of grief upon His shoulders and yet He neither staggered under it, nor cast off the lead. He went to prison and to deathand all through His way of woe, His mighty soul was strong within Him. And He died triumphing over all! He was unconquered and unconquerable unto the last! Crown Him, O you daughters of Jerusalem, as the King of Sufferers, most mighty to suffer and to save! With His garments all red from the winepress, adore Him as having alone sustained the fury of His adversaries!

Remember, too, that Christ won, on the Cross, the glory of being the fully obedient One. Being found in fashion as a Man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross. It is a great glory to a servant of God to be, through Divine Grace, sincerely obedient to His Lord. But it would be a greater honor if he could be perfectly obedient. Upon our Lord, who had voluntarily taken the place of a Servant for us, the petition of His service casts the highest honor. After having, in all points, kept the Law perfectly by His active obedience, He crowned His lifes service by His passive obedience and was glorious, indeed, when He went to the end of the Law for righteousness. Firstborn of many brethren are You, O You glorious Son of Man, made perfect in Your obedience in order that You might be the Captain of our salvation and bring many sons unto Glory!

Further, Christ was glorified on the Cross by achieving what no one else could have achieved. How often do we set forth the Truth of God, which is always fresh and delightful to Believers, that Christ Jesus, on the tree, took all the sins of all who believe in Himtook them to Himself, literally, and carried them as though they had been His own and suffered for those sins upon the Cross, all that ought to have been suffered by us on account of those sins, enduring that which His Father accepted as an equivalent for all the agony which ought to have been endured by us because of those iniquities? We believe, Brothers and Sisters in Christ, in the literal Substitution of Christ for His people. Christ stood in the Sinners place and suffered what was due to the Sinnereven the curse of God and the wrath of God! And now He has so suffered for sinners that those for whom He died can have no sin laid to their charge so as to involve them in punishment, since it is a maxim of all courts of justice that the law cannot first punish the substituteand then punish those in whose place he stood. Every honest man admits that a debt, once paid, is settled forever. So, as Christ paid the debt that His people owed to Infinite Justice, it is forever blotted out and our obligations to Divine Justice are obliterated! This is the joy of joys! This is the Doctrine that makes the Gospel to be Gods good news to guilty sinners! This is the glorious Truth of God that sets the bells of Heaven ringing with their loudest and their sweetest musicthat Christ has made the sin of His people to cease to be! Thus is fulfilled that ancient prophecy, In those days, and in that time, says the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve.

The work of Messiah the Prince is to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness. And this work was fully accomplished when this Man, after He had offered one Sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God. O Beloved, herein is bliss, indeed, for us if He did really die for us! Your question and mine must be this, Did Christ die for me? To answer that, I must ask, Am I trusting in Him? If I am, then He did die for me and all my sins are gone because He was punished in my place. My demerit was imputed to Him and He died to put it away. And now His merit is reckoned as my merit! A wonderful transfer has been made by means of the death of ChristHe has taken all the consequences of our guilt and borne them alland ended them forever! So was He not, indeed, glorified in His death? And you, Believer, may sing this sweet song, on earth and in Heaven, too

*In my Surety I am free,   
His dear hands were pierced for me!   
With His spotless vesture on   
Holy as the Holy One.   
Oh the heights and depths of Grace!   
Shining with meridian blaze   
Here the sacred records show   
Sinners black, but comely too.*

But we must not forgot that Christ was glorified in His death, officially, as our great High Priest. He stood alone in that dark hour as the true High Priest presenting the one perfect Sacrifice unto God. All other high priests had been but types of Christ, the great Anti-type. They had, once a year, though not without blood, passed under the embroidered veil which hid the Holy of Holies from other eyes. But in that dread hour of darkness on Calvary, Christ, the true High Priest, offered up Himself as the Propitiatory Sacrifice which alone could put away His peoples sins. And then, through the torn veil, that is to say, His bodyHis soul passed up into the Presence of God and there His blood still pleads for His people, speaking better things than that of Abel! Begone all you gorgeous ceremonies of Aaron and his sons, like stars that hide their light when the sun itself appears! Christ, the Great High Priest, is the only one that His Church needs! You may banish your many-colored robes. You may put away your precious miters. You may lay aside your bespangled breastplate, for Christ alone wears the robe, the miter and the breastplate of the true High Priest before God! And He stands gloriously accepted through His unique Sacrifice. From now on let it be known, throughout the whole earth, that there is no other sacrificing priest but the living Christ, and there is no other sacrifice but the Sacrifice which He has once and for all offeredand which still avails for all who trust in it! His precious blood

*Shall never lose its power,   
Till all the ransomed Church of God   
Is saved to sin no more.*

Thus have I shown you that even on the Cross, Christ was glorified. Yet this declaration of His may also refer to that which followed His death. It is indeed so closely linked and intertwisted with His passion and Crucifixion that it would be wrong to separate it from themyet we must never forgot that He who died and was put into the gravealso rose again! It was His Glory that by His own almighty power, He arose, the first-born from the dead. After forty days He ascended unto the Father and angels welcomed Him as He returned triumphantly to Heaven. Our faith can almost hear the lingering notes of that wonderful song of His angelic escort, Lift up your heads, O you gates; and be lift up, you everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in. Glorious was His welcome by the spirits bought with blood who were already before the Throne of God! And truly glorious was He as He sat down at the right hand of the Father. See the Son of Mary exalted to sit at the right hand of the Father! Man like ourselves, yet glorified in Being made to reign there with His Father! He had always been there as God, but now He is there, also, as Man, crowned with glory and honor, and made to have dominion over all the works of Gods hands! The very Man who was once the Baby in Bethlehem and then the Carpenter of Nazareth and afterwards the Murdered One of Calvary, is now so highly exalted that at His name, which is above every name, every knee shall bow, of things in Heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father!

It strikes me that our Lord also meant, by making this statement in connection with the visit of these Greeks to Him, to teach us that after His death He would be glorified among all the nations of mankind. That although in His earthly ministry, He was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, yet, after His death the Gospel should be preached in His name to all nationsand out of all nations a people should be gathered who would praise His name forever and ever! Even at the present time it is no small Glory to Christ, who was nailed to the Cross of Calvary, that His name is reverenced over a great part of the eartheven by nations whose ancestors were strangers to itand that His name is the foundation of every true morning prayer and every holy evening song! His name shall endure forever and His Gospel shall extend its saving and sanctifying power from realm to realm till He comes again, in His Glory, and all the holy angels with Him, to glorify His saints with Himself forever and ever!

I have spoken at this length upon what our Lord said concerning His death as the means of glorifying Him, for I am anxious that we should not think lightly of that of which He thought so highly!

II. The few minutes that remain must be devoted to the second part of the text which concerns THE NECESSITY AND RESULTS OF CHRISTS DEATH.

Our Lord seems to say that it was absolutely necessary that He should diethat even His perfect life would have been of no use to us if He had not died. He says, Except a corn of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone. So you see, Brothers and Sisters, that if Christ, after having come to this earth as He did, had not died, He would, as far as mankind is concerned, have had to abide in Heaven alone. As God, the word, alone, would have had no reference, for the holy angels, as well as His Father and the ever-blessed Spirit would always have been near Him. But if our Lord could have come here and then have gone back to Heaven without dying, it would not have been possible for any other man to ever have gone to Heavenand Christ would have been the only Man in the whole of that land of joy! It is dreadful even to think of such a thing as that! If that could have happened, where must all the saints of God and all mankind have gone? There is but one other regionthe land of darkness and of death, the land of pain, of horror and of unutterable woe. And we must all have gone there if Christ had not died upon the Crossnot only the thief on the left hand of Christ, but the thief on His right hand, toonot only Judas, but Peter, John and all the Apostles not only Demas, but Paul, Silas and all the early Christiansnot only Ahithophel, but David, alsonot only the unrighteous, but the righteous, tooall! All! ALL, having sinned, would have been condemned to eternal wrath if Jesus had not died! Ah, but it was not possible for the Son of Man, who was also the Son of God, to be alone in Heaven! He could not be content to be there alone. He left His Fathers side in Glory, in order that He might become the Son of Man! And then, after He had once taken our human Nature into union with His Divine Nature, He could not go back to Heaven to live there in solitude, without another man to bear Him company! We cannot conceive of the First-Born without a brotherhood, the Head without a body, the Savior with no saved ones to sing His praises, the Shepherd without sheep, the King without subjects! No, this could not be and, therefore, it was absolutely necessary that Christ should die!

It was a most suggestive and suitable figure which Christ usedthat a corn of wheat must be put into the ground and die, or it cannot produce its like. Our language and all languages, when they speak of such lofty themes as life and death, become very much like a skein of silk that is all in a tangleand we must never talk lightly concerning these supreme Truths of God. I believe that half the disputes about that very important matter of eternal punishmentconcerning which some think that the Scriptures favor the view of a limited period to the punishmentarise because those who hold that view do not observe that there is a vast difference between mere existence and life and, an even greater difference between death and annihilation. If a grain of wheat were really to die, it would not bring forth any fruit. When the maltster has passed the corn through the various processes which end with kiln-drying, it is really dead. And if you were to plant it, it would never bring forth fruit. That is a very different kind of death from that which takes place when the seed is cast into the groundthere it dies in quite another sense, that is to say, it rotsthe matter of the corn dissolves and furnishes the first soil for the little minute of life to feed upon, for the grain of wheat is not all life, there is a life-germ inside it. The grain of corn or wheat must be broken up and be resolved into its primary elements or else it cannot bring forth fruit. [In C. H. Spurgeons Autobiography,C. H. Spurgeons Autobiography, 6, there are further explanations of this subject, including the definition of death given by Mr. Spurgeon to Mr. Ruskin, who said, That is the most extraordinary definition of death that I ever heard, but it is true.]

So, our Lord Jesus Christ had to die and to be buried in the grave, as the seed-corn is put into the ground, and there He had to be resolved, as it were, into His primary elementsthe soul to be for a while separated from the body, and the Deity from the Humanity. Without this death there could have been no fruit-bearing to spring out of Him. But when He had passed through this experience of death, then there sprang up out of the dead Christdead after that fashionabundant fruit! Nobody can tell you why it is that if a single grain of wheat is put into the ground, it may bring forth a hundredfold. Why should it so multiply itself? That is a great mystery, but it is a solid factand it is a blessed mystery of faith that, as Jesus Christ died, all who put their trust in Him are the much fruit springing up from His death! It is because He died on the tree that Believers are to live with Him forever. I have not time to go fully into that subject now, but you all know that if Christ had not died, we would all still be under the curse. If Jesus had not died, we would have been condemned at the bar of God. If Jesus had not died, there would have been no way of approach for us to God. We could not, as Believers, have had any existence at all except through His death! And now, through the preaching of His death, and the hearing of the message by the ear of faith through the effectual working of the Holy Spirit, we are made alive unto God and so become fruit to the praise of the Savior who died on the Cross of Calvary!

Brothers, if we want to have fruit in our ministryif we want to see sinners convertedwe must preach up Christs death! As the blacksmith strikes the hot iron upon the anvil, we must keep the hammer of the Gospel at work upon this great foundation Truth of God, Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. It is no talking to men upon other topics in the hope that it will lead to their conversion. The great soulquickening agency is, Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Whoever will come and trust in the God-appointed Substitute for sinners shall be eternally saved, for life comes only through His death! The salvation of sinners is not even by preaching the great and glorious Truth of Christs Second Advent, nor by preaching about Christs millennial and eternal Glory, but by incessantly pointing to Christ lifted up upon the Cross! There is the grain of wheat that put into the ground brings forth much fruitand we must keep to that theme beyond all others! You who try to talk to the unconverted must do this if you wish to see them find real, lasting peace, and enter into true Christian liberty. You must say, with Charles Wesley

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

I must close, Brothers and Sisters, with this reflection. You and I want to bring forth fruit unto God. We want to save souls. Then we must do what Christ did, though in another sense. That is to say, we must fall into the ground and die. Did you ever see a minister who was such a gentleman that he did not know his people, and never shook hands with them in his lifeone who was only anxious to show them what a dignified individual an ordained minister is? Well, such a man as that is like a grain of wheat put into a golden shrine to be admired. But, possibly, you know another manhe may be a city missionaryand he goes right down into the midst of the sin and misery of those whom he seeks to win for Christ, looking at everything from their point of view. And often it is a difficult task for him, yet he will do it. He lays aside everything in which he is their superior, speaks so that they can understand him, and brings the Gospel right down to their level. That man will win souls for the Savior because he is not a grain of wheat laid on a marble shelf, but he is dropped into the ground! And the more that man will spend himself for his Masterwork himself to death, break up his constitutionkill himself, as it were, in his Masters servicethe more likely is he to bring forth much fruit unto God. I do not believe you can do much good without having a great deal taken out of yourselves. And when men are so very particular and careful about themselves and will only serve God if it does not cost them anything, I believe that no earthly good can come of that. The man whom God will greatly bless must be willing, in this sense, to fall into the ground and die!

In persecuting times, the Christian has often had to literally give himself up to die, but, instead of the cause of Christ being injured by his death, he has, in that way, brought forth the much fruit. There have been no other such fruitful preachers of the Gospel as those who suffered at the stakes of Smithfield or died upon the rack. If you would be the means of saving others, you must make no reserve for yourself, but imitate your Master, of whom His enemies tauntingly but truly said, He saved others; Himself He cannot save. I ask you, Brothers and Sisters in Christ, to resolve, by Gods strength, that there is nothing you will not do and nothing you will not give for Him who loved you so well that He gave all He had to save you! Seek, by every means that you can use, to win souls for Christ! The man who must have conversions, or he will die, will have them! The woman who feels that she must bring her class to Christ and will never rest till she does, will bring them to Christ! The Lord help us so to preach Christ and so to live for Christ and, if necessary, so to die for Christ, that we may bring forth fruit unto Godsome a hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold. Amen.

PUBLISHERS NOTE:   
A very considerable portion of this Sermon was revised by Mr. Spurgeon in readiness for publication. The topic Christs Death and Oursis peculiarly appropriate to

the 15th anniversary of the beloved preachers last days upon earth. [He died January 31, 1892.] But the subject of the next Sermon, which is to be published on January 31st the exact anniversary of the date of his Home-goingis still more suitable.

The text is, The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. And the title of the Sermon is to be, Fifteen Years After! to remind all readers that although the preachers voice has not been heard in this world for the past 15 years, yet, like the martyred Abel, He being dead yet speaks, and, as Dr. Newman Hall truly said, as he yet speaks, he is not dead.

It is also a somewhat remarkable fact that the Sermon to be issued next week was preached on Thursday evening, February 11th, 1869, exactly 23 years to the very day, before the funeral service at the Tabernacle, the long procession from Newington to Norwood, and the interment in the cemetery there in the presence of an enormous concourse of sympathizing spectators.

Regular readers of the Sermons will remember that similar coincidences were pointed out at the time of Mr. Spurgeons Home-going, when, without any human pre-arrangement, the Sermons intended for reading on the four Sabbaths in February, 1892, were as followsNo. 2242, Volume 38GODS WILL ABOUT THE FUTURE; No. 2243, Volume 38 HIS OWN FUNERAL SERMON; No. 2244, Volume 38MEMBERS OF CHRIST and No. 2245, Volume 38LIVING, LOVING, LASTING UNIONthe four discourses concerning the Home-going of Deacon William Olney.

Read/download the entire sermons, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.]  
EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 12:12-36.**

Verses 12-15. On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet Him, and cried, Hosanna! Blessed is the King of Israel that comes in the name of the Lord. And Jesus, when He had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written, Fear not, daughter of Zion, behold, your King comes, sitting on an asss colt. Even in the little glory of a temporal kind, which was given to the Lord Jesus Christ when He was here among men as Mrs. Lukes hymn puts it, His humility and meekness were very manifest, thus fulfilling the prophecy recorded in Zechariah 9:9Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, your King comes unto you; He is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass. Oh, that all His people would always be of such a lowly spirit, not seeking great things for themselves, but condescending to men of low estate, remembering that it was their Master who said to His disciples, Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and you shall find rest unto your souls.

16. These things understood not His disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of Him, and that they had done these things unto Him. I wonder whether, when Christ comes back to earth, in the Glory of His Father with the holy angels, we also shall not understand a great many things which are complete mysteries to us now. Perhaps it will be said of us, then, These things understood not His disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of Him, and that they had done these things unto Him. That first Glory of His Ascension to Heaven shed a flood of light upon the life of Christ, as doubtless the greater Glory of His Second Advent will shed a yet brighter light upon our understanding of the things of Christ which quite surpass our comprehension now.

17-19. The people therefore that were with Him when He called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record. For this cause the people also met Him, for that they heard that He had done this miracle. The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive you how we prevail nothing? Behold, the world is gone after Him. No doubt many of His disciples thought so, too, yet how mistaken were both the friends and the foes of Christ, for you recollect, Brothers and Sisters, that Christs triumphal entry into Jerusalem was followed, within less than a week, by a far different scenewhen the same crowd that cried, Hosanna! shouted, Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him! The world that was supposed to have gone after Him, nailed Him to the Cross, so short-lived is human popularity. So short-lived, also, is the admiration of Christ by carnal minds, for they do admire Him after a fashion, they cannot help doing so! There have been written lives of Christ which have been full of admiration of Him, yet equally full of opposition to His Deity. We must not always regard it as an encouraging sign when men praise Christ for very soon, if the root of the matter is not in them and they do not accept Him as their Lord and Master, they will change their note and instead of, Hosanna! it will be, Away with Him, crucify Him!

20, 21. And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast: the same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired Him, saying, Sir we would see Jesus. I do not know why these Greeks went to Philip, who was of Bethsaida of Galilee, unless it was because he had a Greek name. Yet Andrew and Peter also had Greek names. If I went to Paris and wanted to see the President, and knew that there was somebody in the cabinet who had an English name, I would probably say, Well, either he is an Englishman, or he comes of English parentage, so he may take an interest in me and get me the introduction I want. Perhaps that was the reason why these Greeks came to Philip. I cannot think of any other, but I know that if you want to get to Christ, you will always find some way of doing itand that the reason why so many people do not get to Him is because they do not want to! You may all come to Jesus Christ if you will. But, alas, until His Grace controls it and changes it, your will inclines you to go still further away from Christ rather than to come to Him.

22. Philip came and told Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip told Jesus. Andrew and Philip appear to have been staunch friends and fellow laborersand it is always well when Christian men can work for Christ with congenial companions. My poor perplexed Brother, if you cannot get to Jesus Christ by yourself, it will be a good thing for you to say to some Philip, Sir, I would see Jesus. Perhaps Philip will tell his friend, Andrew, and then Philip and Andrew will go together and tell Jesus, and so you will get to Him! It is a great help in prayer, when you are yourself unable to pray, to get someone whom you know to be a Christian, and who has sympathy with you, to come and pray with you.

23, 24. And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified. Verily, verilyAmen, amen.   
24, 25. I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone: but if it dies, it brings forth much fruit. He that loves His life shall lose it. Or, as it should be rendered, He that loves his life loses it. That is not the true way to liveand in his selfish attempt to live to himself, he is losing his life.   
25, 26. And he that hates his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serves Me, let him follow Me. The best service you can render to Christ is to imitate Him. If you want to do what will please Himdo as He did!   
26. And where I am, there shall also My servant be. You cannot expect better lodgings than that! So, as Christ had to live here amid sorrow, sin and shame, you must be willing to do the same. But, as Christ was afterwards exalted to indescribable honor, so shall it be with you if you are His true servant!   
26. If any man serves Me, My Father will honor him. For such is the Fathers love to His Son, that He delights to honor all those who become His Sons faithful servants!   
27. Now is My soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. There was a conflict in the Saviors heartthe weakness of His true Manhood striving with the strength of His Infinite affection to His people, and also to His Father. We must never forget that He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. If it had been no pain to Him to die as the Substitute for sinners, there would have been no atoning Sacrifice in His death. And if no dread had overtaken Him at the thought of death, it would have proved that He did not die as we do and, therefore, He would not have been able to take our place as He did. Notice how the Savior speaks of the struggle that was going on in His soul. What shall I say? Do you ever have to ask that question when you are trying to pray? If so, do not be astonished, for even your Lord and Master said the same. What shall I say?as if He paused to consider what form His prayer should takeshall I say, Father save Me from this hour? No, but I will say, For this cause came I unto this hour.   
28. Father, glorify Your name. That is a grand answer to the Saviors question, What shall I say? And when you do not know how to pray, you may always present that petition, Father, glorify Your name. You have some dear one at home very illyou would be glad if the precious life might be spared, yet you are not sure whether you may ask for it. Well then, say, Father, glorify Your name. Possibly you are passing through a great trial and you would be glad to escape from ityet you do not know whether it is the Divine will that you should do so. Well then, you may, at any rate, put up this prayer, Father, glorify Your name. Whatever is most for Your Glory, let that be my will as it is Your will.   
28 Then came there a voice from Heaven. An audible voice, for those who stood by could hear itThere came a voice from Heaven.   
28-30. Saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again. The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered. Others said, An angel spoke to Him. Jesus answered and said, This Voice came not because of Me, but for your sakes. You needed to be strengthened as to the Divine Character and authority of My mission. You required to be comforted with the full assurance that I shall, indeed, be glorifying My Father even when I die upon the Cross of Calvary.

31. Now is the judgment of this world. This is a wonderful sentence as if, in Christs death, the world was judged and condemned! And so it was. Nothing ever so convicted the world of high treason against God as when men said of the Lord Jesus Christ, Gods well-beloved Son, This is the Heir. Come, let us kill Him, and the inheritance shall be ours. The shedding of the blood of Christ upon the Cross is the crimson evidence of the deep transgression of human nature! Now is the judgment of this world. There is another rendering of this text, retaining the Greek word,

Now is the crisis of this world. [See Sermon No. 2338, Volume 39THE CRISIS OF THIS WORLD Read/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.]

31. Now shall the prince of this world be cast out. Thank God for that! His throne was shaken to its fall when Christ died on Calvary. All the powers of darkness suffered eternal defeat in the hour that men and devils fancied they had gained the victory.

32, 33. And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me. This He said, signifying what death He should die. Yet they did not understand it, even then, clear as it now appears to us that He spoke concerning His lifting up upon the Cross.

34-36. The people answered Him, We have heard out of the Law that Christ abides forever: and how say You, The Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man? Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walks in darkness knows not where he goes. While you have light, believe in the light, that you may be the children of light. These things spoke Jesus, and departed, and did hide Himself from them.

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #2449 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE RULE AND REWARD OF SERVING CHRIST   
NO. 2449

**A SERMON INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, JANUARY 26, 1896.   
DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON THURSDAY EVENING, JUNE 27, 1889.

**If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me, and where I am there My servant will be also:   
if anyone serves Me, him will My Father honor.   
John 12:26.**

THIS verse is all about serving and service. Three times over you get the word, serve, or, servant. Each clause of our text has in it a part of the verb, to serve. You cannot have Christ if you will not serve Him! If you take Christ, you must take Him in all His Characters, not only as Friend, but also as Master. And if you are to become His disciple, you must also become His servant. I hope that no one here kicks against that Truth of God! Surely it is one of our highest delights on earth to serve our Lord and this is to be our blessed employment even in Heaven, itselfHis servants shall serve Him: and they shall see His face.

This thought also enters into our idea of salvation. To be saved means that we are rescued from the slavery of sin and brought into the delightful liberty of the servants of God. O Master, You are such a glorious Lord that serving You is perfect freedom and sweetest rest! You have told us that it would be so and we have found it so. Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and you shall find rest unto your souls. We do find it so and it is not as though rest were a separate thing from servicethe very service, itself, becomes rest to our souls! I know not how some of us would have any rest on earth if we could not employ our daily lives in the service of Christ! And the rest of Heaven is never to be pictured as idleness, but as constantly being permitted the high privilege of serving the Lord.

Learn, then, all of you who would have Christ as your Savior, that you must be willing to serve Him. We are not saved by service, but we are saved to service. When we are once saved, from then on we live in the service of our Lord. If we refuse to be His servants, we are not saved, for we still remain evidently the servants of self and the servants of Satan. Holiness is another name for salvationto be delivered from the power of self-will, the domination of evil lusts and the tyranny of Satanthis is salvation. Those who would be saved must know that they will have to serve Christand those who are saved rejoice that they are serving Him and that thus they are giving evidence of a change of heart and renewal of mind! Come, Beloved, and when the text says, If anyone serves Me, let each of us read his own name, there, and let us say, Yes, I would serve the Lord Jesus Christ.

If we cannot read our own name there as yet, let us pray God that we may first believe in Jesus unto eternal life and then, receiving that eternal life, may spend the full force and strength of it in His service! I hope that I am addressing a large number of those who are working together with God, who have said concerning their great King as Ittai said to David, Surely in what place my lord the king shall be, whether in death or life, even there, also, will your servant be. You have taken up Christs Crossit has become a delightful burden to youand you wish to bear it after Jesus as long as you live. May you be helped in that desire by the consideration of the passage before us!

First, here is the rule of serviceIf anyone serves Me, let him followMe. Secondly, here is the fellowship of serviceWhere I am, there My servant will be also. And thirdly, here is the reward of serviceIf anyone serves Me, him will my Father honor.

I. First, dear Friends, here is THE RULE OF SERVICEIf anyone serves Me, let him follow Me.   
So you are proposing to yourself that you will serve Christ, are you? You are a young man. As yet you have plenty of vigor and strength and you say to yourself, I will serve Christ in some remarkable way! I will seek to make myself a scholar. I will try to learn the art of oratory and I will, in some way or other, glorify my Lords name by the splendor of my language. Will you, dear Friend? Is it not better, if you are going to serve Christ, to ask Him what He would like you to do? If you wished to do a kindness for a friend, you certainly would desire to know what would best please that friend, or else your kindness might be mistaken and you might be doing that which would grieve rather than gratify! Now listen. Your Lord and Master does not bid you become either a scholar or an orator in order to serve Him. Both of those things may happen to fall to your lot in that path of duty which He would have you to take, but first of all He says, If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me.  
This is what Christ prefers beyond anything elsethat His servants should follow Him. If we do that, we shall serve Him in the way which is according to His own choice. I notice that many good friends desire to serve Christ by standing on the top rung of the ladder. You cannot get there at one step, young man! Your better way will be to serve Christ by following Him, by, doing the next thing, the thing you can dothat little simple business which lies within your capacity which will bring you no special honor, but which, nevertheless, is what your Lord desires of you. In effect, you can hear Him say to you, If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me, not by aiming at great things, but by doing just that piece of work that I put before Him at the time. Do you seek great things for yourself? said the Prophet Jeremiah to Baruch, seek them not. So say I to you.   
One friend here, perhaps, blessed with great riches, is saying to himself or herself, I will lay by in store until I acquire a considerable amount and then build a row of almshouses for the poor. I will give very largely to some new foreign missionary effort, or I will build a House of Prayer in which Christs name shall be preached. God forbid that I should stop you in any right design whatever! Still, if you would do what is absolutely certain to please Christ, I would not recommend the selection of any one particular objective, but I would advise you to do just thisfollow Him, remembering that He said, If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me. You will, by simply going behind your Master, following His footsteps and being truly His disciple, do that which would please Him more than if you could endow His cause with a whole mint of riches. This is what He selects as the choicest proof of your love, the highest testimony of your regardIf anyone serves Me, let him follow Me.   
What, then, does the Savior mean by bidding us render to Him our best service by following Him? I would say, first, I understand by these words that we are to follow Christ by believing His doctrine. Our Lord says, practically, If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me as Teacher. Let him sit at My feet. Let him learn of Me. Some seem to fancy that they can serve Christ by striking out a new line of thought. My dear Sir, if you do that, you will serve yourself, but you will not serve Christ! He has come to be the Teacher of the glorious Gospel of the blessed God and it is only by teaching the Truths which He has made known, and by publishing the message which He has revealed, that you can really be His servant. Suppose you have a man to be your servant at homesay, your gardener. He is a very industrious man, indeed, and works very hard. But when you walk round your garden, you do not see him, and for a very good reason, for he is not there. Where is he? He is at work in your neighbors garden! Of course you love your neighbor as yourself, so you are pleased to think that your servant is working on behalf of your neighbor.   
You smile, do you? I think you say to yourself, That is a kind of servant that I should not care to keep. If he worked for somebody else all day long, in the time for which I paid him, I would not want him as my servant. Well now, if I, as a Christian minister, become a teacher of philosophy instead of a preacher of the Truths of the Gospel. If I receive into my mind some of the novel views that abound in the present daywhich are not the views that are revealed in the Scripturesthen Christ is not my Master and I am not His disciple! I am a follower of somebody else. If you act thus, you are

pretending to be Christs reformeryou are attempting to make His teaching better. Impious fool! I dare not use a milder expression! You are acting as Christs critic! You are finding fault with the Faultless! You are trying to correct the Infallible! You had better give up such a task as that, for it is not consistent with being His disciple. He requires of you that you should become as a little child, that you may be taught by Him. His own words are, Except you are converted, and become as little children, you shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.   
If you would be a servant of Christ, come to Him as a little child! Sit on the infants form to be taught by Him the Gospel A B C. If anyone serves Me, let him follow Mefollow Me as My disciple, regarding Me as his Teacher to whom he bows his understanding and his entire mind, that I may fashion it according to My own will. This is the language of our Lord and I would impress it very earnestly upon you alland especially upon any who are beginning the Christian life. If you are to serve Christ, put your mind like a tablet of wax under His stylus, that He may write on you whatever He pleases! Be you Christs slate, that He may make His mark on you. Be His sheet of paper on which He may write His living letters of love. You can serve Him in this way in the best possible manner.   
But next, I think that the text means, If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me by obeying My commands. A fortnight ago, we considered that

most instructive text, [Sermon #2317, Volume 39Obeying Christs OrdersRead/download

entire sermon at http://www.spurgeongems.org] Whatever He says unto you, do it. I would bring that text to your notice, again, and ring it like a bell Whatever HE says unto you, do it. If you want to truly serve Christ, do not do what you suggest to yourself, but do what He commands you! Remember what Samuel said to Saul, To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. I believe that the profession of consecration to God, when it is accompanied by action that I suggest to myself, may be nothing but will-worshipan abomination in the sight of God! But when anyone says to the Lord, What will You have me do? Show me, my Master, what You would have me dowhen there is a real desire to obey every command of Christ, then is there the true spirit of service and the true spirit of sonship. If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me, running at My call, following at My heels, waiting at My feet to do whatever I desire him to do.

Dear Friends, this makes life a very much simpler thing than some dream it to be. You are not to go and carve a statue out of marble by the exercise of your own geniusif that were the task set before us, the most of us would never accomplish it! But you have just to go and write according to Christs own example, to copy His letters, the up-strokes and the down-strokes and to write exactly as He has written. The other day, I was asked to sign my name to a deed and when it was handed to me, I said, Why, I have signed my name! Yes, said the one who brought it, you have the very easy task of marking it all over again. Just so, in that case I followed my own writing and you have the easy task of writing after Christ, blacking over, again, the letters that He, Himself, has made, and you cannot do Him better service than this. If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; that is, let him do just what I bid Him to do.

Now, thirdly, I think that by these words our Lord meansand this is the same thing in another shape, If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me by imitating My example. It is always safe, dear Friends, to do what Christ would have done under the same circumstances in which you are placed. Of course you cannot imitate Christ in His miraculous work and you are not asked to imitate Him in some of those sorrowful respects in which He suffered that we might not suffer. But the ordinary life of Christ is, in every respect, an example to us. Never do what you could not suppose Christ would have done. If it strikes you that the course of action that is suggested to you would be un-Christly, then it is unChristian, for the Christian is to be like Christ! The Christian is to be the flower growing out of the Seed, Christ, and there is always a congruity between the flower and the seed out of which it grows. Keep your eyes fixed on your heavenly Model and Pattern, and seek in all things to imitate Christ. If you want to serve Christ, repeat His life as nearly as possible in your own life. If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me by copying My example.

Once more, I think the Savior means thisIf anyone serves Me, let him follow Me by clinging to My cause. Cling to the cause of Christ, dear Friend. Give yourself to that Kingdom for which you are taught to pray and be ready to make any sacrifice, whatever, that you may advance and extend it. Yes, throw your whole self into the holy service of your Lord. Make the name of Christ to be more widely known and the cause of Christ to be further extended among the sons of men. Cling to the cause of Christ and so carry out His own Words, If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me.

Beloved, I believe that every Christian person should follow Christ in the waters of Baptism and, having done that, should join the Church of Christ, not so much to follow the Church, as to follow Christ. We are not to follow men, even the best of men, any farther than they follow Christ. But we must take care that we do boldly stand up as adherents of His cause, so that, if it is asked, Who is on the Lords side? we may put in an appearance, directly, and avow ourselves as His followers. Are you living in a village where there is no congregation of the faithful? Then let it be known that you are on the Lords sideand do your best to open a place where Christ can be preached. Do you live down some dark part of this city where nobody goes to a place of worship? Such places are, alas, very common in this dreadful London. Then, be sure that you go to the House of God and your very going there will be a form of serving Christ, for others will see that you, at least, take a decided step and join in public worship with the avowed followers of Christ.

If you would really serve Christ, come right out from the world and say, Let others do as they will. As for me and my house we belong to Christ and we will never hide our colors. We will bind the scarlet thread in the window and we will let all who come by this way understand that here live those who have been redeemed with precious blood and who, therefore, cannotdare not and will not conceal the gracious fact! If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me by taking up My cause and working for it with all his heart.

I hope that I do not need to dwell any longer on this point. You all see that the way in which to serve Christ is not a visionary one. You do not need to run away from your father and mother and leave your home and friends. You do not need to go away to the natives in Africa in order to serve Christ. It is not the getting of some idle speculation in your own brainand working that out according to your own whims and fancies that constitutes service of Christ! It is simply thisif any man will serve Christ, let him follow Christ. Let him put his foot down as nearly as he can where Christ put His foot down. Let Him tread in Christs steps, be moved by His Spirit, actuated by His motives, live with His aim and copy His actions. This is the noblest way in which to serve the Lord.

II. Now secondly, and briefly, let us notice THE FELLOWSHIP OF SERVICEIf anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. I do not know any other master but Christ who ever said that. There are some places where an earthly master does not want his servant to behe must have some room to himself and some engagements which he cannot explain to his servantand into which his servant must not pry. But the Lord Jesus Christ makes this the glorious privilege of everyone who enters His service that, where He is, there shall His servant be!

And where is He, I pray? He is in Heaven and we cannot go to Him, there, until He calls us Home. But where is He? Where was He when He spoke these words? He was, first, in the place of consecration. The Lord Jesus Christ stood before the Father a consecrated Man. All that there was in Him was dedicated to the Glory of God. Now, go and serve Him by following Him, and He will put you into the place of dedication, consecration, sanctification! You desire to be holy? Well, you will never attain to holiness simply by lying in bedget up and work for Jesus if you are able to do so! And you cannot get holiness merely by studying books serve your Lord and serve Him especially by following Him! It is in the sacred process of active obedience, or of passive obedience, that we get the consecration which is not to be found, as some think, by merely willing it and talking of it, but which grows out of holy service.

As rivers, when they take up sewage, are said to drop it as they flow and purify themselves as they run, so, assuredly, it is with a Believer as he flows on in his Christian course. God blessing him, he drops much of the earthiness which he has taken up in his progress through life and, by the very motion, he seems to purify himself, refining as he runs. I notice that people who have nothing to do but to sit and stare into the black hole of their own nature are generally very sad and not often very virtuous. But they who, knowing how dark and sinful their nature is, trust Jesus for salvation, and then spend their lives in doing the will of the Lordthese are they who are both holy and happy!

But where is Christ?for He says, Where I am, there My servant will be also. He is and always was in the place of communion with God. He was always near to His Father. He often spoke with God. He always had the joy of God filling His spirit. And you, perhaps are saying to yourself, I wish that I had communion with God. Well, through Jesus Christ it is to be had by serving Him in that particular kind of service which consists in following Him! If you want to walk with God, why, of course, you must

walk! If you sit down in idleness, you cannot walk with Himand if you do not keep up a good brisk pace, He will walk on in front of you and leave you behind, for the Lord is no laggard in His walking. Therefore, you see, there must be diligent progress and activity in service in order that we may keep pace with Him and have communion with Him. And if we act thus, here, He has promised that we shall be in the place of communion with our blessed Master.

Further than this, our Lord Jesus Christ was in the place of confidence. Whenever Christ went to work, He worked with assurance. He never had a doubt as to His ultimate success. No haphazard work ever came from Christs hands. He spoke with certainty and He worked with the full assurance that His labor would not be in vain. If you want to have confidence in your work for Christ, so as to perform it without any doubts and fears, you will have to obtain it by serving Himand serve Him by following Him. And then, into that hallowed place of confidence where your Master always stood, there shall you also come.

Our Lord stood, too, in the place of holy calm. How unruffled He was at all times! His was a life of storms, yet a life of peace. All around Him moved, but He was the Rock of Ages and never moved. Would you not like to be calm as Christ was, to dwell with Him on the serene heights while the tempests roll and thunder far below your feet? Well, then, serve Him by following Him and, as you do so, the promise of the text shall be fulfilled to you, Where I am, there My servant will be also.

And oh, blessed be His name! He has actually gone into the place of conquest and victory in the eternal world! And you and I shall be there with Him in His own good time. Where I am, there My servant will be also. Count it no dishonor to be servants when this high favor is promised you, that where your Master is, there you shall be also! I have sometimes thought that if I could get into Heaven somewhere behind the door, and just sit there, I would be perfectly satisfied. But far more than that is promised to us! Wherever Christ is, there shall we be! If He is on a Throne, we shall be enthroned, too, and, if He is at the Fathers right hand, we shall be at the Fathers right hand, for He has promised, Where I am, there My servant will be also. You need not to know much about Heavenit is where Christ is, and that is Heaven enough for us! If we could once go into the courts above and ask, Is my Lord Jesus here? and they should answer, No, He is not here, it would be no Heaven to us, would it? We would want to go outside the city walls and cry, Show me where He is.

But suppose it possible for us to be in the very lowest room of Heaven, where the glories were veiled, as it wereif such a place could beand if we could hear one truly say, There He is, its glories would not be any longer veiled and we should need no higher Heaven than that! As soon as ever we saw Him, we would say, as our Friend did in prayer, He is all the Heaven we want to know. Remember that blessed verse we had in our reading, Father, I will that they, also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, that they may behold My Glory?

This, then, is the great fellowship of holy servicewho would not be a servant of Christ?   
III. Now, as our time is nearly spent, I must speak but briefly upon THE REWARD OF SERVICE, upon which I have already entrenched If anyone serves Me, him will My Father honor.   
It is very sweet to notice how the Lord Jesus brings His Father into His speech. It is as if He said, When a man joins himself to Me, then he joins himself to My Father, also. It is not only I who will love him and do My best to honor him, but My Father, the great and ever-blessed Lord over all, keeps an eye on that man. On whom does He look with this gaze of approval? Not on those who have some grand project of serving themselves, but on those who serve Christ and who do it by following Him! Come, dear people of God, you are, many of you, very poor, yet I know that many of you are seeking to serve Christ by following Him. Some of Gods dear servants here are not great speakersthey are very quiet, humble Christiansbut they are trying to do what Christ would do if He were in their position. If this is your case, dear Friends, you are honoring your Lord and the Father, Himself, looks approvingly upon you!   
If anyone serves Me, says our Lord, him will My Father honor. How will He do it? Well, He will honor him by letting him know his sonship. Because Jesus always pleased the Father, the Father bares witness to Him, saying, This is My beloved Son. And if you serve Christ by following Him, the Father will often bear witness in your heart and say, This, also, is My beloved son, in whom I am well pleased. He will often cause the Spirit of adoption to renew the witness in your heart so that you will cry, Abba, Father, and He will acknowledge the kindred. Surely, there is no greater honor than for God to acknowledge you as His son!   
Next, He will honor you by giving you a sense of approval. You know what that means. I will tell you when it is very sweet. You have been doing something for Christ. You have done it with all your heart and some friend picks holes in itand someone not quite so much a friend and who, therefore, cannot so sorely wound youbegins to impute wrong motives and to judge you for having come down to the battle because of the pride and the naughtiness of your heart. Well, you lose a friend and you get a double number of enemies round about you. Yet in your heart you feel that you did it only for Christ. Well, then, at such a time it is delightful to have a sense of the approbation of God such as you never had when you had the approbation of men!   
Sometimes when even Christian people cry, Well done, well done, the Lord says, That is quite enough praise for him. I shall not give him My, Well done. But when you get no, Well done, from men and, on the contrary, are misunderstood and misrepresented, then the Lord comes and puts His hand upon you and says, Be strong, fear not, I have accepted your service. I know your motive and I approve your action. Be not afraid of them, but go your way. Ah, Beloved! Such approval as that is the highest honor we can have here! If anyone serves Me, says Christ, him will My Father honor with a sense of sonship and with a sense of approbation.   
If any man serves Christ there is another kind of honor that often comes to him, and it is not to be despised. If a man will serve Christ by following Him, the Father will give him honor in the eyes of the bloodbought family. There are certain of the Lords people who do not carry yardsticks with them, but they carry scales and weights. And if they do not measure by quantity, they measure by qualitytheir approval is worth having. They are often the poorest and most afflicted members of the Church, but, being the most instructed and living the nearest to God, to be had in honor of them is a thing worth having! I believe that if any man will live the life of a Christian, however few his talents, and if his service lies in close obedience and imitation of Christ, the real saints, not the mere professors, especially not the shining worldly ones among them, but real saints will say, That is the man for us! That is the woman with whom we like to converse. Thus it comes to pass that those who really serve the Lord by following Him have honor in the estimation of those who sit at meat with them at their Lords Table.   
And then, at last, when we come to die, or when we stand at the Judgment Seat of Christ, or when we enter upon the eternal state, what a glorious thing it will be to find the Father ready to honor us forever because we served the Son! Our reward will not be of debt, but of Divine Graceit is Grace that gave us the service and Grace that will reward us for our service! No man and no woman shall serve the Lord Jesus Christ here on earth by following Him without finding that the Father has some special honor, some rich and rare reward, to give to such soldiers in due time! This is the fighting dayexpect nothing now but bullets, bruises, wounds, scars! But the battle will soon be over and when the war is ended, the King will come and ride up and down the ranksand in that day you who have been most battered and most wounded in the battle shall find Him pause when He reaches youand He will fasten on your breast a star that shall be more honor to you than all the Victoria Crosses that have decorated brave men here below! Stars and garters they may have who want them, but blessed are they who shall shine as the stars in the Kingdom of our Father! And this honor is to be had by that Believer who will faithfully serve His Lordnot by any who merely talk about it, or dream of it, or propose to do itbut to those who serve Him by following Him, this honor shall be given.   
I have preached all this to Gods people, but I have not said anything to you who are not His people. I cannot invite you to His service as you arehow can you serve Him while you are His enemies? I do not invite you unconverted people to work for God. Oh, no! He wants no such servants as you are! He will not have rebels in His host. First bow your knee in submission, lay down the weapons of your rebellionthen fly to Christ for mercy! Trust in Him for forgiveness and then, but not till then, you may come and serve Him, and follow Him, and expect that His Father will honor you as He has promised. God bless you, for Jesus sake! Amen.

HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK625, 262, 785. EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON:  
**JOHN 17.**

This chapter contains the marvelous prayer of our Great High Priest. May the Holy Spirit apply its teaching to our hearts as we read it!   
Verse 1. These words spoke Jesus, and lifted up His eyes to Heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You. The great design of Christ, all through His life on earth, was to glorify the Father. He came to save His people, but that was not His first or His chief aim. It was His objective, through the salvation of myriads of the sons of men, to glorify the Father.

2. As You have given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. Here we have both the universality and the specialty of the work of Divine Mercy. Christ has power over all fleshmen are in the power of the one Mediator, but there is this special objective ever before Himthat He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him.   
3. And this is life eternal, that they might know You the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent. This does not mean mere headknowledge, but to know in the heart and soul the one only true God and Jesus Christ who was sent of Him to the sons of men, this is life eternal. God without Christ brings not eternal life, and Christ, if He were not sent of God, would not bring eternal life to us, but knowing God in Christ Jesus is eternal life.   
4. I have glorified You on the earth: I have finished the work which You gave Me to do. Here our Savior speaks by anticipation. He foresaw that He would pass through His passion, that all the work of His peoples redemption would be fully accomplished. And in this, His final prayer on earth to the Father, He could truly say, I have finished the work which You gave Me to do. May you and I be able to say the same when we depart out of this world! Not boastinglythere was no boasting in our Lordbut truthfully, conscientiouslyfrom the bottom of our heart may each one of us be able to say, I have finished the work which You gave me to do!   
5. And now, O Father, glorify You Me with Your own Self with the Glory which I had with You before the world was. After the finished work, Christ was to have the Glory. O worker for God, seek not glory before your work is done! Expect not honor among men because you have begun the work so earnestly. Plod on until it is finished, then shall the glory come. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward, said our Lord concerning the scribes and Pharisees who sought the praise of men. But you have not your reward at presentit is yet to come. Wait for it, for it is sure to come.   
6. I have manifested Your name unto the men which You gave Me out of the world: Yours they were, and You gave them to Me; and they have kept Your Word. How tenderly He speaks about them! He says the best He can of them. They were faulty, feeble folk, but He says, They have kept Your Word. So they did. Oh, that you and I may do the same, and not be swept away by the drift of the current of unbelief! If we are not perfect. If we fail in some respects, yet may the Muster be able to say of us to God, They have kept Your Word!   
7. Now they have known that all things whatever You have given Me are of You. How the blessed Christ loves to lay aside all honor to Himself even in His own Gospel! He said that the things which He had taught to His disciples were not His ownthey were the Fathers. The Father always honors the Son and the Son takes care to always honor the Father.   
8-10. For I have given unto them the Words which You gave Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came from You, and they have believed that You did send Me. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which You have given Me; for they are Yours. And all Mine are Yours and Yours are Mine; and I am glorified in them. Every true child of God glorifies Christ! And if you cannot say that you are glorifying Christ, you should question whether you really belong to Him. If you are His, it is true of you, I am glorified in themnot only by them, but in themtheir suffering with patience, in their laboring with diligence, in their faith, in their trustfulness in Me, I am glorified in them.   
11. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the worldWe also know that we, too, are in the world. We have good reason to feel it and sometimes to mourn it.   
11. And I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your own name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one, as We are. When God keeps us, He keeps us in unityour divisions are not the result of His work. When we get away from His keeping and get away from His Word, then we are sundered in heart from Him and from one another. But by His keeping He keeps His children one.   
12. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name: those that You gave Me I have kept, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition; that the Scripture might be fulfilled. The Scripture was fulfilled in the preservation of His ownand also fulfilled in the destruction of the traitor. Gods Word will always be fulfilled. Oh, that it may be to us a savor of life unto life, that we may be kept by it and not a savor of death unto death, as it was to Judas, who was blinded by the very Light of God that shone upon him! That fierce Light that beat about the King of Kings fell on him and it blinded him eternally. God save us from such an awful doom as that!   
13. And now come I to You. I can only read you this wonderful chapter, but what must it have been to have heard it! I think I see the look on the Saviors face as He says to His Father, And now come I to You. May something like that look be on your faces, my Beloved, when your last moments come! Looking away from your dear ones whom you must leave as Jesus left His disciples, may you, each one, be able to say, And now come I to You!   
13. And these things I speak in the world, that they might have My joy fulfilled in themselves. While He drained the cup of sorrow to the dregs and went forward to all the agonies of the cruel Cross, He wanted His disciples to have His joy fulfilled in them, that they might be filled full with His joy.   
14. I have given them Your Word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. This does not look like trying to please the world, to adapt our method to the spirit of the age, to come as near to the world as ever we can, to dabble in its politics and join in its schemes! This has, to me, a very different tone in it from all that!   
15. I pray not that You should take them out of the worldChrist and His people did not go together out of the world all at once. That would have been to leave the world in an utterly forlorn condition without any help whatever! So He says to His Father, I pray not that You should take them out of the world.   
15-16. But that You should keep them from the Evil One. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. You cannot make Christ a worldling. Do what You will with His Charactertwist it as you likeyou must see that there is something unworldly, otherworldly about Him. So let it always be with His people.   
17. Sanctify them through Your Truth: Your Word is Truth. Thank God for thatYour Word is Truth. Not, Your Word contains the Truth with a mixture of error. Or, Your Word has some Truth in it. No, but, Your Word is Truth. Not only is it true, but it is Truth, the very essential Truth of God!   
18, 19. As You have sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify MyselfI separate Myself to this work, I dedicate, devote, consecrate Myself wholly for their sakes.   
19-20. That they, also, might be sanctified through the Truth. Neither pray I for these aloneThis little handful of disciples who had been gathered to His name   
20. But for them, also, which shall believe on Me through their word. Thank God that He will bless our word as well as His own Word! When our word is based upon His Wordwhen we do but expound what Christ has given us to saythen men shall believe on Him through our word!   
21-23. That they all may be one; as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You, that they, also, may be one in Us: that the world may believe that You have sent Me. And the Glory which You gave Me, I have given them; that they may be one, even as We are one: I in them, and You in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me. This is a wonderful expression. Does the Father love His people as He loves Christ? Then His love to them must be without beginning, without change, without measure, without end! Oh, it would ravish your heart, it would carry you away to the very Heaven of heavens if you could get the full meaning of this expression, and have loved them as You have loved Me!   
24. Father, I will that they, also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My Glory, which You have given Me: for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. This is Christs last will and testamentFather, I will. It is not merely His prayer, but He makes this as one clause in His will, that all whom the Father gave Him should be with Him to behold His Glory. And it will be so, Beloved. He will not lose one of His own. He will never drop from those dear pierced hands any portion of the eternal gift of His Father!   
25, 26. O righteous Father, the world has not known You: but I have known You, and these have known that You have sent Me. And I have declared unto them Your name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith You have loved Me may be in them, and I in them. Here the doctrine becomes a matter of experience! May we never rest till we get the full experience of it, that the very love which God gives to Christ may be found in our hearts shed abroad by the Holy Spirit! Amen.

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THE CHRISTIANS SERVICE AND HONOR   
NO. 2651

A SERMON   
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS DAY, DECEMBER 3, 1899.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT NEW PARK STREET CHAPEL, SOUTHWARK, ON A LORDS-DAY EVENING IN THE AUTUMN OF 1857.

**If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor. John 12:26.**

FEW men love service. Man prefers to be his own master, to do as he pleases according to his own sweet will and, like the winds, to be under no control whatever. But he who spurns the counsel of God, despises His Law and tramples on His commands, commits an act of suicide to his own liberty! Those who act thus, while they seek to be free, become the truest slaves, for, when they give a loose rein to their lusts, they find them like wild horses dragging them irresistibly along. Passions indulged turn into

habitsand those habits hold them fast in their iron grip and they cease to be free any longer. He is the freeman who serves God and not the man who scorns the yoke of Jesus. He is the freeman whose shoulders bear the yoke of Christ. But he who refuses to serve Him is a slave. He who will not obey Jesus, obeys a tyrant master called Satan, or worse still, himself, for, after all, the greatest tyrant to a man is his own sinful self! There is no slavery harder to endure than the despotism of evil habits when they have grown strong upon a man and fixed their chains upon his neck. The service of Jesus is perfect libertythose who wear the collar of Jesus find it to be a royal badge which makes them far more honorable than would the Order of the Garter, or the Bath. There is nothing that can so exalt a man as to make him a servant of Jesus! And the man who bends his neck willingly to serve Him, manifests the greatest wisdom.

What is it to serve Jesus? The text says, If anyone serve Me, him My Father will honor. Well, we can serve Him in the faith that we hold, in the sufferings we endure and very much in the acts we perform.

First, we can serve Him in the faith that we hold. This is true service. I believe certain Doctrines of God because God says they are trueand the only authority I have for their truth is the Word of God. I receive suchand-such Doctrines, not because I can prove them to be compatible with reasonnot because my judgment accepts thembut because God says they are true! Now this is one of the best services we can render to God to submit ourselves to Him in our belief of what He has revealed and ask Him to fix His Truths in our hearts and make us obey them. There are some who have an idea that doctrinal belief is nothing, but I tell you again, one of the highest services we can render to God is to fully believe in the Doctrines of His Word. So far from doctrinal error being a thing of no moment, it is a great sin because the Word of God is plainand he who does not, by searching, discover the Truthsins against God in the proportion in which he errs from His Word. But he who manfully proclaims the whole Truth of God and he who heartily receives it, alike, obey God and perform one of the highest services that can be rendered to the Most High!

Secondly, we honor Him, also, when we suffer for His names sake. When, with patience, we bear the fires of persecution. When, with calmness and resignation, we listen to the lies and calumnies that fly abroad. When we continue in well-doing though all manner of evil is said against us on account of our devotion to Jesus, then we serve Him and God is thereby honored and glorified. Our Lord Jesus bids us, in that day, rejoice and leap for joy, for great is our reward in Heaven, for so persecuted they the Prophets who were before us. And, moreover, when our suffering does not spring from our enemies, but when God, Himself, lays us on the bed of affliction, we honor Him when, worn with pain and tossed from side to side, we are calm and patient under the sickness and say

*Father, I wait Your daily will   
You shall divide my portion still.   
Grant me on earth what seems to You best, Till death and Heaven reveal the rest.*

The patient bearing of poverty is a service to God. The calm endurance of pain is honoring the Fathersubmission to His will in all the proceedings of His Providence is the very essence of devotion.

Thirdly, we can serve God in the outward acts we perform. And that is the highest form of service. Indeed, if we do not serve God thus, we do not really serve Him at all. If anyone serve Me, him My Father will honor, says Christ. And, in proportion as a Christian man serves God in his outward life and conversation, shall he receive honor of God. There are two or three ways of doing that. Some may serve God by the performance of ecclesiastical duties, as they are called. Others, by the more private duties of religion. But others, and more frequently, by the acts of daily life. Those who preach the Gospel from love to God and for His Glory, serve Him, and shall be honored in their labor. The deacon who toils for the Church of God is serving Him, and shall be blessed in what he does. The Sunday school teacher serves God. And each of you who have been preaching in the open air, or have, in smaller places of worship, been testifying to the Truth of God and now have come here to take the rest which all tired soldiers needeach of you who have been engaged in humbler work, teaching a little class, or giving away a tract you have each and all, in some measure, served God!

But if you have not served God in this way, today, you can serve God tomorrow in your shop, or in your family. The servant can honor God even when she sets the things out for the daily meal and when she clears them away. The nurse can serve God when, with tender hands, she binds up the wounds of the distressed and suffering. And the merchant, also, when he makes honesty the law of his dealings and afterwards, with a liberal hand, dispenses some of his goods to feed the poor. Do not think it is necessary to be a clergyman and wear a gown in order to serve Godyou may serve Him behind the counter, at the plow, or driving your horses! Whatever your hand finds to do may be done to the Glory of God! Common actions reveal the essence of true piety. Those things which we call common, God does not think so. When they are done with a right motive and in a right spirit, they become as great, in Gods sight, as the sermons of the minister who preaches to the largest audience! And I take it that there will be people before the Throne of God, who, for acts which they have done in private, will be stationed nearer to the Savior than some of those who occupied very high positions in the Church! They went foremost in the day of battle and received great applause from men, yet, God knows that they were not one-half so faithful to their Savior as the poorest cottager, or the meanest peasant who, for the good of souls, and the Glory of God, bent his knees before the Lord in earnest and believing supplication.

I cannot enlarge upon these points. You must think over them when you get home. You may serve God in the belief of His Doctrines, in suffering the dispensations of His Providence and in obeying all His Commandments, not forgetting the Commandment concerning Believers Baptism. Now I come to the subject of my discourse, in our Saviors declarationIf anyone serve Me, him My Father will honor, from which I learn that God will honor him in this world, in the future and intermediate state, at the Day of Judgment and throughout eternity!

I. GOD THE FATHER WILL, EVEN IN THIS WORLD, HONOR THE MAN WHO SERVES THE SAVIOR!   
Some of you look at me with astonishment and are ready to say, That is not true! God does not, as a rule, honor His servants in this world. It is a notorious fact that those who serve God best receive the most dishonor in this world, that those who are the most valiant for the Truth of God are called upon to endure the largest share of ignominy! Instead of the greatest honor, they have the most of the worlds hisses, derision and scorn. Yes, I know that the friendship of the world is enmity with God and that if any man will be a friend of God, he will generally be an enemy to this world. But yet, for all that, the servants of Christ do receive respect and reverence even in this time-state.   
I remark, first, that Christs servants receive honor in the Church. Any man who serves God faithfully will be sure to be honored by the Lords true servants. Let him preach the Truth fearlessly, fully, earnestly and heartily, and he need not be afraid that he shall not be honored by his Brothers of the Church, for the good will assuredly rally round him and not be backward in showing respect to him. Nor, if he toils in the Sunday school, shall he be without honor. Nor will he lack it, if he is but a humble member of the Church, if he is only seeking to glorify his Lord. Just in proportion as each one serves God will he be honored!   
I deny the statement which is made, sometimes, that honor is not given to those members of Churches who do not happen to occupy what is called a respectable position in society. I believe that if an examination were to be made into the conduct of the affairs of this Church, for example, it would be proved that the greatest honor is given to those who work most for God. There are, I am sure, some of our members to whom we all look up with respect and reverence, though they are not men of position or wealth. But they have something more and something betterthey have the love of God in their hearts and they manifest the effect of that love in their livesand that makes them most honorable! And putting this Church as the representative of all Christian Churches in this matter, I may say that the poor man, in his efforts to do good, will be honored equally with the rich! No distinction is made by God on account of rank or estate, but each one is honored according as he loves and serves the Savior. If respect is shown to the rich as well as to the poor and why should the poor be honored and the rich despised?it is not because of his worldly wealth, but because he is also rich in faith! A rich mans soul is as good as the poor mans, and the poor mans soul is as good as that of the richand when the poor man labors for Jesus as well as the rich man, they will alike receive honor!   
I believe it is so among us here and trust that it will continue to be so in all time to come. At any rate, as long as this arm can strike a blow against the spirit of social bigotry, it shall be driven from our midst! We do not admit any thought of caste among us and I am constrained to believe that the general practice, in all our Churches, is to reverence men according to their usefulness. Do not imagine, then, that you are debarred from any position in the Church, or from any of the honors of your Brethren because you do not happen to be rich. The Church will honor those who serve the Lord and so will God, Himself, for Jesus said, If anyone serve Me, him My Father will honor.

But, next, those who serve Christ will also receive honor from the world. The world itself honors the Christian. You say, How can that be? I am the subject of the laughs, the jeers and the ridicule from morning to night! I am called a canting Methodist, or something of that sort. And I cant think, therefore, that I am honored by the world! I feel rather that I am dishonored. But you are honored, after all, though it may be you do not know it. You are honored in the consciences of those very men who thus speak evil of you. Whatever they may say, in their hearts they reverence you. They may call you evil names, but they know they do not belong to you. They may call you a dog, but they believe you an angel. They may call you black, but they believe you white. Here is a proof of itif they were to see you fall into sin, they would say directly, He is one of your members! Why would they say that? Because they really expect you to be holy and consistent! And it is not till they have proof of the fact that you are not so, that they can deny the respect and honor of their own consciences. An ungodly man is not to be found whose conscience would not force him, inwardly, to do you honor. Even Satan himself was obliged to admit the majesty of holiness, if, as Milton tells us *Abashed the devil stood,   
And felt how amazing goodness is.*   
Goodness is an amazing thing to a wicked man! He sees you bear with patience what he says against youit surprises him that you forgive injuries and it vexes his hearthe cannot understand it. There is a power about Christianity which makes the enemy fall back, and a majesty in righteousness before which he must tremble. You need not concern yourselves about taking care of your own character before the eyes of men, but you must see that it is right before the eyes of Godif you serve Him, He will honor you!   
Again, the most wicked men will honor the Christian when they come to die. I have known some few hardened wretches who passed out of the world as they had livedin open rebellion against God and who, to the last, therefore, despised religion. But, generally, I have found that the scoffer changes his tone when death approaches. Send for someone to visit me, is his cry then! For whom shall we send? Shall it be John, the swearer? Oh, no, send for John, the praying man. I should like him to pray over me. Or send for the minister. But why dont you ask for your old companions? You used to say that they were the jolliest fellows, they were the merriest men you ever met? You know there is no such place as Heaven or Hell, for you often said so when in their company. Many a glass have you drunk with themwhy not have another before you die? Ah, such companions as these will not do for him now! And that fact proves the honor which such a man, at last, puts upon the Christian. His language then is, Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his. The ungodly scorn their own comrades society and run to our camp then! They think there is something in religion when they come to die! The voice of the last enemy speaks with a tongue of iron and a sound of thunderand makes even the most hardened conscience honor the Christian.   
Once more, the Christian man is honored after he is dead. If you want to be thought well of and spoken of with high honor, you must die. All of us who are alive must be slandered and criticized. But when we have been a while in our graves, it may be that we shall, in our turn, be the masters! Many men are stars to the world now who were but glowworms when they were alive! While playing their part among men, they were run down, scoffed at and spoken of as everything that was bad. But they descended to the grave, a few years passed away and now, looked at from a distance, they bear a very different aspect to the general eye! Looking upon them now is like gazing at the sunyou see their brightness far more than their spots! The world misses the Christian when he is gone. Perhaps one member of a family is godly and the rest are not, and they say, Oh, we dont care for him, he is too religious for us! But they will feel a sad gap when he is goneand one which they will not be able to fill. The neighborhood, too, in which he lived, will miss him because his words of kindness and deeds of mercy will be seen no more. They will say, Well, after all, he was a good fellow. How often have I heard that, Ah, well, he was not so bad, after all. There are not many left so good as he was. You dont know why this change has been worked in peoples minds, but so it often is. Death embalms the poorest Believer and lays him in the sepulcher of the kings! He who was but a common Christian becomes a brilliant light when God hangs him up, like a lamp with a silver chain, to glitter from the skies!   
II. GOD WILL HONOR HIM IN THE INTERMEDIATE STATE.   
When a Christian dies, his soul at once ascends to Heaven. Not so his bodythat continues in the grave until the Resurrection morning and, sometimes, we are anxious to know what will be our lot while our souls are separated from our bodies. Let me say then, for a certainty, according to Gods Word, that before our bodies rise, we shall be in Paradise, for Jesus said to the penitent thief, Today shall you be with Me in Paradise. There is no purgatory into which souls are dragged in order to be prepared and made fit for Heaven! But although they go at once to the Heaven of God, and rest in His Presence, it is not the full consummation of their bliss. They will not be satisfied till they wake up in the likeness of Christwhen body and soul will be reunited.   
What are the honors which the pure spirit will receive when, freed from this tabernacle of clay, it comes before its God? The Almighty will then say, I see My son, or, I behold My daughter. Your spirit I loved with an everlasting love. Your name I wrote in the Covenant of Election. I sent My Son to die for you. I called you by My Grace. I led you through all the desert. I fed you by My hand. I guided you through dangers and snares into the right way and I will keep you forever. Thrice-honored servant, you have done wellenter and take your place among the spirits of the redeemed. Angels, too, are ready to attend upon the saints. A saint in Heaven will receive all the service which an angel can perform. If the archangel Michael, himself, could do the meanest service for a child of God, he would consider himself thrice honored! Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation? We cannot tell what glory the saints have, even now, while their bodies are yet in the house of death and under the cold slab. Yet we know that their souls are more glorious than the angelsand more honored than the cherubim that sing incessantly before the Throne of Jehovah!   
III. If any man serves the Lord Jesus Christ, HE SHALL BE HONORED IN THE GREAT DAY OF JUDGMENT.   
That day is approaching. I will not attempt to describe the scene which shall be witnessed when the heavens and the earth shall flee awayand when the quick and the dead, the righteous and the ungodly shall stand before God. In the Day of Judgment, God will honor His servants from the mouths of the wicked, from the mouths of devils, from the lips of angels and from His own lips!   
At the Day of Judgment, God will honor the righteous before even the wicked themselves. You proud monarchs, who put to death the servant of God, sending him in a fiery chariot to Heaven, how confounded will you be when the lowly martyr, on whom you wreaked your vengeance, shall stand before you and say, Tyrant, I suffered for the Truths sake at your hands. And what shall the lordly cardinal say, then, and the wicked priest who put to death, when they had the power, the men who would not forsake the Truth of God and do violence to their consciences, even though fire and torture had to be endured in consequence of their loyalty to their Savior? And how will the ungodly look the righteous in the face? How will the hardened sinner feel when he has to confront that man of God whom he stretched upon the rack? How will he tremble who was the unjust judge who signed his death warrant? The Christian will then be able to point out his persecutors and the entire universe will regard them with disdain. That is the man, he will say, who stretched me on the rack! That is the man who cast me into prison! Yon wretched men chained me to the stake and that man brought forth the fire and firewood which consumed me.   
But how honored is the martyr now! He is arrayed in robes more glorious, though not more white, than others can weargarments more studded with jewels, though not more the workmanship of the Savior and on his head is a crown heavy with brilliance! While the monarch who persecuted him and all who aided him shall be cowed into silence and shrink away in despair, calling upon the mountains and the hills to cover them, how will the Prophets be honored? I think I see Jeremiah standing before those kings who laughed at his predictions and with his fellow heroes exclaiming, in triumph, O king, was not my prophecy fulfilled? Is not Babylon cast down? Is not Nineveh become as a heap? Where is Petra, the city of Edom? Where are the houses of Baal and the temples of the gods? Are they not fallen, fallen, fallen, even as I prophesied? How great will be the triumphs of those grand old Prophets when they stand before those who scoffed at and ridiculed themwho then shall be obliged to confess that not one of their words has failed, but that every threat that came from the mouth of God has been fulfilled!   
And I think there will also be great honor put upon the ministers of the Gospel, the men whom God has, Himself, chosen. The men who, by a sacred impulse within their souls, were forced to speaknot the manmade minister, made so by the imposition of the hands of the bishop, or of the presbyterswho shall then be confronted with those who despised their message. Unto such will Jehovah say, in the presence of the men whom He chose to proclaim His Gospel, Inasmuch as you scoffed at the words of these, My servants, you did it unto Me. It would have been better for you that a millstone had been hanged about your neck and that you had been cast into the midst of the sea! Depart, you cursed, into everlasting fire.

And every member of Christs Church shall receive honor in that day. I am sometimes doubtful whether the sins of the elect will be read out before the world, but, if so, I am certain it will not be for the purpose of casting upon them any reproach, but only to make the judgment an impartial one. But of this I am sure, that their righteous acts will be proclaimed. This man was called a liar and he shall be proved to be truthful. Another was styled a hypocrite, but it shall be found that he was perfectly sincere and his false accusers shall be confounded. The biographies of the saints, written with the pen of God, shall be read out from the lips of the Eternal, that the universe may confer honor upon them! And, wicked men, whatever you have done in darkness, shall be declared in the light! Your midnight sins shall be exposed before the sun. Your most private acts shall be exhibited to the gaze of the entire universe and all your petty acts of cheating and fraud shall be read out to the world so that men and angels shall hear! And while you are dishonored, the righteous shall be honored, even from your lips. They shall be honored by words that shall be forced from you in that day, when God shall make His people stand forth clear as the sun, fair as the moon and terrible as an army with banners!   
Again, the saints shall be honored even from the devil himself. Do you not know that the saints are to judge the world? Nor are they to judge only men, for the great foe of God and man, Satan, himself, shall lift his brazen front, scarred with thunder, and receive his final sentence and begin his Hell anew! I think I hear God asking His saints, Will you ratify the sentence that I have pronounced upon Satan? I hear one loud, Amen! proceed from the entire host of the redeemed and I, for one, will say, Amen, with all the voice I have, in favor of his condemnation! Full often have I fought with him and sometimes he has seemed as if about to triumph over me. And hurling his fiery darts, he has cried, Now I will make a full end of you. But again and again have I been able to return to the attack and to exclaim, Rejoice not against me, O my enemy! When I fall, I shall rise! And soon he has been once more put to flight.   
And I believe, in that Last Great Day, the Lord will allow His saints to put their feet upon the neck of this Agag and I think I see the feeblest saintLittle-Faith himselfputting his foot upon the neck of the devil. And I know that if I may but once get my foot upon him, he shall not receive a heartier crush from anyone than he shall receive from me! I owe him no thanks, I can assure you. Full often has he cast me down, but, then, I will tread upon himthat will be a day of triumph, indeed, when the old dragon shall be laid prostrate, to be assaulted by every child of God, and to be the scoff and jeer of the universe! And thus *The weakest saint shall win the day,   
Though death and Hell obstruct the way!*

So the saints shall be honored by the wicked and even by the old serpent himself. But angels, also, will mention your names in their songs. Angels are the poets of Heaven and do you think that the heroes of earth shall have their praise sung in this world and that your deeds will not be sung in Glory? In the battle odes of the angels, there are names more celebrated than Alexander, or Hannibal, or Napoleon, and songs more melodious and seraphic than were uttered in honor of the battlefields of Blenheim and Waterloo! No praise shall be so great as that which angels shall give to the saints, except that which they ascribe to the Savior!

The Church of Christ shall be honored then. Many a time has she had to sit as an outcast amid the ruins of the Temple, with locks broken and tears trickling down her cheeks, enduring the disdain of the world. With the voice of lamentation, we have heard her cry, My Lord is gone, and we have seen her tear her garments in grief and woe. But the heart of the Church is still true to her Lord, whom, seeing not, she loves and, at times, notwithstanding her desolation, she is the possessor of unspeakable joy and full of glory! As the proud ones of the earth pass her by, they call her hypocrite and laugh at her pretensions to be the Bride of King Jesus, saying, Her Husband has cast her off and will not acknowledge her! Is she not a despised woman? Thus the poor Church sits and exclaims, Behold, and see if there are any sorrow like unto my sorrow. But, in due time comes the Day of Judgment! Jesus steps from His Throne and, like Ahasuerus of old, stretches out the scepter and says, My queen, my spouse, touch this emblem of mercy and live. Leading her up the steps of His high Throne, He places her beside Him and shows her to the assembled universe as the Bride, the Lambs Wife. Then he will take the crown of universal sovereignty and will place it upon His own head, none other being worthy of the honor, while another regal diadem shall be placed by Him on the head of His elect Queen. Then, turning to the Church, He will say, I have loved you with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn you. Her mourning shall then be turned into singing and she shall be clothed with the garments of praiseinstead of the spirit of heavinesswhile all her enemies shall be covered with confusion of face and be ashamed.

IV. Lastly, GOD WILL HONOR THE RIGHTEOUS THROUGHOUT ETERNITY.   
The honors of the godly are not fleeting thingsnot the gewgaws of an hour that shall pass away. Last Thursday, when I was at Windsor Castle, I saw a man who was painting up the escutcheon of the last new-made knight, to be added to a long series of similar emblems which had their places in the hall. I said to him, Are the escutcheons of all the knights here? And I think he replied that they could be traced back to the very origin of the order. I thought to myself, A fine honor this, to have conferred upon one a few stripes and stars, representations of rampant lions, beasts, tigers with two heads and such like! Wonderfully glorious these things make a man, to be sure! A little paint can make it all, and the painters brush can erase it! Yet there are men who will face death upon the battlefield to be thus honored, or to have their image cut in stone and placed upon a pedestal for men to gaze at! Wonderful glory is it not for a man to die for? It is such an honor, I imagine, as very few of us would care for, for this sort of glory will pass away.  
But the honor which the Christian shall receive will never fade! When a million years shall have elapsed, it shall be as fresh as ever, for Christs promise shall always stand, If anyone serve Me, him My Father will honor. Christian, the hour of your honor is coming, when your name shall be pronounced by the great Judge and Arbiter of all, and you shall be acknowledged by Him as one among the followers of the Lamb! You shall receive more enduring honors than the men of this world can bestow! You may not receive the reward of an earthly coronet, but you shall be a priest and a king unto God, and shall reign with Christ forever and ever! Blush not, Christian, to look the whole world in the face, for in Gods sight you are a king! Walk, therefore, with humility before God, and wait patiently till the Master shall remove you to your kingdom there you shall be clothed with glory and become the possessor of everything which the heart can wishhonor, wealth, happiness, dignity and unspeakable joy shall be yours, and that forever. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.   
Now, what shall I say, in conclusion, to those who do not serve God? Well, I have but little to say to you tonight. I have often found that when preaching on these subjects, I have said little to sinners. God has said a great deal more to them than I have, for all that has been spoken respecting the bliss of the righteous has set them wishing it were their lot! It is not infrequently the case that sermons which seem to be more especially adapted to comfort saints, prove especially powerful to the conversion of sinners because they have been led to say to themselves, All these promises are not intended for us. Let me ask you, then, my Brother and my Sister, if this is the case at present with youwhen will you appropriate these things to yourself? I have told you that the righteous shall be honored. Now, what were the righteous more than you are? You are ungodly, but the righteous would have continued the same had not Divine Grace interposed and made them new creatures in Christ Jesus. You are a great sinner, but such were some of us. Whatever may have been the form of your iniquity, there are those now among the family of God who were as bad as yourselves.  
I will ask you a question. Can you find, anywhere in the Bible, the declaration that you cannot be saved? Is it anywhere stated that it is possible for the man who comes to Jesus Christ to be lost? If you find that, then you may despair, but till then, you need never do so. But perhaps you say, I know not how to come to Christ aright. I will tell you coming to Christ at all is coming aright, for He has said, Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out. It matters not whether a man comes running, limping, or creepingso long as he gets to Christ, he has come the right way! You must not say, I am too bad to be saved. That, in the hymn we sang just now, we are taught that nothing so much grieves the heart of Jesus   
*As that unkind, injurious thought   
That Hes unwilling to forgive.*

I do think, poor Sinner, He would forgive you anything sooner than this wicked unbelief! If Christ were once more upon this earth and could suffer again in the flesh as He did 1,800 years ago, I believe that you might spit upon Him, buffet Him, and crucify Him again, and yet not see a single frown upon His face. But when you stand up and say, I do not believe that Christ has love enough to forgive me. I do not think He is willing to pardon my sins. I see the heart of the blessed Lord almost broken by such cruel words! What? Poor Sinner, Christ might well exclaim, have I not love enough to remove your guilt when I purchased you with My blood? Look at My hands and My feet and see the wounds which were inflicted for you. I think I see Him looking you in the face and saying, in words of the utmost tenderness and compassion, Poor Soul, speak not so, nothing grieves My heart like thatnot to be trusted by one I love is the most harrowing thing I can experience. I could almost as soon drink some drops of the cup of bitterness which I tasted in the Garden, as to hear you say that I cannot forgive you. I

can, I WILL, I DO! This very hour I say unto you, I, even I, am He that blots out your transgressions for My own sake! Remember that, Sinnernot for your sake, not to glorify you, but to honor Jesus Christand will not remember your sins. Take heart, therefore, poor Soul! If you will go to Him, there is Grace for you, and you shall be saved.

But know, you Pharisees, that He came not to call the righteous! Sinners, only, Jesus came to save!   
And now, saints of God, let me urge you to despise the scorn and the contempt of men. Think of the glories you shall soon inherit and the honors that your soul and body shall receive at the Judgment Day. By filling our minds with thoughts of the glories of Heaven, the Word of God, the blessings that are eternal and full of glory, the love of Jesus and the mercies of Jehovah, we shall be graciously strengthened and enabled to conquer in the fight and keep the road to Heaven. In the strength of the Lord we cry, Nil desperandum! We still believe that Christ is our Shield, and Christ our Sun, and doubt not that we shall hear it said at the last, Well done, good and faithful servant, enter you into the joy of your Lord.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 15:9-27.**

This chapter contains some of the choicest of the utterances of the Lord Jesus to His disciples. On His way from the upper room in Jerusalem, where He had instituted the Supper, to the Garden of Gethsemane, where He was about to be betrayed, He spoke these wondrous words of cheer and counsel. He had been speaking to His followers concerning fruit-bearing. Now He turns to another subject.

Verse 9. As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you: continue in My love. Oh, what love for Christs disciples to continue ina love which finds no parallel except the love of the Father to His well-beloved Son! A love, therefore, without beginning, without end, without measure, without limit, without change! Oh, to be fully possessed by this love! I will read this verse again. It is such s sweet silver bell that we cannot hear it ring too often. As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you: continue you in My love. That is, live in it, abide in it, make it your home and your continual dwelling place.

10. If you keep My commandments, you shall abide in My love. Obedience will enable you to live in this love as the fish live in the sea. You shall always enjoy it if, by Grace, you are enabled always to be obedient to your Lords commands.

10-12. Even as I have kept My Fathers commandments, and abide in His love. These things have I spoken onto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. This is My commandment, That you love one another, as I have loved you. Oh, you who profess to be the disciples of Christ, take heed to this new commandment which He has given and do not violate it! Let your very nature be love. Let your very spirit be love and then let your whole life be transmuted into the pure gold of love!

13, 14. Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. You are My friend if you do whatever I command you. Obedience to Christs commands leads us into the banqueting house of friendship. We never understand how friendly Christ is to us, nor do we become His familiar companions until we are obedient to Him.

15. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knows not what his lord does. Things that he is told to do are not explained to him. It is enough for him to obey the orders that are given to him by his master.

15. But I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you. Christ has told all to His own chosen ones. There are no secrets which we would keep from Him, or which He keeps from us. Oh, what hallowed communion! This blessed result comes of obedience to our Lord. May God enable us to enjoy it richly!

16. You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatever you shall ask of the Father in My name He may give it to you. Gods servants are all ordained. I sometimes hear remarks which remind me that there still lingers among as the superstition about ordained ministers. There is no ordination of a minister except the descent of the Spirit of God upon him, and the choice of the Church which calls him to his special sphere of work. All the saints are partakers of the Divine Ordinationthey are all ordained to minister before the Lord. I have chosen you and ordained you. For what purpose? That you should go and bring forth fruit. Oh, that we may prove the reality of our ordination to this blessed work by bringing forth fruitfruit that shall remain!

17-27. These things I command you, that you love one another. If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own: but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the words that I said to you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept My sayings, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for My names sake, because they know not Him that sent Me. If I had not come and spoken onto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin. He that hates Me hates My Father also. If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now they have both seen and hated both Me and My Father. But this came to pass that the Word might be fulfilled that is written in their Law, They hated Me without a cause. But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceeds from the Father, He shall testify of Me, and you also shall bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning.

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PRECEPTS AND PROMISES   
NO. 2874

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, MARCH 10, 1904.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 13, 1876.

**If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there shall also My servant be: if anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor. John 12:26.**

I HAVE already said, in expounding the chapter from which my text is taken, that the sight of these Greeks who desired to see Jesus seems to have very greatly affected our Saviors mind. [See Exposition at end of sermon.] He had not had much to do with Gentiles, for, as far as His personal ministry upon the earth was concerned, He was not sent to the Gentiles, but only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. But now He sees, in those enquiring Greeks, the advance guard of that mighty host of Gentiles who, for these 1,800 years and more, have continued to seek Him out and to call Him their Leader, Friend and Savior! The thought of this great result of His lifes work naturally led Him to also think of the Cross from which that result would spring. These are the redeemed, He seemed to say to Himself, then it is time for Me to think of the Redemption which I have yet to present on their behalf. These are the first fruits of My great harvest. Then I must see to the sowing of the Seed and I must set my mind steadfastly to think of that sowing, for unless the grain of wheat is cast into the ground, and die, it abides alone. So He began to feel the throes of desire for that Baptism wherewith He was to be baptized, for the joy that was set before Him was, just then, clearer than usualthe joy of winning souls and, especially, the joy of winning Gentile nations unto God and, therefore, His mind fixed itself more than ever upon the plan by which His peoples redemption was to be achieved. Hence, I think, arose the words to which I called your attention while we were reading the chapter.

The sight of these Greeks also led the Savior to feel that He must again explain the conditions upon which He could receive disciples. There have been religious teachers who have been content to gather followers through falsehood or error. They have never properly explained what allegiance to them meant, or they have caught men by craft and guile. Our Lord Jesus Christ never did that. He said to any who proposed to follow Him, Have you counted the cost? He bade them not to begin to build their house if they were not able to finish it, nor to commence a warfare in which they could not reasonably expect victory. It seemed, sometimes, to be rather repelling men, than attracting them, to say to would-be disciples, If you will follow Me, do this and do thatperhaps some very trying ordealyet that was the Saviors usual habit. So, now, lest these Greeks should say that they would become His disciples without knowing what discipleship involved, He said to them, I, Myself, will have to die in order that I may produce others like Myself, and you, if you become My disciples, will have to follow Me in this respect as well as in all other things. You will have to deny yourselves and to undergo selfsacrifice, for, otherwise, if you will not do this, it is no use for you to pretend to be My servants, for My servants you cannot be. If any man would serve Me, He must follow Me. It was the coming of these Greeks to Christ which led to the utterance of these wordsand that incident, in a measure, explains them. Now may the Spirit of God impress the Saviors words upon your hearts as I try to speak to you about them!

Our text is divided into three sentences. The first is a sentence of preceptIf anyone serves Me, let him follow Me. The second is a sentence of precept and promise, for, to this day, no scholar can tell whether it ought to be rendered, Where I am, there

let My servant be, or, Where I am, there shall also My servant be. Either may be a correct interpretation of the original and, therefore, I take it in both senses as a sentence of precept and promise. Then the third is a sentence of pure promiseIf anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.

I. First, then, we have A SENTENCE OF PRECEPT. If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me.   
The Greek term used here might be translated, If anyone will become a deacondo a deacons work, be My minister, My servant and wait upon Methen let him follow Me. By which is intended, first, that, if you become Christs servant, you must obey Him. This does not seem to occur to many professing Christians. They say they are Christians and, therefore, Christs servantsyet they dare to sit in judgment upon Him and upon His precepts! They are a law unto themselvesthey obey this precept because they like it and they disobey that other precept because they do not like it! They call Him Master and Lord, but He is not really their Master and Lord, for they do not obey Him. Paul rightly says, To whom you yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants you are to whom you obey. But if you simply take the name of Christ upon you and call yourself His servant, yet do not obey Him, but follow your own whim, or your own hereditary prejudice, or the custom of some erroneous churchyou are no servant of Christ. If you really are a servant of Christ, your first duty is to obey Him.   
In the Church of Christ, He is the only Legislator. Not all the bishops and clergy, nor the whole Church, if it could be summoned in one solemn conclave, could pass an ordinance that would have even the slightest force upon a Christians conscience if it were contrary to the teachings of Christ, Himself! There is but one Head of the Churchone spiritual Rabbi and Infallible Teacherand that is the Lord Jesus Christ, Himself, and we are to understand, when we enter His Church and enlist under His banner, that we are to serve Him, and Him alone! We may serve others, as far as they are commissioned by Him, and as far as what they say is in harmony with His teaching, but no farther, for, One is your Master, even Christ, and all you are brethren. Did you understand that, young Man, when you became a Christian? Did you understand that, my Sister, when you professed to be a follower of Christ? I am afraid some professing Christians did not.   
I bless God that this was one of the things which I learned when I first trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as my Savior. I felt, Now I am going to be Christs disciple, through His Grace, and I am going to do, as far as the Holy Spirit will help me, everything that I believe He commands me to do. I turned to the New Testament and read it for myself. I did not enquire of this teacher or that, but said to myself, What does Jesus say? I will find out what He has revealed as His will concerning me. This way of acting gives a man independence of mind towards his fellow men and, at the same time, humble yet firm confidence in what he does in the sight of God. When he knows that he has submitted himself to the teaching of Christ and that he would not knowingly hold anything that Christ would not endorse, and would not willingly, either himself learn, or impart to others anything that Jesus Christ does not teach, it gives him a firm footing in the things of God.   
Christian men and women, do you stand thus firmly? You know that many of you do not. You have another book, besides the Bible, which is your guide. The Bible alone is not the religion of many professing Christians. It is to some, but there are many who have another book to which they bow with almost equal reverenceand courts of law have to decide as to the shape of this garment or the other, or whether they shall turn their noses to the East or to the West, for they cannot do anything without calling in lawyers and judges! Yet God knows the Bible alone is quite enough. And if we did but follow its guidance, it would lead us rightly enough. I call you back, Christian men and women, to your allegiance to Gods Holy Word! You owe none to any book except the one that He has givenand you are to regard no teaching but the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ and that which comes to you upon His sole authority. In this respect, He says to you, If anyone serves Me, let Him follow Me that is, by obedience to His commands.   
The next teaching of the text is this. If any man serves Christ, his service will be most like his Lords when he does, as nearly as he can, what Christ did. He is your Master, but He is also your Exemplar. Suppose that you say to Him, Blessed Lord Jesus, I am willing to obey You, but what is Your Law? He replies, I am My own Law. Imitate Me. Follow Me. If you want to obey Jesus instead of merely keeping the Law written upon stones, you can see the Law written out in His life   
*My dear Redeemer and my Lord,   
I read my duty in Your Word,   
But in Your life the Law appears   
Drawn out in living characters.*   
If you would obey Christ and so serve Him, be like He, for the sum and substance of His teaching is, Follow Me. Watch, then, His every footstep, and ask for Grace to put your foot down where He put His. Whatever you see to be His temper under any circumstances, cultivate that temper when you are in similar circumstances. If you want to know what you should do at any special time, think what He would have done if He had been in your place, for what He would have done is what you should do. And if you know that any course that you are pursuing would not have been pursued by Christ and would not have been according to His mind, do not follow it any longer. If it is not in harmony with Christs life, it is not the way for you to walk. If it is not that which you would have done if Christ stood by you and looked at you with His tender but piercing eyes of everlasting loveif it is not what you would have done in His immediate Presence, do not do it, for it is clearly not what you ought to do. You are His servant, so you are to obey Him and, in order to obey Him, you are to imitate Him.   
I must, however, warn you, dear Friends, that if you do thisand you must if you mean to be His faithful follower, for this is the only way of being Christs servant, indeed and of a truththis following of Christ will bring you into very much the same condition as that in which your Lord was, that is, you will become a marked man! In the midst of the company that you frequent, you will be a speckled bird! You will not need to adopt any different mode of dress, for Jesus did not. He wore the common garb of the country and dressed just like any other man of His class. He affected no singularity in meat, or drink, or language, but He was singular, essentially, because the greatest singularity under Heaven is holiness. If you will just do the right and be the right before God, men will soon find you outand you will first become the subject of their observationbyand-by, of their reproachperhaps, also, of persecution. But, whatever the consequences are, this is what you have to do. Hear what your Lord saysIf anyone serves Me, let him follow Me.   
But, Lord, You had to go outside the camp. Then follow Me there. But, Lord, You had to endure the Cross. And he who would be My disciple must take up his cross daily and come and follow Me. You cannot be Christs servant if you are not willing to follow Him, cross and all! What do you crave? A crown? Then it must be a crown of thorns if you are to be like He!! Do you want to be lifted up? So you shall, but it will be upon a cross! In following Christ, you must be prepared to suffer persecution, loss and, if necessary, even death itself! Will you have Christ as your Lord and Master on these terms? If not, you cannot have Him at all! He does not want, as His followers, cowards who will sneak away from Him as soon as the first shot in the battle is fired. He does not want another Judas who will sell Him for the price of a slave. He wants truehearted men who are determined, out of love to His glorious Character, and devotion to His Divine mission, that they will follow Him because they desire to serve Him.   
Our Lord would also have us understand that if we mean to be His servants, we must follow Him even to the extent of being put into the ground to diethat is, self-sacrifice, self-abnegation and even selfannihilation. Our Lord Jesus Christ is at His best when He makes Himself of no reputation. I do not know any time when Christ seems so glorious as when He lays aside all His Glory and takes upon Himself all our shame. So, Brothers and Sisters, if you would follow Christ, you are not to bargain to be honored. On the contrary, you are to commence to strip off from yourself the garments of honor. You are not to bargain for ease, but are to put on the harness of a warrior who will get but little rest and who must constantly be on the watch. You are not to stipulate for this indulgence or that. What indulgence had your Lord? He had not where to lay His head! His life was spent amidst poverty and hardship! He kept nothing back from the sons of menHe emptied Himself that we might be filled.  
There was not a grain of self-seeking in Him. He saved othersHimself He could not save. Oh, that we had even a few Christians who were like their Master in this respect! Few are there, in these evil days, who seem willing to sacrifice all for Christs sake. The brave Covenanters could give up house, home and everythingand die for King Jesus on Scotlands bleak mountains. But we, in these easier times, are content to make money, as other people doto live in ease and luxury, as other people doto contribute our cheese-parings and our candle-ends to the cause of Christ and to think that we have done a great deal if we have done even as much as that! But where is the self-sacrifice? Where is the burying of ones self in the ground to die, like a grain of wheat? Where is the wishthe willingnessto lose reputation, to sever friendships, to sacrifice respect, to endure hardness so that we may be true to our conscience, faithful to our Lord Jesus Christ? May the Lord soon raise up among us more men and women of noble principle who will count God, and Christ, and truth, and eternity to be worth living forand worth dying forand who will count all things else but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord!

I will leave that first sentence of my text when I have made one more observation upon it. Perhaps somebody says, I want to serve Christ and I am willing to make some self-denial for His sake. I have been thinking about saving my money and building a church or a chapel. Possibly another friend says, I want to serve Christ, so I should like to give a painted window in His honor. Yes, but Christ Himself says to you, If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me. The very best way of serving Christ is to do just what Christ was accustomed to do, as far as that is possible to you. This is a very blessed text for a poor man, for a sick man, for an illiterate manin fact, for every man who really wants to serve Christ. If I want to serve Christ, what have I to do? To follow Him. If I am very ill, how am I to follow Him? Why, by bearing the affliction as patiently as He would have borne it! If I am very poor, how am I to follow Him? Why, by trusting in God, as He did! Suppose that I am very much maligned and slandered, what am I to do? I am to try to bear it as meekly as He would have borne it! You can accomplish a great deal, in that way, if you really try to do it. You nursery maids and you other servants who have to work hard to earn your daily breadand you boys and girls, who are still at schoolthere is something that you can be, or do, or suffer by which you may prove your love to Christand that something is the best way in which you can follow Him.   
It is sometimes the case that a person says, I want to serve Christ, so I shall go into a nunnery, or into a monastery. Now, let me just ask this questionDid our Lord Jesus Christ ever act like that? He said, If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me. Can you imagine Christ shutting Himself up in a monastery? What? The great battle of the ages to be fought and the Captain of our salvation concealing Himself and so setting us an example of how to be cowardly? You know He did not do that! So fight it out, man, even as He did, and do not go sneaking away and hiding yourself under the pretence of so serving the Lord Jesus Christ! That is sheer selfishnessthere is a far better course than that for you to take! Give yourself up wholly to Jesus and do as Jesus would have done if He had been in your place, for so you will serve Him in the best possible fashion.   
II. Now I turn to the second clause of my text which seems to me to be both A PRECEPT AND A PROMISE.   
First, read it as a preceptWhere I am, there let My servant be. Wherever Jesus was and is, there you are to be if you are really His servant. In His relationship to God, how did Jesus stand? Well, He was wholehearted in His consecrationbe you likewise. He began His public life by being baptized in Jordan, saying to John, Thus it becomes us to fulfill all righteousness. If you are really His servantyou act in the same way. He came out into the midst of mankind to bear witness for Gods Truth and He kept on bearing that witness. And He was content to be found in His place, as the faithful Witness, when the time came for Him to seal His testimony with His blood. Be you a witness-bearer for Him, whatever that witness bearing may cost you

*Cold mountains and the midnight air*

*Witnessed the fervor of His prayer*   
so let midnight witness the fervor of your prayer, too. The attitude of Jesus towards God is shown by His saying in the Garden of Gethsemane, Not as I will, but as You will. Servant of Christ, be you also found in the same attitudebow before the Lord in the spirit of resignation to His holy will even though it should bring the death-sweat to your brow! Whatever it involves, mind that you say to God, Your will be done. Wherever you see the Lord Jesus Christ in His relationship towards Godwith the one exception of His substitutionary Sacrifice for sinners, in which you cannot follow Himin everything else, if you would really serve Him, follow

Him! Where the Master is, there let His servant be.

Then, next, what was Christs position with regard to men? He was in the midst of them and in all His relationships He was always the example of what His servants should be. As a child, He was subject to His parents. Godly children, that is what Christ would have you, also, to be. As a child, He grew in the knowledge and understanding of the Word, and in favor with God and with men. So seek, dear young people, to be always making progress in the Divine Life and to be growing up, as Christ did, well-pleasing unto God. When He had reached maturity, what was His attitude towards men? Why, He was the Lover of men! He was seldom angry with them, but often bearing their reproach. He was never selfish, but always ignoring Himself and living entirely for others. Someone has called Him the great Philanthropist. I hardly like such a title for Him, for He rises far above all ordinary philanthropyyet is it true that no one else ever loved men as He loved them and no one else ever made such sacrifices for them. Be you like Jesus in this respect, also, and wherever you see His footprint, seek to set your feet there.

Wherever there was a battle to be fought for truth and right, Christ was always to the front. And wherever there was reproach to be borne for Gods sake, Christ was ready to bear it. The Pharisees could not silence Him, the Herodians could not make Him seek His escape. He was ready for every emergency that arose. Did God want a Witness? There was Christ. Did man need a Teacher? There was Christ. Were men sick? He was their Physician. Were they hungry? He was their Provider. Were His disciples liable to sink in a storm? He walked on the waters and rescued the frightened men. He was always giving Himself to the service of men and, Beloved, wherever your Master was in relation to men, there should you be. If you can conceive of a place where Christ would not godo not go there. If you know of any company where Christ would not be found, do not be found there. But if you know of a place where Christ would go, there you also can go with safety, for it is your business to be where your Master would have been if He had been in your placeand never to be where your Master would not have gone!

We have thus looked at this sentence as a precept. Now let us regard it as a promiseWhere I am, there shall also My servant be. This is a very blessed promise. I do not recollect one that has more sweetness in it to my heart. We expect, Brothers and Sistersunless Christ shall speedily comewe expect to die. When we fall asleep in Jesus, we shall be carried to the grave, even as Jesus was. We shall be in good company! It is, to my mind, a beautiful thought that when our Lord rose from the dead, He took off the grave clothes and left them in His sepulcher. And He unwound the napkin that was about His head and laid it by itself. So the grave is not an empty tenement without furniture. Christ has left the linen in which He slept to wrap His followers inand He has put the napkin by itself for those who are left behind to wipe their eyes with. We rightly sing, with good Dr. Watts

*The graves of all His saints He blessed,   
And softened every bed   
Where should the dying members rest,   
But with the dying Head?*

Where will our spirits be when we have left the body behind? We do not know much about the unseen world, but we are content with what Richard Baxter sings

*My knowledge of that life is small,   
The eye of faith is dim,   
But tis enough that Christ knows all,   
And I shall be with Him.*

Our Saviors words are certainly true, Where I am, there shall also My servant be. Some people are anxious to know more concerning the condition of the redeemed between death and the Resurrection, but, my dear Brothers and Sisters, I am satisfied to know that I shall be with Jesus where He is! I feel like the little child who had been a long while away from its mother and who was told that it should soon go home to her. That was all the child wanted, to be in mothers bosomand all I want is to be with Jesus. This He has promised us and this is our comfort, Where I am, there shall also My servant be. As soon as ever we fall asleep in Him, absent from the body, we are present with the Lord!

What about the Resurrection? Well, Jesus rose and so, in due time, our bodies shall also rise. These very bodies of oursfor Christ has redeemed not a part of our manhood, but the whole of itand these bodies of ours are the temple of the Holy Spiritthey shall rise again and in our flesh we shall see God. And so shall we be forever with the Lord.

But what is Heaven, Brothers and Sisters, and what will eternal Glory be? Although eye has not seen, nor has ear heard, nor heart of man conceived what God has prepared for them that love Him, He has revealed it unto us by His Spirit, at least, in part. But it is enough for us to know that we shall be with Jesus, where He isthat we may behold His Glory. It is wonderful what new discoveries are constantly being made. Many books have come out, lately, filled with what I believe to be nothing but rubbish, but, for my part, I do not care about where I am going to be in the millennium or afterwards, for I know that I shall be with my Lord and I want nothing else. I do not stipulate for a golden harp, or a place by the sea of glass. I do not ask, even, to be among the angels. I am quite content with my Lords promise, Where I am, there shall also My servant be. My Lord and I shall fare alike and it will do for me if it will do for Him! Are you not of the same mind, Beloved, and is not this all you wish to know about the futurethat you shall be with Him, where He is, and behold His Glory?

III. Now, thirdly, we have A SENTENCE WHICH IS ALTOGETHER A PROMISEIf anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.   
Brothers and Sisters, if you serve Christ in the way I have feebly tried to describe, that is, by an out-and-out consecration of yourself to Him and to His service, you will not get much honor among men. You know what many want, at the present day, in a minister. He must have no principles at all, or, if he has any, he must keep them to himself and never say anything about them. Above all, he must be perfectly neutral and never say a word against any error. Do you not know that it is uncharitable to attack what others believe? Preach always what everybody would like you to preach. If you see anything wrong, put the telescope up to your blind eye, as Nelson didthen you will find all the brethren will praise you because you praise them! Pat them on the back and they will pat you on the back! And you will get through the world very smoothly. I know that path and I know how many friends we might have if we would but follow itwriggle in and out and be anything and everything, or nothingjust to suit the tastes of others! Brothers and Sisters, if you believe anything to be true and stick to it, some will call you sectarian and others will be offended with you, but, mark this, if you do not get any praise from men for clinging to the right, you will have an easy conscience! I would sooner have all the demons in Hell enraged against me and all the dogs on earth howling at me, than feel that I had kept back anything I believed to be true!

If we do what our conscience tells us is right. If we serve Christ outright and follow Him fully, God will honor us by setting His seal upon our work. If you preach Christ and not the fancies of men, God will give you souls, make you useful and help you to build up His people. That is the honor which you will receive. Faithfulness will not be without its reward. In due season, you shall reap, if you faint not.   
Then, by-and-by, it will come to pass that even those who censured you as too strict, too punctilious and, perhaps, litigious, will come round to see that you are truthful and right. And, so, God will give you honor in their sight. It is wonderful how even bad men are compelled to honor consistency and uprightness. They may hate it, but they respect it. Whereas if you do not fully follow Christ and do not act as His servants should, God will not honor you, neither will men do so long, for they will find you out and then they will drive you from them in derision.   
The best honor that comes from God will come to His people, by-and-by. I have been thinking over those words, If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor, and I feel that I cannot preach from them at all. What would some people think if the Queen were to honor them? But what is that compared with our Father, who is in Heaven, honoring us? I do not know whether you can conceive what it means. I cannot. God makes His creature love Him, but for Him to honor that creatureto put honor upon himis something so amazing that I am lost in contemplation of it! Yet He will do it. If you faithfully serve Jesus Christ on earth, God will bid the angels make way for you in Heaven. While you live here, they will be your servants and when you ascend to Heaven, you shall have a place nearer to the Eternal Throne than even they have. And then, in the presence of all the holy angels, God will do you honor and your spirit shall be known among them as one that God loves. What shall be done unto the man whom the king delights to honor? was the question asked of old, but I put another question, What shall be done unto the man whom the eternal God, the Creator, the Possessor of Heaven and earth, delights to honor? Do you aspire to that honor? Are you ambitious to share it? Then you have only to do thisserve Christ faithfully, follow Christ fully.   
Some of you cannot do thisyou who are not renewed in heart and life. I might as well urge the dead to dance as bid you attempt this, for you cannot do it. You must believe in Jesus! You must be born again and receive the new life. But, oh, you who have believed in Him, remember that this is your road to honorwillingness to be dishonored, willingness to be counted as the mud in the street for Christs sake and for His Truths sake! Then let this be your strong resolution that come what may, Christs life shall be your ruleChrists Word shall be your marching orders and whether you have to die a martyrs death, or notto Him who loved you and bought you with His blood, you consecrate yourself entirely, henceforth and forever!   
May God raise up many who will feel the power of these words! If we only get a few of such men who will follow the Lord fully, happy will be the churches to which they belong, blessed will be the age in which they live, highly privileged will be the land in which they dwellfor such men are Gods heroes! These are the soldiers who will stand firm in the day of battle and who will help to save our country from ever becoming Roman Catholic again! May we have many such men and many such women in every age till Jesus comes, and glory dawns! May this be your happy lot, my dear Brothers and Sisters, for Christs sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 12:20-41.**

Our Lord had raised Lazarus from the dead and this miracle had excited great attention in Jerusalem. In consequence of this, the people had led Him in triumph through the streets, and everywhere there was great excitement. Everybody was speaking of the wonderful miracle which He had worked.

Verses 20, 21. And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast: the same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus. There is no doubt that these men were Gentilesprobably proselytes. They had come up to worship at the feast and their curiosity had been excited and their interest had been awakened by what they had seen and heard about Jesus. There appears to have been at least some measure of reverence for Him in their minds. Hence they addressed one of His disciples, whose purely Greek name may lead us to suppose that he had some Greek relatives. They said to Philip, Sir, we would see Jesus.

22, 23. Philip came and told Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip told Jesus. And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified. They did not expect Him to say that! Surely, the coming of a few Greeks to see Him was not very much in the way of glorification! But, to Him, the coming of these Greeks was a sort of prophecy of the myriads of other Gentiles who would, by-and-by, come to His feet and, therefore, He looked forward to that death which would be the means of their salvation. Christ came into the world to preach the Gospel, but He came on a greater errand than that, namely, to provide a Gospel that could be preachedand He knew that the time was approaching when He must provide that Gospel by dying upon the Cross. See how He proceeds

24. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides alone: but if it dies, it brings forth much fruit. The preservation of the grain is the prevention of its increase, but the putting of it into the ground, the losing of it, the burial of it is the very means of its multiplication. So our Lord Jesus Christ must not care for Himself and He did not. He surrendered Himself to all the ignominy of the death of the Cross. He died and was buried in the heart of the earth but He sprang up again from the grave and, ever since then myriads have come to Him through His death, even as these Greeks came to Him in His life. Now, as it was with Christ, so is it to be with usat least, in our measure.

25. He that loves his life shall lose it; and he that hates his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. His love is ruinous to his true life, but to destroy self-love, to make a sacrifice of ourselves, is the truest way to really preserve ourselves.

26, 27. If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there shall also My servant be: if anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor. Now is My soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father save Me from this hour? But for this came I unto this hour. This seems to be a sort of rehearsal of the dread scene soon to be enacted in Gethsemane. At the sight of these Greeks, our Savior seems to have been led especially to think, as we have already said, of that death by which they and multitudes like they, were to be redeemed. Thinking of it, He enters so fully into it, by a sort of foretaste, that He feels something of the same shiver and throe of anguish which came upon Him in Gethsemane. He seems to say here, Father, save Me from this hour, just as He said there, If it is possible, let this cup pass from Me. Yet He says here, But for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify Your namejust as He afterwards said in the garden, Nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.

28, 29. Father, glorify Your name. Then came there a voice from Heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again. The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said an angel spoke to Him. This was the third time that that mysterious Voice had been heardfirst, at His Baptism. The second time on the Mount of Transfiguration. And now a few days before He died upon the Cross. The voice of God had been heard on a much earlier occasionat Sinaiand then it was attended with thunder, as it was here. Those who had not ears to understand the voice of God only perceived the loudness of its thunder peals. But there were others, like John, who understood what the Lord saidI have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.

30, 31. Jesus answered and said, This Voice came not because of Me but for your sakes. Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. The old Roman empire seemed to stand as fast as the eternal hills, but God had come to judge the whole state of affairs as it was then in the world and, inasmuch as Christ the pure and perfect Son of God was condemned to die, that action condemned the society of that period! Yes, the whole of the ungodly world, in taking its part in crucifying Christ, bore evidence against itself and pronounced sentence upon itself as being guilty of the death of the Christ of God. Now shall the prince of this world be cast out. The overthrow of the usurper began from that timeand that overthrow of the devil is still going onand, blessed be God, it will reach its completion one of these days and we shall yet rejoice in a new Heaven and a new earth on which the trail of the serpent shall never be traced!

32. And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me.

Christ on the Cross draws all men up to Himself. I have heard this text quoted as if it referred to Christ being extolled in preaching. Well, it is true that when Christ is lifted up in the ministry, there is an attractive powerbut that is not the first meaning of the text. Let us read on.

33. This He said, signifying what death He should die. He alluded to His Crucifixion which is the great attractive center of mankind.   
34-36. The people answered Him, We have heard out of the Law that Christ abides forever: and how can You say, The Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man? Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walks in darkness knows not where he goes. While you have light, believe in the light, that you may be the children of light. It is always well to use the Light of God that we already have. If any man will use the Light he already has, God will be sure to give him more. That is a good saying of an old Puritan, If you have starlight, thank God for it and He will give you moonlight. And when you have moonlight, give thanks to God for it and He will give you sunlight. And so it shall be. Nothing is worse than sinning against the Light of Good. If it is only the light of conscience, even if you know it is not perfect, yet, nevertheless, never sin against it, for, if you do, you will quench it, and to quench the Light you have, is the way to effectually prevent your having any more. While you have light, believe in the light, that you may be the children of light.

36-41. These things spoke Jesus, and departed, and did hide Himself from them. But though He had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on Him: that the saying of Isaiah the Prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke, Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Isaiah said again, He has blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Isaiah, when he saw His Glory, and spoke of Him. There is such a thing as judicial blindness. If men can see and yet will not see, God is at last so provoked by their wickedness that He takes away the Light of God altogether and removes from them the very faculty of sight. It is not surprising that it should be so, for it was so with the generation in which Christ lived. They had so long rejected the true Prophetso long refused to listen to the voice of God, that, at last, He abandoned them to their own waysand nothing worse can happen to a man than to be abandoned of God! If God casts you off, you are lost indeed.

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CHRISTS SERVANT HIS DUTY AND REWARD   
NO. 463

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON SUNDAY MORNING, AUGUST 3, 1862, BY REV. C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**If any man serve Me, let him follow Me. And where I am, there shall also My servant be: if any man serve Me, him will My Father honor. John 12:26.**

How many persons are of the religion of the Greeks who are mentioned in this chapter! They would see Jesus, but they would not serve Him. Impelled by curiosity they would know somewhat of this matter. They would investigate the claims of Christ to the Messiahship, and they would consider the special truths by which He professes to illuminate the world but beyond this they would not venture. They give their minds to criticize. They are not indifferent to the Gospel, but they regard it with the same interest as that with which a naturalist would look upon a newly discovered insect, or a geologist would study a section of the earths crust.

But as to personally feeling the hallowed influence of the Truth of God, they know not what it means. Many of these Greeks proceed much further. They feel an admiration for the character and teaching of Jesus, and they express that admiration in honest, warm praise. But see how hollow is their appreciationthey applaud the Person whom they scorn to obey. They admire teachings which they will not practice. They listen to the Divine Word, but they are hearers only, and not doers of the Truth of God.

Probably there are numbers in this assembly to whom the Christian religion has always been a subject of respectful interest. They have never blasphemed the name of Christ. They have not doubted the inspiration of Scripture. No, they have studied Gods Word. They have given a degree of attention to its doctrines, and they intend yet more fully to examine its revelations. How pleasant and hopeful are such marks of interestbut how far are many of these enquirers from true discipleshipfor their unhumbled hearts are not obedient to the dictates of the Gospel. The Cross is to them too heavy a load to carry. They have not made up their minds to wear Christs yoke. They had rather see His holiness, and see His disciples imitate Him than themselves take up the cross daily and follow Him.

My Hearers, allow me to remind you very solemnly that a speculative religion which has curiosity as its impulse, a search after knowledge as its rule, and self-esteem as its root, can never save the soul. It is not for you to criticize, but to repent. It is not for you to judge but to believe. It is not for you to admire, but to obey. It is not for you to praise and applaud, but cheerfully to bow your necks to imitate and follow Christ. Nothing short of a religion which subjects us to personal service of Christ, which gives us a new heart, and a right spirit, and compels us to feel that we are not our own but bought with a pricenothing short of this will ever give lasting peace of mind, or bring us to the place where we shall see the face of God

with delight.

Many proudly dream that to serve Christ would be dishonorable, and that they would demean themselves by becoming humble followers of the Lamb. Let me remind them that those whose opinions we esteem did not think that. Even a heathen could say, To serve God is to reign. We know that most noble of men, Moses, before the coming of John the Baptist the greatest that had ever been born of womanMoses, the king in Jeshurun, and the leader of Gods hosts, has as his highest titleMoses, the servant of God.

And even our Lord and Master, whose shoe latchet we are not worthy to unloose, took upon Himself the form of a servant, and though He were a Son, yet learned obedience by the things that He suffered. Since the days of our Redeemer, the greatest in the Church of Christ have been the servants of all, and those who have attained to the highest dignities and honors which it is in the power of Christs Church to confer, have been those who joyfully stooped to the most menial occupations. They were willing to be less than the least, and became the greatest of all.

Let us imitate Him who was King of kings, and yet a Servant of servants. Let us follow Him who is girt about the paps with a golden girdle, and wraps the light about Him as a garmentand yet He unrobed Himselfand took a towel, like a servant, that He might wash His disciples feet. The motto of the Prince of Wales is Ich dienI serve. It should be the motto of every prince of the royal blood of Heaven. Let every Christian write this now upon his crestI serve, and, from this day forth, wherever he is, let him not seek lordship. Let him leave that to the Gentiles, and to a carnal world, but let him seek ministry and service, being willing to do anything or to be anything by which he may profit the body of Christ, which is the Church.

We will now endeavor, as the Blessed Spirit shall aid us, to expound His three-fold teaching. You will mark, first of all, plain directions for a very honorable officeIf any man serve Me, let him follow Me. In the second place, most generous stipulations from a noble MasterWhere I am, there shall also My servant be. And thirdly, most glorious rewards for

imperfect services If any man serve Me, him will My Father honor. I. We have here PLAIN DIRECTIONS FOR A VERY HONORABLE OF  
FICE. If any man serve Me, let him follow Me. A golden precept, written  
on a tablet of ivory.   
I speak the sentiments of the majority of those present when I say, we  
would all of us like to minister to Christ. We feel that if He were here now,   
there would be nothing which we would not do for Him. The word used in  
our text three times might very properly be translated thusIf any man  
would act the part of a deacon towards Me, let him follow Me. And where I   
am there shall also My deacon be. And he that acts as a deacon towards   
Me shall be honored of My Father. The word deacon in the original   
Greek means nothing but a servant, and every deacon should be the   
cheerful, laborious and faithful servant of the Church.   
Now, what was the part of a deacon in the early Church? It was service   
to the people of God of all sorts and kinds. Who among us would blush to   
be the deacons of Christ, His body servants, His attendants? Would we  
not wait upon Him? We would be His servants to the very fullest extent. I think we should consider ourselves ennobled for life if we might cast our garments in the way, that He might be saved from a muddy place in the road. Would we not feed Him? There should be such a feast in our house as never was before! We would submit to hunger ourselves, if we might   
but supply His wants.   
And I think if the twelve poor fishermen were with Him, we would not   
shut one of them out, but ask them all home. We ourselves would leave   
our houses and stand in the street all night to let them have rest. For we   
feel that, if the Blessed One were here, it were so high an honor to contribute in any degree to His comfort, or to show in any way our respect for   
Him, that nothing would be too hardnothing impossible for us to perform. Permit me to say, however, that very much of this is mere sentiment. In fact, we do not know ourselves. And, in the case of many here   
present, if Christ were here in the same guise in which He came the first  
time, they would not receive Him, but the reverse.   
Their doors would be shut in His face and, perhaps, they might even   
join in the bloodthirsty cry of, Let Him be crucified! All this talk of generosity and homage to be offered to Jesus, is to a great extent, mere sentimentmere talkand we would do no such thing when it came to the   
practical push. For, mark me, if we really would do these things, we can  
do them now. If it is true that we would minister to Christ, and be servants and deacons towards Him, it is in our power to do so now as much   
as if He were on earth. And, inasmuch as we live in the neglect of this   
duty, we must not delude ourselves into the notion that if such-and-such  
a thing should happen, we should act differently from what we do now. This sentimentalism about entertaining Christ has at the bottom of it   
the idea that we should be honoring ourselves by it. Now this is not the  
spirit that gives a worthy friendship towards Christ. He that loves Christ   
really serves Him, not to be honored by Him, but to give Him honor. We,   
indeed, would gladly receive the Lord into our guest chamber, because   
men would say of usHe entertained the Lord of Glory! He was honored   
with His company! But, oh, if, instead, men would sayYonder fool disgraced himself by harboring the mendicant impostor. He entertained the

man whom we call Beelzebub, I think there are many who now talk so  
well of Christ who would decline the privilege of entertaining Jesus if all   
the world were against Him.   
But, dear Friends, I say again, if any of you would serve Christ, it is   
now in your power, for the directions given are meant for all time, and   
may be carried out today. It seems from my text that to follow Christ, or to  
imitate Him, is really to serve Him. I think we can plainly see this. Oh,   
says one, I should like to do something to prove that I really would obey   
my Lord. I profess to be His servant and I would show that I am not a servant in name, only, but that whatever my Master says to me, that I will   
do. Well, the opportunity is before you todayimitate Christ and then   
prove your obedience. This command may be summed up in thisBe like  
I am.   
If you would know what He would have you do, see what He did Himself. His own life is your Law, written in living characters. No better proof  
can you give that you are not a lip server, but a real disciple than by diligently and scrupulously copying Christ even to the least jot and tittle.   
Oh, says another, I would joyfully assist Him in His wants. I would supply Him with bread. I would give Him the cup of cold water to drink. I would not let Him say again, The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests but the Son of Man has not where to lay His head. I would   
never let Him want.   
Imitate Him, then, and you can do it, for what did He do but distribute   
of his substance to the poor? Did He not care for the wants of all men? Is  
it not written of Him, He went about doing good? If you would supply  
His wants, behold Him in His poor saints. If you would feed Him, feed the   
mouths of His hungry children. If you would clothe Him, clothe the backs   
of His naked ones. If you would succor Him, relieve the poor, the widow,  
and the fatherlessand those that have no helper. Imitate Him in the   
generousness of His lifecare for the wants of men. Follow Him in this,   
and you will have served Him in supplying His wants

*Lord, You have Brethren here below,   
Flesh of Your flesh through Grace.   
Teach us to see You in your saints,   
Your sorrows in their face.   
In them You may be clothed and fed,   
And visited and cheered   
And in their accents of distress   
My Saviors voice is heard.   
Your face, with reverence and with love,   
We in Your poor would see!   
O let us rather beg our bread   
Than keep it back from You.*

But, says another, I would do something to cheer Him. I think if He were here I would endeavor to smooth a few of the furrows from His marred brow. I would labor to make the heart of the Man of Sorrows rejoice in some measure, and be glad in some degree. I would lay down my life to give Him peace who is my souls peace and rest. You can do it. You can do it. If you would serve Him thus, and cheer His heart, follow Him. This is the solace of His sorrow, the reward of His laborsthe obedience of His children to His commands. This is the spoil which He divides with the mighty. This is the prey which He takes from the strongthat all His saints should be like He is in all righteousness and true holiness.

This is the travail of His soul which He sees and is satisfiedwhen you are conformed to His image and show forth His character among the sons of men. Oh, if you are Christ-like, you have done more to make Christ happy than all the songs of the angels. If men shall say of you, That man has been with Jesus and has learned of Him, you have given Jesus better music than cherubim and seraphim can yield.

Yes, I hear another say, but I would honor Him. If He were here I would climb the trees and strew the branches in His way. How would I gladly run before Him and cry, Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna! Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord! Would you thus serve Him, by honoring Him, and extolling His name? You can do it. Follow Him. Live as He lived. Act as He acted, and you have honored Him more completely than by strewing palm branches or throwing your clothes in the road. For when is Christ most honored? When His saints are most sanctified. When is His name the most esteemed? When the sons of God walk the most carefully, the most prayerfully, and the most closely with their God. You can today serve Christ if you will today humbly take His plain directions, exactly imitate His Example, and closely follow in His steps.

Beloved Friends, I think we have made it clear enough that there is a possibility of serving Christ, of deacon zing towards Christ by the imitation of His Character. Now I quoted the Greek word deacon zing because it was the means, when I was looking into the verse, of giving me an illustration of this subject. You remember that on the first Sunday of last month we had in our midst, the venerable Mar Yohanan, a presbyter of the Nestorian Church at Oroomiah. And with him was a deacon whose name was Mar Isaak. These two men had performed an almost incredible journey.

They had walked the entire distance from the borders of Persiaover the mountains of Armenia and Circassiaacross the steppes of Russia. And from Russia right through Prussia, Germany and Holland, till at last they arrived in London. Now, I could not help but notice how the deacon, the servant, carefully attended in all things to the venerable presbyter whom we saw among us. How he marked his every look that he might not for a moment appear to neglect his reverend leader. Probably on that day when Yohanan the presbyter, first thought of this journey, he addressed Isaak thusIsaak, are you a true servant? Yes, says he, ever since the Church made me deacon I have loved you as my own soul, and I would gladly do anything for your comfort.

Then, says he, If you would serve me, follow me. But must I leave my children and my household? Verily, says the presbyter; it must even be so, for I, also, shall leave behind me my wife and children, and go forth on a long and weary journeymany a hundred miles, to Britain, where there are many who love our Lord, and who may help the persecuted saints in this region. Now came the pinch, and Isaak, if he would serve the presbyter, must follow him. He does not decline the service. When he accepted the office of the deacon, he resolved to really be the servant of the Church and her minister. And he is now ready to undertake the journey with his presbyter.

I think I see them sallying forth. They journey among the Kurds, a savage people always thirsting for the Christians bloodwith more than Mohammedan hatred of Christ. Perhaps Isaak is faint-hearted and would like to turn back. If any man would serve me, let him follow me, says the hoary presbyter, as he strikes his staff upon the ground and advances fearless of the foe. They pass one danger and encounter another. A mountain is in their way lifting its snowy crest even to the sky. The graybearded preacher goes first, and he cries, Isaak, if you would serve me, follow me. And on they go, climbing from crag to crag, along the unfrequented path where scarce the wild goat has found a footing.

Soon they travel through the valley and across the barren, snowy, pathless wilderness, the presbyter saying continually, Brother, if you would deaconize towards me, follow me, for now it is that it shall be proved to the world that you are a true servant of the Church and are willing to follow the presbyter to the worlds end. He did follow him right faithfully, and they reached their journeys end together. Now, this is just what Jesus Christ says to us. We are all His deacons, His servants. We all became engaged, in the day when we gave ourselves to Him, that we would take up our cross and follow Him. And He points today to some high mountain, saying, If you would serve Me, follow Me.

He does not ask you to lead. He Himself has gone before. He calls you to no labor which He has not Himself already accomplished. Oh, can you say in your heart today

*Through floods and flames if Jesus leads, Ill follow where He goes.   
Hinder me not, shall be my cry,   
Though earth and Hell oppose?*

This is true service, the best that can be rendered, to follow where He leads the way, let the way be never so rough or arduous, to persevere to the end, even though the end be a martyrs death.

Come, Brethren, and especially those who are beginners, and have but lately enlisted in Christs causelet me mark you out Christs way, and thenif you would serve Him, follow Him. I know the proud flesh wants to serve Christ by striking out new paths. Proud man has a desire to preach new doctrines, to set up a new Churchto be an original thinker, to judge and considerdo anything but obey. This is not service to Christ. He that would serve Christ must follow Him. He must be content to tread only in the old footsteps and go only where Christ has led the way. It is not for you and me to be originals. We must be humble copies of Christ.

There must be nothing about our religion of our own inventing. It is for us to lay thought, and judgment, and opinion at the feet of Christand do what HE bids ussimply because He gives the command. Look, then, disciples, at your Lord. I think I see the Savioroh, that you would follow Him today! I think I see Him coming. It is His first public entry in the world. And where does He go? It is the beginning of His manifest ministry among men. He is about to show you what should be the beginning of yours.

He goes to Jordan. There stands the Baptist, and the willing crowds are baptized with the Baptism of repentance. As John stands there, lo, the Son of Man Himself appears. And John says, I have need to be baptized of You and come You to me? But our Master, whom if we would serve, we must follow, says, Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becomes us to fulfill all righteousness. He descends into the stream. He is buried beneath the water. And as he comes up from that immersion, the Heaven is opened and the Spirit descends upon Him like a dove.

If you would serve Him, follow Him. Butbutbut! Alas, my Brothers and Sisters, this is not a fitting word for a discipleyou forget your service when you begin to question. If you would serve Him, follow Him. Your business as a servant is not to object, but to obey. Imagine that you ask your servant to fill a bath with water. But You say, I must have it filled. But she questions again, and again, and again, and at last flatly refuses to do more than sprinkle it with a few drops. Do you call her a servant any longer? Methinks no.

So there are some of you who see most clearly that your Master was baptized at the commencement of His public life, and yet you will be raising questions where there is no room for questions. You will neglect a duty which is as plain in Scripture as the very Deity of Christ. You will turn aside from a Baptism which is as plainly taught in express words as even the doctrine of justification by faithyou do not take up your service as you should.

But, it is not essential, you say. Is that a servants business? But what good will it do? Is this a question for a servant? If any man will serve MeChrist does not sayLet him question Me. Let him be asking Me why I command him to do such a thing. No, no! He says, Let him follow Me. But I dread the publicity, I fear the ordinance. It is your proud flesh that fears itsubdue it under your feet and take up your cross, for there are far heavier crosses than this to carry. Thus your Master puts itIf any man will serve Me, let him follow Me.

He now comes from Jordan and the Spirit leads Him into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. You, too, must be tempted. Do not think when you are tempted that, therefore, you are out of Christ. Noif you would be His servant, you must follow Him, and must be tempted, too. You must be assailed in many points. The arrows must fly from above and from beneath. You must be tried on all hands and in all ways. Run not from the conflict, for if any man would serve Christ, he must follow Him through the hottest temptations as well as through the brightest joys.

Now the Master comes forth boldly and begins to preach and teach and labor. If you would serve Him, follow Him! Labor for Him. In some way or other teach His Gospel. If you cannot teach it to the thousands, teach it to the tens. It you cannot converse with multitudes, converse with one at the well, as Christ did at Sychar. If you would be His servant, let His life, written in large letters, be your life. And let your life be the miniature, the condensation of the life of Christ. If any man would serve Me, let him follow Me.

You see the Master bears bold witness before His adversaries. He beards the Pharisee to His face. He upbraids the hypocrites who oppose Him. Follow Him, if you would serve Him. Let there not be a single foe before whose face you would fear His cause to plead. Speak up for His name. Let no blush suffuse your cheeks. Speak His name before kings, nor yield to sinful shame. But see, the Master comes into the black cloud of reproachthey say He has a devil, and is mad. Follow Him there. Now, you servants of God, now is the trying hour. Now follow Him. Be rejected and despised, and hooted at with Him and sing as you go through it all

*If on my face, for Your dear name,   
Shame and reproach shall be,   
Ill hail reproach and welcome shame,   
If Youll remember me.*

Look, He comes to die. If you would serve Him, follow Him. Be ready to be brought before the judgment seat for His name. Be ready to yield your life up at His command, and if the martyr days should ever return, give your blood as freely as you would give water from the well. Or if they come not, spend that blood, and the life it gives them, devoting every hour of every day, and every moment of every hour, to His cause, whose you are, and whom you do profess to serve. No new fashions, no new views and opinionsthe imitation of Christ is the only mode of service, and the Master lays it down before each of you. Ask your consciences whether you have ever really served HimIf any man would serve Me, let him follow Me.

Walk in the way of Christ, it is the Kings highway. I pass the question round these galleries, and this vast areaAre you serving Christ? Well, I subscribe to a charity. Are you serving Christ? I intend to build a row of almshouses. My dear Brothers and Sisters, you may do all this and yet

not be serving Christ, for your Master tells you that to serve Him is to follow Him. Have you followed Him? Have you believed in Him? Is He All in All to you, and do you now make His life the guiding star of your life? And do you desire to be, and are you, as far as is possible to manmade like He in all thingsthat you may be obedient unto His will? God help us that desiring to serve Immanuel, we may do it by following Him!

II. We must come to our second pointGENEROUS STIPULATIONS FROM A NOBLE MASTER. Where I am, there shall also My servant be. Whoever heard of such conditions as these from an ordinary master? The master is in the drawing room, the servant is in the kitchen. The master is in the parlor, the servant is in the workshop. The master sits at the table with his friends, the servant girds himself to wait on them. What, I say, what generous stipulations does the master makeWhere I am, there shall also My servant be!

Well now, to return to the illustration we used beforeWhere I am, there shall also my deacon bestill using old Yohanan and Isaak as your pattern, you will remember that wherever the old presbyter went, there was Isaak at his side. I dare say many a night they slept under the broad shadow of a tree, and where Yohanan was, there the deacon was, too. Were they entertained by generous friends? They shared the same couch. At times they sat around the genial fire, but they sat together. Other times they shivered in the winters coldbut they shivered side by side. Their lot during the long journey was the same. And when they arrived here they sat with us at the same table. We spoke to them as to those who were intimate friends, and I know that throughout the whole of their voyage, where the presbyter was, there the deacon was, also.

Do you not see that this was the rule which Christ carried out all His life? He went to a weddingis it not written, the disciples of Jesus were there? Jesus once rejoiced in spirit over the elect ones, the babes and sucklings to whom God had revealed Himselfyes, but His disciples shared the joy, because Satan fell like lightning from Heavenand even the devils were subject to them. The Master often went to the house of Lazarus. And Martha and Mary made a great feastbut the disciples were always there. Sometimes they went to a Pharisees housea very respectable gentlemanand if Christ had been an ordinary man he might have said, I cannot take those poor fishermen with Me. It will lower My character if they see what rag tags follow at My heels. But no, where He was, there His servants were.

And you know, Beloved, one time He rode in triumph through the streets of Jerusalem. But He did not say to His disciples, Now you had better keep out of the way. This is a day in which I am to be honored, and I think you will rather spoil the pageantry if they see you in your fishermens dress walking with Me. Nowhere He was, there were His servants, also. And when the multitudes cried, Hosanna, and welcomed the Master, the welcome was shared by the disciples. Then there came His last great feast. With desire, said He, have I desired to eat this Passover with youit was with youHe could not enjoy that last supper except with them. Where I am, there shall also My servant be. Share and share alike. Their lot, My lot. My portion, their portion forever.   
Mark, Beloved, if the Lord thus shared His comforts among His disciples, He expected them to share His discomforts. He was in a ship in a great storm, and the disciples must be with Him, though they are sorely afraid. He goes to Gethsemane. He sweats, as it were, great drops of blood. His disciples must be with Him there, even though they cannot bear it, and are asleep. And though in His last passion they could not be with Him, for He must tread the winepress alone, yet, mark you, His disciples were with Him afterwards, for if He were brought before kings, so were they. If He stood falsely accused, so, in after years, did they. If He died upon the Cross a martyr, so did they!

And so, for three hundred years, where Christ was in death, there His Church was, too, for the gibbet and the cross and the stake and the block, and the bloody axe had stern work to do with Christs Church, that it might be fulfilledWhere I am, there shall also My servant be.

Beloved, this stands true to you and me this morning. Where Christ was we must be. The disciple is not above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord. Blessed be His name, He is gone to Heaven, now, and where He is, there shall His servants be, in the same Heaven in His Fathers house. Yes, He has mounted to His Throne, and where He is, there shall His servants be. To Him that overcomes will I give to sit on My Throne, even as I have overcome and have sat down upon My Fathers Throne. He is in the joy of His Father. And where He is, there must His servants be.

We also must be partakers of His joy that His joy may be full. Lo, He comes! The trumpet sounds! Jesus comes! The second advent draws near. But when He comes, all His saints shall come with Him. My God shall come, and all His saints with Him. He reignskings and princes, your scepters are not your own. He comes to take them from your hands and your crowns from your headsJesus comes to reign from pole to pole with illimitable sway. And we shall reign with Him, for, Where I am, there also shall My servant be.

I think you understand, then, that the conditions of the service are thesefare ill or fare wellwe are to have joint stock with Christ. We are to take Him for better or for worse, in shame and in honor, in reproach and in esteem, in riches and in poverty, in life and in death, in time and in eternity. Where I am, there shall also My servant be. I love my Masters conditions! He is a noble Master! Shall I ever blush to go where He goes? God forbid, for if I do, I may be afraid lest at the last He should ignore me and should not permit me to be where He is.

I have heard an old story, somewhat amusing, which will illustrate this point, and then I shall leave it. I have heard that a noted Methodist preacher, who commenced his ministry very early in life, suffered not a little at first because of his humble origin and unpromising exterior. Being sent on the circuit to a certain house on a Saturday night, to be in readiness for preaching on the Sunday, the good woman, who did not like the look of him, sent him round to the kitchen. There was a manservant who served them at odd times, and also worked in the coal mine, or at the forge, who was surprised to see the minister in the kitchen with him when he came from labor.

John, rough as he was, welcomed the despised preacher, and tried to cheer his heart. The minister shared Johns meal of porridge, Johns bed in the cockloft and Johns humble breakfast. He walked to the House of

God with John in the morning. Now, the preacher was a notable man, though then unknown, and he had not long opened his mouth before the congregation perceived that there was something in him, and the good hostess, who had so badly entertained him, began to feel a little uneasy. When the sermon was over there were many invitations for the minister to come visit, and the hostess, fearful of losing her now honored guest, begged him to walk home with her.

To her surprise, he said, I supped with John, I slept with John, I breakfasted with John. I walked here with John, and Ill walk home with John. So when dinner came he was, of course, entreated to come into the chief room, for many friends wished to dine with this young minister, who was so much admired and esteemed. But no, he would dine in the kitchen. He had supped with John, he had breakfasted with John, and he would dine with John. They begged him to come into the parlor and at last he consented on the condition that John should sit at the same table. For, he said, very properly, John was with me in my humiliation, and I will not sit down to dine unless he is with me in my exaltation.

So on he went till the Monday morning, sleeping at night with John, and persevering in the same ruleI supped with John, I slept with John, I breakfasted with John, I walked with John, Ill walk home with John, and Ill dine with John, for John was with me at the beginning and he shall be with me to the end.

Brethren, this story may be turned to account thus: Our Master came into this world once, and they sent Him into the servants place. They sent Him where the poor and despised ones were, and said, Live with them. The manger and the cottage are good enough for You. He lived with poverty and supped with toil. Now the name of Christ is honored, and kings and cardinals, popes and bishops, say, Master, come and dine with us. Yes, the proud emperor and philosopher would have Him sup with them. But still He saysNo, I was with the poor and afflicted when I was on earth, and I will be with them to the end. And when the great feast is made in Heaven, the humble shall sit with Me and the poor and despised who were not ashamed of Me, of them will I not be ashamed when I come in the glory of My Father and all My holy angels with Me.

III. We have, thirdly, A GLORIOUS REWARD FOR IMPERFECT SERVICES. If any man serve Me, him will My Father honor.   
If any man will serve Christ in the way Christ bids him, that is, by following Him. If any man is content not to do as father or grandmother did, but will follow Christ and not man. If any man will break through all customs, all regulations, all rotten proprieties, and just do as Christ did, and imitate Him in all thingsthat man will have honor, first of all, in his own soul. He shall have such blessed peace of conscience, he shall have such sweet fellowship with Christ, he shall have such profound peace from the Fathers right hand, that it shall be very apparent to him that the Father honors him.   
Look at John Knox, who never feared the face of man. He followed Christ as far as his light went, and how greatly the Father honored him with unruffled serenity of heart. What calm that gigantic spirit had! When the world was all in uproar against him, how peacefully he smiled in the face of the roaring of the multitude, for God honored him with an indwelling consciousness of being right before the Lord.   
Then, again, I am persuaded that God will honor such a man by success, by prospering him in his ministry and in whatever he may attempt for Christ. Why is it that so little success rests on some who labor for God? Because they do not serve Christ in the way He would have them serve Himby imitating Him. Ecclesiastical courts, rubrics, rules, forms, liturgies, and such like, confine too many, who if they would snap the fetter, would be honored of the Lord. If there were in connection with this Church anything which I thought to be unscriptural, I could not expect to have Gods blessing in it.   
And I think if any man here is a member of a Church of which he can say, Well, there are many wrong things in it, but I do not think I ought to come out, you cannot expect Gods blessing. He that would serve Christ, must follow Christ in little things as well as in great things. Whenever we say, Well, there are some things wrong in my position but I can do more good where I am, we set ourselves up as masters instead of servants. Our business is conscientiously to follow, as far as our light goes, the example of Christ in every respect, and in all things. And if this should entail the giving up of our present position and usefulness, we must not consider results, but instantly obey imperative commands.   
I claim for my Master immediate, unquestioning, unqualified obedience to all His Words. And I demand of you, in His name, that you renounce everything which prevents your rendering perfect, unhesitating service to His Person and doctrine. Whether as members of a Church, or a community, or in a trade, if you have anything that prevents your following Christ, leave everything and come right outfor you cannot expect great success from God till you have honored Christ by following Him in all things. If you think you know better than Christ, why then I have done with you. If you think that you can lead a better life, or set a better example, you are proud, indeed! Or, if you imagine that in your position you may tolerate yourselves in disobeying His commands, you talk as one of the foolish women talks but not as a disciple of Christ. I say again, if you would be honored of God, you must serve Christ by following Him.   
And lastly, such who thus serve Christ, by following Him, shall have great honor at the last. We will suppose that the Prince of Wales is wrecked on a certain voyage and is cast on shore with only one companion. The prince falls into the hands of barbarians and there is an opportunity for his companion to escape. But he says, No, my Prince, I will stay with you to the last, and if we die, we will die together. The prince is thrown into a dungeon. His companion is in the prison with him, and serves him, and waits upon him. The prince is sickit is a contagious feverhis companion nurses himputs the cooling liquid to his mouth and waits on him with a mothers care.   
He recovers a little. The fond attendant carries the young prince, as he is getting better, into the open air, and tends him as a mother would her child. They are subject to deep povertythey share their last crust together. They are hooted at as they go through the streets, and they are hooted at together. At last, by some turn in Providence, it is discovered where the prince is, and he is brought home. Who is the man that the queen will delight to honor? Make way for this man. He was with my son in prisonhe was with my son when he was near deathhe nursed himhe suffered with himhe was reproached for him. I fancy she would look with greater affection upon the poor servant than upon the greatest statesman. And I think that as long as she lived she would remember him above all the rest, for she would say, He was with my son in all his sorrow and affliction, and I will honor him above all the mighty ones in the land.   
And now dear Brothers and Sisters, if you and I shall be with Christ, the Kings Son. If we shall suffer with Him, and be reproached with Him. If we shall follow Him anywhere and everywhere, making no choice about the way, whether it shall be rough or smooth, whether it shall be green sward or miry bogif we can go with Him to prison and to death, if such times comethen we shall be the men whom Heavens King delights to honor. Make room for him, you angels! Make room you cherubim and seraphim! Stand back you peers of Heavens realm! Here comes the man. He was poor, mean and afflicted. But he was with My Son and was like My Son. Come here, Man! Here, take your crown and sit with My Son in His glory, for you were with My Son in His shame! Oh that the Holy Spirit would teach us how to follow Jesus and enable us to tread in His steps!   
I conclude by again asking this important questionAre you with Christ today? Have you put your hand into Christs hand to be Christs forever? My Hearers, the speaker wants to make this question ring in your earsAre you with Christ today? For he that is not with Him is against Him. And he that follows not Christ scatters abroad. Do you trust Christ? Oh, Sinner, if you do not, I beseech you trust Him now, and you are saved. If you have trusted Christ, is it the true trust? If it is, it will make you follow Him and you will be obedient to His every wish and word. Faith, such as the Holy Spirit gives, always leads to obedience.   
Is it so? Is it so? If not, humble yourself before God. Believe in Him who is the only foundation upon which a sinners hope can be built. Take up your cross daily, and through evil report and through good report, follow the Master even to the end, and the Lord God, the God of Heaven and earth, the fountain of honor, shall glorify you when Christ comes in His kingdom.

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A GOLDEN PRAYER   
NO. 1391

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, DECEMBER 30, 1877, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Father, glorify Your name.   
John 12:28.**

IN the first part of my discourse this morning I shall strictly keep to my text, as the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and endeavor to show what it teaches us with regard to Him. These are His own words and it would be robbery to borrow them until first we have seen what they meant as they fell from His lips. Their most golden meaning must be seen in the light of His sacred Countenance. Then, in the second part of my sermon, I shall try to point out how the petition before us may be used by ourselves. I pray that Divine Grace may be given us that it may be engraved upon our hearts and that each one of us may be taught by the Holy Spirit daily to say for himself, Father, glorify Your name.

I would suggest that these words should be to all the Lords people in this Church their slogan for another year and, indeed, their prayer throughout life. It will as well behoove the beginner in Grace as the ripe Believer. It will be proper both at the wicket gate of faith as at the portals of Glory. Like a lovely rainbow, let the prayer, Father, glorify Your name, arch over the whole period of our life on earth. I cannot suggest a better petition for the present moment, nor, indeed, for any moment of our pilgrimage. Let us close the old year with it and open the door of the new to the same note.

As for the past, Father, glorify Your name in the present. Fulfill this desire unto Your servants and in the future do it yet more abundantly!   
I. Let us look, then, at the words, first of all, IN RESPECT TO OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. They occur in the following connection. He had worked a notable miracle in the raising of Lazarus from the dead. The fame of the miracle had attracted many to hear Him. Enthusiastic crowds had gathered and He had become so extremely popular that the Pharisees said, the world has gone after Him. The people were willing to have made Him a kingand a great concourse met Him with branches of palm trees and cried, Hosanna! Blessed is the King of Israel that comes in the name of the Lord.   
Our Lord passed in royal but humble pomp through the streets of Jerusalem, riding upon a colt, the foal of an ass. This public manifestation, the renown of the miracle and the general talk of the populace led to strangers hearing of Him and enquiring about Him. And certain intelligent Greeks of a very respectable orderfor their mode of address to Philip shows their superior behaviorasked to be introduced to Him. They wished to see Jesus, not, of course, merely see Him in the streets, for that they could do if they pleased without applying to Philip. No, they wanted an interview with Him. They wanted to learn more about His teaching and His claims.   
I suppose that the sight of these Greeks greatly gladdened the heart of the Savior, for He delighted to see men coming to the light. He seemed to say within Himself, Behold the nations come to Me. The Gentiles arise and seek their Savior. He saw in those Greeks the advance guard of the Gentile world. He looked upon the strangers with delight, regarding them as representative men, the first of myriads who, from the ends of the earth and the islands of the sea, would come flocking to Him to behold the Glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Our Lord rejoiced in spirit! His heart was glad within Him and He began to address Himself to the people round aboutand to the Greeks who mingled with the throng.   
At that very moment the thought flashed across the Saviors mind, But these nations who are to be born unto Me and to be saved by Me, cannot be so born without birth-pangs, nor saved unless I endure unspeakable suffering as their Redeemer. This fact came vividly before our Lords mind and it rushed over His spirit like a raging torrent. He saw that He could not become the seed corn of a great harvest unless, first of all, He should fall into the ground and die. He was the one grain of wheat upon whom all depended and He must lose comfort and lifeand be buried in the earth or else He would abide alone and bring forth no fruit. He saw the vicarious suffering which lay in His way and His soul was troubled.   
Do not imagine that our Savior dreaded death, in itself considered. He was far superior in sacred courage and strength of mind to any of His servants and yet many of them have welcomed death! And others of them, such as the martyrs, have endured it in its most terrible forms, without fear, even expressing a holy delight in glorifying the name of God by their mortal agony. Our Lord was not less brave than these in prospect of His departure. But never let it be forgotten that the death of Christ was a very peculiar one and, in fact, stands alone by itself! His death was the vindication of Justice. It was the death of the Sin-Bearer. It was a sacrificial, substitutionary, expiatory deathand this is very different from the death of a pardoned and justified Believer who passes out of the world resting on the Atonement and supported by a sense of having been reconciled to God by the great Sacrifice.   
Our Lord was called to bear the enormous load of mans transgressionsover His holy soul the dark shadow of human guilt must pass and on His sensitive spirit must be made to meet the iniquity of us all. His saints deaths are blessed in the sight of the Lord, but He must be made a curse for us that we might be blessed in Him! And as the mind of Christ clearly perceived this lying in the way of that triumph among the Gentiles which gave Him joy, there was a struggle in His souland that struggle was manifested before the assembled people. The Greeks desired to see Jesus and they did see Him in a very remarkable mannerso that they must have been astounded at the sight! If they expected to see a king, they did, indeed, behold a royal soul, but they saw Him in such grief as falls not to the lot of common men. If they wished to see somewhat of His greatness of spirit and power of mind, they did see it, but it was a power which did not transfigure His face with glory, but filled it with an agony marring all its beauty!   
I shall not be too bold if I say that Gethsemane was rehearsed in public upon the occasion before us. Our Lord says His soul was troubled. He felt a sort of foreshadowing of that midnight among the olives in which His soul was exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death. It was out of that conflict that our text camein fact, our text is to His suffering in the midst of the crowd what, nevertheless not as I will, but as You will, was to the agony of Gethsemane, or what, It is finished, was to the passion upon Calvary. It was the culminating point, the climax and the conquest of a great mental battle! And when He had thus spoken He seemed to shake Himself clear of the agony and to emerge from it with the memory of it still upon Himbut with His face set like a flint to go forward to the bitter and the glorious endthis being now His watchword, Father, glorify Your name.   
I shall need to call your attention, dear Friends, briefly here, first, to the trouble of the Redeemers soul. I always tremble within myself when I try to speak of the inner conflicts of our blessed Lord, for it is so easy to make a mistake and darken counsel by words without knowledge. His Person is complex and, therefore, we readily confuse. Yet He Himself is but one and it is equally dangerous to make over nice distinctions. Loving jealousy of our Lords honor makes us feel that we scarcely know how to speak of Him! I remember an earnest admirer of the arts who, in pointing with his walking-stick to the beauties of a famous picture, pushed his cane through the canvas and ruined it. And it is possible that in our enthusiasm to point out the beauties and points of interest in the life and death of our Lord, we may spoil it all.   
I fear lest in my ignorance I should make sorrow for myself by dishonoring Him for whose honor I would gladly lay down and die. Help me, O Divine Spirit! This much is clear, that our Saviors heart was full of trouble. He who could still the sea and bid the storms retreat was tempesttossed in His own soul and cast about Him for anchorage. He who could drive the fever from its lair, or send a legion of demons into the deep was, nevertheless, troubled in spirit and cried, What shall I say? Master of all worlds, supreme among the angels and adored at His Fathers right hand, yet He confesses, Now is My soul troubled.   
Lord of all, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. How near akin it makes Him to us! How human! How compassed with infirmity! We worship Him and rightly so, but still He is a Man and a mourner. We call Him Master and Lord, and we do well, yet He not only washed His disciples feet, but His own feet trembled in the rough places of the way. He felt those same commotions of spirit which make our hearts sad within us and cause us to pour out our souls within us. Do not think of the Lord Jesus otherwise than as of a dear Brother born for adversity, or a faithful Husband sharing all our lot, being bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh. Did you cry out in anguish, Now is my soul troubled? Then remember that your Lord has used the same words!   
Are you half distracted? Are you tossed to and fro in your thoughts? Do you ever ask, What shall I say? Jesus understands by sympathy what it is you mean. Do you look around you and feel that you know not what to do and does your trembling heart suggest that you should pray, Father, save me from this hour? In all this you may see the Well-Beloveds footprintsyou are not upon a new and strange track. He leads you through no darker rooms than He went through Himself. With the same afflictions He has been afflictedthere is nothing in them novel or surprising to His sympathetic heart! Beloved Friends, let me invite you to consider that not only did our Lord thus suffer, but it is joyful to reflect that He suffered all this without sin!   
Therefore it follows that mental conflict is not, in itself, sinfuleven the shrinking back of the flesh from suffering is not necessarily evil. And the question, What shall I say? and the apparent distraction of the spirit, for the moment, as to what shall be its course, are not, in themselves, criminal. There could be no sin in the Lord Jesus and, consequently, there is not, of necessity, sin in our inward struggles, though I am very far from venturing to hope that in any one of them we are quite clear of fault. Our Lords Nature was so pure that however much it was stirred, it remained clear. But in our case, though the stirring is not sinful, it sets in motion the sin which dwells in us and we are defiled.   
Yet I do not believe that all those depressions of spirit which come of sickness, or all those wanderings of mind in the heat of fever, or all the shrinking and drawing back from pain which are essential to our humanity are set down as sin by our heavenly Fatherthough sin is doubtless mixed with them. If they are sinful in themselves, yet surely they are blotted out as soon as written down, for like as a father pities his children, so the Lord pities them that fear Him. He pities rather than censures or condemns! You do not judge your children harshly for what they say when they are racked with pain or prostrated by weakness! You bear with their little fancies and temper and the like, and you never taunt them with their follies afterwards!

Neither can I think that our heavenly Father would have us doubt our interest in Christ because, in our semi-delirium, we could not realize His love. Nor would He have us question the Divine Grace which is in us because our feverish thoughts were near akin to despair. When the true heart struggles to love and trust and obey, but the poor brain is tortured with dark thoughts, the conflict is not all sinful, nor any of it necessarily so. There may be an awful struggle in the soul and yet the Father may be glorified. The sin lies not in the conflict but in the defeat, if there is defeat. The guilt is not in the shrinking from pain, but in permitting that natural feeling to hinder us from duty or to lead us to rebel against chastisement. If it is possible, let this cup pass from me, is not a sinful utterance if it is followed by, nevertheless not as I will, but as You will.   
I feel so glad to think our Lord, when He was passing through this inward conflict, spoke out His feelings. It is instructive that He should have done so, for with His strength of mind He was quite capable of preserving a self-contained attitude and keeping His agony to Himself. Yet you notice that neither here, in which case He spoke so that others heard Him, nor at Gethsemane, in which case He took three of His disciples to be with Him and went to them again and again for sympathynor even on the Cross, in which case He cried aloud, My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? did He endeavor to conceal His emotion from others.   
It may be that by this He intended to teach us wisdom. He would show us by His own example that it is well for us not to be too much shut up within ourselves. Smother not your sorrow, tell it out or it may gather an ungovernable heat! That is the worst of grief which cannot weep or moan. Draw up the sluicesgive a vent to pent up feelings! Even though it is but a child who hears your tale, it will relieve your mind to tell it. Anything is better than banking up the fires and concentrating all the heat within the soul. Act not the stoics partbe not ashamed to let it be known that you are a mana man who can grieve and be troubled even as others!  
It may sometimes be well to follow the poets advice who says

*Bear and still bear and silent be,*

*Tell no man your misery,*   
but I question if the occasions are very frequent. At any rate, such is not the command of our Lord, nor does His example point in that direction. In speaking out, our Lord gives us a full permit to speak, too. We might have said, No, I will not tell what is going on within, lest my weakness should seem to dishonor God. Now we know that our Lord did not dishonor the Father by saying, Now is My soul troubled, and by revealing the inward conflict of His soul! Neither will the fact of our speaking out our grief necessarily dishonor our God. Jesus wept and we may weep. Jesus told His sorrow to His friends and you may do the same.

In thus speaking, our Lord affords us the best of help, for His fellowfeeling is a grand support. Did He say, Now is My soul troubled? and did He scarcely know what to ask? But did He, at the last, still triumph and resign Himself into His Fathers hands? Then, girt about by the same power, we also will encounter the same sorrow after our measure and endure until we triumph as He did! Even though in the triumph there should be clear evidence of our personal weakness, yet we will not regret it since by that means our God shall be the more surely glorified by the more distinct revelation of His power. I will say no more about the trouble of our Redeemer because I would now ask you to fix your thoughts, for a minute, upon the firm resolve which the text sets forth.

There is a battle, but from the very first moment to the last of it there is really no question in the Saviors mind about what He means to doHis purpose was settled beyond disturbance. The surface of His mind was ruffled, but deep down in His heart the current of the Redeemers soul flowed on irresistibly in the ordained channel. He was always straitened till He had been baptized with the appointed Baptism. Observe the question raised and see how really it was answered in His heart before He asked it. Now is My soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour? Must men be unsaved and Jesus be delivered from the lowering storm? If so, yonder Greeks need not ask to see Him, for there will be no life look at Him!

The disciples round about need not cling to Him as their helper, for there is no help in Him unless He dies to redeem the sons of men! Shall men, then, be unredeemed? Shall the blood of Atonement not be spilled and no man be ransomed from going down to the Pit? Shall He remain alone, the grain of wheat unsown? If He does, He will be happy enough

and glorious enough, for Heaven is all His own! Does He need men to make Him blessed? Does He require worms of the dust to make Him glorious? Should He remain alone, He will still be God and Lord!

But, shall the death penalty be left to be borne by men, guilty men, who deserve to bear it? Shall there be no Cross, no Calvary, no open tomb, no Resurrection, no gates of Heaven set wide open for coming souls? There is the question and you see in the text how resolutely Jesus had settled it! He says in effectFather, glorify Your name by My death! For this purpose have I come to this hour, that by My agony and bloody sweat, by My Cross and passion, I may redeem the sons of men. Redeemed they must and shall be, cost Me what it may! I have resolved to bear the penalty and magnify Your Law and I will perform it, though Hell itself is let loose against Me and all its waves of fire dash over Me. I will endure the Cross and despise the shame to honor You, My Father.

Observe right well that the text indicates the deep intent which steadied our Lords resolve. Why is Christ resolved to die? Is it to save men? Yes, but not as the chief reason. His first prayer is not, Father, save My people, but, Father, glorify Your name. The Glory of God was the chief end and objective of our Saviors life and death. It is that the Fathers name may be illustrious that Jesus would have souls redeemed! His passion had for its main intent the exhibition of the attributes of God. And, Brothers and Sisters, how completely He has glorified Jehovahs name! Upon the Cross we see the Divine Justice in the streaming wounds of the great Substitutefor the Son of God must die when sin is laid upon Him! There, also, you behold infinite Wisdom, for what but Infallible Wisdom could have devised the way whereby God might be just and yet the Justifier of him that believes?

There, too, is loverich, free, boundless lovenever so conspicuous as in the death of mans Redeemer! To this day it still remains a question concerning the Atonement which of the letters is best writtenthe justice, the wisdom, or the love. In the Atonement the Divine attributes are all so perfectly glorified that no one crowds out the othereach one has its full display without, in the least degree, diminishing the glory of any other! Our blessed Lord, that the Father might be glorified, pushed on to the end which He had set before Him. Whatever conflict might be within His spirit, His heart was fixed upon bearing our load to the death and suffering our penalty to the end.

Now, Brethren, I will detain you here with but one other thoughtit is thisthe grand result which came of it was that God was, in very deed, greatly glorified and to this fact special testimony was given. A Voice was heard out of Heaven saying, I have both glorified it and will glorify it again. That Voice speaks of the pastthe Incarnation of Christ had glorified the name of God. I am unable to describe to you how much luster the love of God receives from the fact of the Word being made flesh and dwelling among us! It is the mystery of mysteries, the marvel of all marvels that the Creator should espouse the nature of His creature and that He should be found in fashion as a man!

Oh, Bethlehem, you have exceedingly magnified the condescension of God! Angels might well sing, Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, goodwill towards men. Nor Bethlehem, alone, but Nazareth and the 30 years which our Lord spent on earth all illustrate the condescension, the pity, the long-suffering of God. Did God dwell among us 30 years? Did He abide in humility in the carpenters shop for the best part of that time and did He afterwards come forth to be a poor Man, a Teacher of peasants, a Friend of sinners, a Man of Sorrows, despised and rejected of men? Could the Holy and the Just, the Infinite and the Glorious thus, as it were, compress infinity into so small a space and marry Deity to such poverty and shame? It was so! Then tune your harps anew, you seraphs, to tell the amazing love and condescension of Immanuel, God with us.

Well spoke that VoiceI have glorified it. But listen yet again, for it addsand will glorify it again. To my mind that word, again, sounds like certain voices I have heard in the Alps. The horn is sounded and then follows an echonotwice, thrice and perhaps 50 times the music is distinctly repeated! The voices follow each other in gradually melting strains. The metaphor is not complete, for in this case the echoes increase in volume. Instead of diminishing, they wax louder and louder. Lo, Jesus hangs upon the Cross and diesand God is glorified, for Justice has his due. He lies in the grave till the third morning, but He bursts the bonds of Death! Lo, Gods great name is glorified again, since the Divine power, truth and faithfulness are all seen in the Resurrection of Christ!

Yet a few more days and He ascends into Heaven, the Man, the God and a cloud hides Him from our sightHe has glorified the Fathers name again by leading captivity captive! Then comes Pentecost and the preaching of the Gospel among the heathen. And then is the name of God glorified by the outpouring of the Spirit! Every conversion of a sinner and every sanctification of a Believer is a fresh glorifying of the name of the Father! And every reception of a perfected one into Heavenand surely they are entering Heaven every day, troops of them climbing the celestial hills, drawn upward by almighty loveeveryone, I say, in entering into Paradise glorifies Jehovahs name again!

And, Brothers and Sisters, by-and-by, when the whole earth shall be filled with His Glory, then will the Father glorify His name again. When in His own time the Lord shall descend from Heaven with a shout with the trumpet of the archangel and the voice of Godand when He shall reign among His ancients gloriouslywe shall hear the gladsome acclamation, Hallelujah, hallelujah, the Lord God Omnipotent reigns! And when comes the end and He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father, and God shall be All in Allthen shall the eternal echoes roll along the glories of the great Father God! The glorious name of the one Jehovah shall, through all space and all eternity, be magnified and the prayer of our once suffering but now exalted Savior shall be fully answered, Father, glorify Your name.

II. Now, Brothers and Sisters, we will use our text IN REFERENCE TO OURSELVES. May the Holy Spirit direct us in doing so. I pray that this text may be our prayer from this time forth, Father, glorify Your name. Have you, dear Hearers, ever prayed this prayer? I trust I am addressing many to whom it is a very familiar desire and yet I question if any here

have ever presented it so earnestly as those from whom it has been forced by suffering and grief. Gods birds often sing best in cagesat any rate, when they have been loose a little while and their notes grow somewhat dullHe tunes their pipes again if He puts them away awhile and clips their wings.

Now this text, as far as we are concerned, whenever we can use it, indicates conflict ended. Sometimes we are in such a condition that we do not know which way to turn. We are in great affliction. It may not be so much outward trouble as distress of mind which is worst of all. The water has leaked into the ship and that is worse than an ocean outside. The vessel begins to fill. You use the pumps, but cannot keep it afloat. At such times you cry, What shall I do? What shall I say? Where can I look? I am oppressed and overwhelmed.

But there is an end of the conflict when you turn round and cry, Father! Father! A child may have lost its way and it may be sobbing its heart out in its distress, but the moment it sees its father, it is lost no longerit has found its way and is at rest. Though there may be no difference in your position, nor change in your circumstances, yet if you catch a sight of your heavenly Father, it is enoughyou are a lost child no more. When you can pray, Father, glorify Your name, then there is no more question about, What shall I say? You have said the right thing and there let it end.

Now, Brothers and Sisters, concerning this next year upon which we are entering, I hope it will be a year of happiness to youI very emphatically wish you all a Happy New Yearbut nobody can be confident that it will be a year free from trouble. On the contrary, you may be pretty confident that it will not be so, for man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward! We have each, beloved Friends, some dear faces in which we rejoicemay they long smile upon us! But remember that each one of these may be an occasion of sorrow during the next year, for we have neither an immortal child, nor an immortal husband, nor an immortal wife, nor an immortal friend and, therefore, some of these may die within the year.

Moreover the comforts with which we are surrounded may take to themselves wings before another year shall fulfill its months. Earthly joys are as if they were all made of snowthey melt even as the hoar frost and are gone before we conclude our thanksgiving for their coming. It may be you will have a year of drought and shortness of breadyears lean and illfavored may be your portion. Yes, and yet moreperhaps during the year which has almost dawned, you may have to gather up your feet in the bed and die to meet your fathers God. Well now, concerning this approaching year and its mournful possibilities, shall we grow gloomy and desponding? Shall we wish we had never been born or ask that we may die? By no means!

Shall we, on the other hand, grow frivolous and laugh at all things? No, that were ill-becoming in heirs of God. What shall we do? We will breathe this prayer, Father, glorify Your name. That is to say, if I must lose my property, glorify Your name by my poverty! If I must be bereaved, glorify Your name in my sorrows! If I must die, glorify Your name in my departure. Now, when you pray in that fashion, your conflict is over! No outward fright nor inward fear remains if that prayer rises from the heart! You have now cast aside all gloomy forebodings and you can thoughtfully and placidly pursue your way into the unknown tomorrow. Pass on, O caravan, into the trackless desert! Still proceed into the wilderness of the future which no mortal eye has seen, for yonder fiery cloudy pillar leads the way and all is well!

Father, glorify Your name, is our pillar of cloud and, protected by its shade, we shall not be struck by the heat of prosperity! Father, glorify Your name, is our pillar of fire by nightnor shall the darkness of adversity destroy us, for the Lord shall be our light! March on, you pilgrims, without a moments delay because of fear. Tarry not for a single instant, this being your banner and your watchword, Father, glorify Your name. Torturing doubts and forebodings of the future all end when the glorious name is seen over all!

Secondly, our text breathes a spirit which is the surrender of self. When a man can truly say, Father, glorify Your name, he begins to understand that saying of our Savior concerning the corn of wheat falling into the ground and dying, for that prayer means, Lord, do what You will with me. I will make no stipulations, but leave all to You. Remember that I am dust and deal tenderly with me, but still glorify Your name. Do not spare me, if thereby You would be less glorious. Act not according to my foolish wishes or childish desires, but glorify Your name in me by any means and by all means.

The prayer means I am willing to be made nothing of so that Gods will may be done. I am willing to be as one dead and buried, forgotten and unknown if God may be magnified. I am ready to be buried and sown because I believe that this is the way by which I shall grow and bring forth fruit to Gods praise. This surrender includes obedient service, for our great Master goes on to say, If any man serves Me, let him follow Me. True self-renunciation shows itself in the obedient imitation of Christ. Father, glorify Your name means waiting the Lords bidding and running in His ways.

If the petition is written out at length it runs thusHelp me to copy my Saviors example. Help me to follow in His blessed footsteps! This is my desirepassively to honor my heavenly Father by bearing His will and actively to glorify Him by doing His will. Lord, help me to do both of these and never let me forget that I am not my own, but wholly my Lords. The prayer appears to me to be most properly used when it is made a personal oneFather, glorify Your name in me. I am the recipient of so much mercy, get some glory out of me, I pray You.

Beloved, I think you must have noticed in this world that the man who really lives is the man who more than his fellows has learned to live for others and for God. You do not care for the preacher whose objective is to display his own powers. You go away dissatisfied after hearing his bravest orations! But if any man shall only desire your souls good and Gods Glory, you will put up with much eccentricity from him and bear with many infirmities because, instinctively, you love and trust the man who forgets himself.   
Now, what you see in preachers I beg you to try and consider in yourselves. If any of you are living for yourselves, you will not be loveable. If you even act that your ambition is to be loved, you will miss your mark. But if you will love for loves sake. If you will seek to be Christ-like. If you will lay yourselves out to glorify God, to increase His kingdom and to bless your fellow men, you will live in the highest and noblest sense! Seek not your own greatness, but labor to make Jesus great and you will live! Christians live by dying! Kill self, and Christ shall live in you and so shall you, yourself, most truly live!

The way upward in true life and honor is to go downward in selfhumiliation. Renounce all and you shall be rich! Have nothing and you shall have all things! Try to be something and you shall be nothing! Be nothing and you shall live! That is the great lesson which Jesus would teach us, but which we are slow to learn. Father, glorify Your name means let the corn of wheat be buried out of sight to lose itself in its outgrowth. O Self, you are a dead thingmay you be laid deep in the sepulcher! You rotten carcass, for such you have become since Jesus died for meyou are an offense to me! Away with you! Do not poison my life, mar my motives, spoil my intents, hinder my self-denials and defile the chastity of my heart! You prompt me to make provision for the fleshaway with you, away with you! Father, glorify Your name.

In our text, in the next place, a new care is paramount. The man has forgotten self and self is buried like a grain of wheat and now he begins to care for Gods Glory. His cry is, Father, glorify Your name. Oh, if you can get rid of self you will feel in your heart a daily intensified longing to have the name of God glorified! Do you not feel, sometimes, sick at heart as you gaze upon this present generation? My soul is often pained within me when I see how everything is out of joint. Everything is now denied which from our youth we have regarded as the sacred Truth of God! The Infallibility of Scripture is denied! The authenticity of one portion is challenged and the Inspiration of another called in questionand the good old Book is torn to pieces by blind critics!

Eternal Truths of God, against which only blaspheming infidels used to speak, are now questioned by professed ministers of Christ! Doctrines which our sires never

thought of doubting are now trailed in the mire and that by those who profess to be teachers of Gods Word! Father, glorify Your name comes leaping to our lips because it is burning in our heart burning there in holy wrath against the treachery of men! Indignation arises from our jealousy and our eager spirits cry, Oh, that God would glorify His name! To many of us this is our heaviest care. Brethren, we desire the Lord to glorify that name in ourselves by preventing our impatience in suffering and keeping us from faintness in labor. We beseech our heavenly Father to destroy our selfishness, to cast out our pride and to overcome every evil propensity which would prevent His getting glory out of us!

Our soul is even as the clusters of the vine which belong to the owner of the vineyardour whole nature is as the fruit for which the great Vinedresser waits. Here, fling me into the wine vat! Let every cluster and every grape be gathered and pressed! Great Lord, cast me into the wine vat of Your service and then squeeze out of me every drop of the essence of life! Let my whole soul flow forth to You! Let the ruddy juice burst forth on the right and on the leftand when the first rich liquid of my life is gone then even to the utmost let me be pressed till the last drop of the living juice which may bring glory to You shall have come forth! Fling all away that will not turn into Your Glory, but use all that can be usedglorify Your name to the utmost!

O great Father of my spirit, the desire of Your child is to glorify You, for if You are a father you should have honor from Your children. Honor your father is the first commandment with promise and it is precious in our eyes. From our inmost hearts we pray, Our Father which are in Heaven, hallowed be Your name, Your kingdom come. Now, see how that desire is divested of all sorrow by our casting it upon God. The prayer is not, Father, help me to glorify Your name, but it is, Father, glorify Your name. Your glory is too much for me to fathomglorify Yourself! In Your Providence, so arrange my position and condition as to glorify Your name! By Your Grace, so sustain me and sanctify me that I may glorify You. I cannot do it, but You can and the desire which I was glad to feel, I am glad, also, to bring by faith to You. Father, glorify Your name.

And now, Brothers and Sisters, if you can pray in that fashion, your confidence will come back to you. If you have been greatly distracted, calm peace will visit you again, for now you will say, I will bear the Lords will and will be content. I cannot quarrel with my Masters dealings any more, for I have asked Him to glorify His name and as I know that He is doing it, I cannot murmur. How can I struggle against that which is really glorifying my Father? Your heart will cease to question and to quake and nestle down beneath the eternal wings in deep and happy peace! Filled with patience, you will take the cup which stood untasted and grasp it with willingness if not with eagerness. It is to glorify God, you will sayevery drop of this cup is for His Gloryand therefore you will put the chalice to your lips and drink straight on, and on, and on till you have drained the last drop and find that It is finished.

I know you will not fail to do this if your soul has really felt the power of this prayerFather, glorify Your name. Why, sometimes it seems to me that it were worth while to pray to be burned at a stake to the death, if by martyrdom we could glorify God! I do not desire such a death and yet, from one point of view, I have often envied martyrs those ruby crowns which they cast at the feet of their dear Lord. How honorable in them to have glorified God by so much suffering! Surely he is the grandest creature God has made who glorifies Him most. And who is he? Not the tall archangel of whom Milton sings, whose wand might make a mast for some great admiral, but the most insignificant nobody who has long laid upon her bed of weariness and there has praised the Lord by perfect patience!

She, though apparently the least, may be the greatest glorifier of the Father! Perhaps the tiniest creature God has made will bring Him more glory than leviathan that makes the deep to be hoary and causes the waters to boil like in a pot. That which most thoroughly yields itself to God. That which most completely annihilates itself into the eternal Allis most glorifying to Him! May God in His infinite mercy bring us to this selfannihilation, this desire only for His Glory! Strive after it, Beloved, by the

power of the Holy Spirit!   
One word to those of you who will have no sympathy with this sermon.   
You know that hymn in which the enquirer asks?   
*If I find Him, if I follow,   
What reward is here?*   
and the answer is   
*Many a labor,   
Many a sorrow,   
Many a tear.*   
Very discouraging this, is it not? You who look for mirth and selfish  
pleasure turn away in disgust. Yet the lines are very true. Jesus Himself  
said, Except a man take up his cross and follow Me, he cannot be My  
disciple. But mark you, the day will come when those who were willing to   
suffer for Christ will be counted to be the only sane persons who ever  
lived! And when those who looked to the main chance and cared for self  
and disregarded God, faith in Christ and love for their fellow menwill be   
regarded as having been mere idiots and drivellers!   
Listen to this parable! It is spring time and yonder is a farmer walking  
the furrows and sowing his seed. Those who know nothing of farming   
mock him for his wastefulness with his grain. He is far too wasteful of  
good food. He is the wise man, is he not, who locks his granary door and   
preserves his corn? Why should he go and fling it into the cold, thankless   
ground? Wait till the end of June when the bloom is on the wheat! Wait   
till July and August have brought the months of harvest and you shall see   
that he who gave his wheat to die shall, amidst the shouts of, Harvest  
home! be reckoned to have been wise and prudent!   
And he who kept the door of his granary bolted through his sluggishness and selfishness shall then be seen to be only fit for Bedlam, for he   
has no harvest except a mass of tangled weeds. Scatter, scatter your lives   
for others! Give yourselves up to Jesus! He who in this respect hates his   
life shall find it, but he that keeps it shall lose it! Still, O you ungodly, if   
you live to yourselves, God will yet have Glory and even Glory out of you!   
You shall not rob Him of His honor, nor tear a jewel from His throne! God  
will be glorified by you and in you in some form or other. Your everlasting   
lamentations, because of your great selfish mistakes, will vindicate the   
wisdom and the justice of God to all eternity!   
In a future state, though you gnaw the flesh of your right arms for very  
anguish and sorrow and passion, you will be obliged to acknowledge that   
the warnings of the Gospel were true and that God is just! Your welldeserved griefs shall help to make up the burden of that song which shall  
eternally celebrate the wisdom and goodness of God, for you will have to  
confess that Jesus was right and you were wrong! You will have to admit  
that to believe in Him and to be His disciple was the right thingand that  
to despise Him and to live unto yourself was what He told you it would   
bedestruction and ruin. God grant His blessing for Jesus sake. Amen.

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VOICES FROM THE EXCELLENT GLORY   
NO. 909

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, JANUARY 9, 1870, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him: and lo a voice from Heaven, saying, This is My Beloved Son, in Whom I am well-pleased. Matthew 3:16, 17.**

**While he yet spoke, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a Voice out of the cloud,   
which said, This is My Beloved Son, in Whom I am well-pleased; hear Him. Matthew 17:5.**

**Father, glorify Your name. Then came there a Voice from Heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again. John 12:28.**

THAT our Lord was the true Messiah of God was proved by His answering to all those prophecies which described the promised Messenger of the Covenant. His miracles also proved that God was with Him, and from their character they marked Him out as the ordained Deliverer. To open blind eyes and unstop deaf ears were works foretold as denoting the Messiah. His teachings were equally clear proofs of His missionthere is about them an authority found nowhere else. The words which He spoke are Spirit and Life. They are self-evidencing in their elevation, purity, perfection. Never man spoke like this Man.

His Testimony is unique and bears a majesty of Deity about it which bespeaks itself. His resurrection also was a clear proof that he was sent of God. He was declared to be the Son of God with power, by the resurrection from the dead. But in addition to all this and a great deal more, the Divine Father was pleased, also, to speak out of Heaven with an audible voice to declare that Jesus of Nazareth was no other than the Son of God and the promised Christ for whom the faithful were watching. Thrice did the majesty of Heaven break its sublime silence and bear witness to the Incarnate God. The three occasions, as mentioned in our texts, are most instructive, and shall command our attention this morning. May the Holy Spirit instruct us.

Without any further preface, let us consider the three Testimonies given to our Lord by the voice of the Most High. If time permits we will then notice one or two instructive circumstances connected with them. And we will close by drawing a great practical lesson from them.   
I. In endeavoring to bring before your attentive minds THE THREE

OCCASIONS ON WHICH THE FATHER, BY A VOICE FROM HEAVEN, BORE WITNESS TO HIS SON, I would invite you to observe, first, when these voices were heard.

Angels had proclaimed His birth, and wise men had seen His star, but the Divine Voice was not heard during the first thirty years of His sojourn. The three celestial utterances were reserved for the brief period of His public life. The first came at the commencement of His public ministryat His Baptism. The second some little time after the central point of His ministry. And the last, just before He closed His work, by being offered up. It is a fit thing to pray that all our works may be begun, continued, and ended under the Divine blessing.

Certainly our Lord Jesus Christ, as to His public work, both began it, continued it, and ended it with the publicly declared witness of the Most High. How cheering a thing it is at the beginning of a great enterprise to have from God clear Testimony that He has sent you upon it! Such was the Testimony given to the Master in the waters of Jordan, when He was first announced as the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world.

How sweetly encouraging it is to the soul when the labor is heavy, the opposition vehement, and the spirit faint, to receive another affirming word from the excellent Glory! Such was that which came to Jesus on the Holy Mount, when retiring from the multitude He sought the refreshment of prayer and fellowship with God. Then, as He prayed, the fashion of His countenance was altered and His raiment was white and glistering, and a Voice came out of the cloud, This is My Beloved Son, in Whom I am wellpleased, hear Him.

And best of all, when our work is almost done, and the shadows of evening are lengtheningwhen we are about to depart into the land of spiritswhat a consolation it is to receive another refreshment from the Divine mouth! Such our Savior had a little while before He was lifted up from the earth. In answer to His fervent cry, Father, glorify Your name, there came a Voice from Heaven saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.

In our departing hours we are most anxious about that which was our lifes dearest object. The lifework of Christ was to glorify His Fathers name. Concerning that He prayed, and concerning that the Voice gave full assurance. The result of the Lords lifework was declared to be ensured, and therefore, wrapping Himself about with that heavenly Testimony, the great Redeemer went bravely to His death. It is to be noted, then, that at the beginning, the middle, and end of our Masters work, the Divine Voice was heard.

The first celestial witness was uttered after He had lived for thirty years in comparative obscurity. It seemed meet that when He first appeared, there should be some token that He was what He professed to be. That heavenly declaration, be it also remembered, came just before His memorable temptation. He was to be forty days in the wilderness tempted of the devil, and among the horrible suggestions hissed forth from the serpents mouth would be the doubt, if you are the Son of God. What better forearming of our great Champion than the witness, This is My Beloved Son?

How in the recollection of that paternal Testimony would the Son be made strong to overcome all the temptations of the Fiend, or to endure the hunger which followed the forty days of lonely fast! Thus ever, my Brethren, it is not with the Master, only, but with the servants. Before temptation there comes spiritual sustenance which makes the heart strong in endurance. Like Elijah of old, the Believer falls asleep. Being awakened, he eats bread of Heavens own providing and in the strength of that meat he journeys forty days through the wilderness without weariness. Expect that when the Lord tries you He will also send you strength to sustain you under it.

The second occasion of the heavenly utterance was when our Lord was about (according to Luke) to send out other seventy disciples to preach the Word. The twelve had healed the sick, cast out devils and done many mighty works. But now the laborers were to be increased and the harvest more rapidly ingathered. The seventy Evangelists were to carry the Divine Crusade through all the Holy Land.

Brethren, it is instructive that Heaven gave to our Savior, before extending His agencies of mercy, a fresh token for good. And we also, when the Lord calls us to wider service, may go up to the mountain to pray. And while we are there we, too, may expect to enjoy the comforting and strengthening witness of the Spirit within. The heavenly Voice shall whisper, You are Mine, and we shall descend with radiant countenance to fight anew the battles of the Lord.

The third heavenly Testimony came to our Lord just before His sufferings and death. I need not say to you how well-timed was that witness. With such a death before Him, with such circumstances surrounding Himall tending to make His agony sharper, and His death more terrible than any which had fallen to the lot of man before. With Gethsemane, with Gabbatha, with Golgotha all before Him. With such words as these yet to be uttered, My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death. And these, My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?it was meet that the oppressed Sufferer, who must tread the winepress aloneshould receive at the outset a Word from the Throne of the Highest, meeting exactly the point about which His soul was most concerned, namely, the glory of the Fathers name.

While still enlarging upon the times when the Divine Voice was heard, we may also note that the first came to our Lord when He was in the attitude of obedience. Why needed He to be baptized? It is a sinners ordinanceJesus is no sinner and needs no washing, no death, no burial! But He takes the sinners place, and therefore comes to be buried in Jordan, for, Thus, says He, it becomes us to fulfill all righteousness. It was to Christ an act of obedience. He took upon Himself the form of a servant, and being found in fashion as a Man, He became obedient to every ordinance of God, and hence He yielded Himself to Baptism. Then came the Voice, This is My Beloved Son.

Brothers and Sisters, learn that when you are in the path of filial obedience you may expect the Spirit to bear witness with your spirit that you are born of God! But if you live in neglect of any known dutyif you are willfully unobservant of any command of Christyou may expect that there shall be withheld from you the sweet assuring tokens of Divine love. But if you are scrupulously obedient on desiring to know what is the Lords will, and then promptly do itnot asking the reason why, nor using your own tastes, or indulging your own whimsthen in the path of obedience, especially if it costs you much, you may expect to have the witness in yourself that you are a child of God.

The second attestation came to our Master in His devout retirement. He had gone up to the mountain to pray. His desire was to be alone. He had taken with Him His accustomed bodyguard of threePeter, James, and Johnthat they might be with Him while His soul communed with God. I doubt not that, as in the garden, they were bid to remain a stones cast distance off, for surely Jesus poured out His soul before God alone. And then it was that suddenly the Glory of God shone upon Him. Then, in His retirement, Moses and Elijah appeared, coming forth from the spirit-world to commune with Him. Then did the Father utter a second time the Testimony, This is My Beloved Son, in Whom I am well-pleased.

Brothers and Sisters, you too, like your Master, may expect to receive Divine Testimonies when you are on the mount of communion alone, when your fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. The neglect of retirement will probably rob you of such assurances. If your prayer should be, Show me a token for good, the answer will be, Get you to the top of Tabor, get you away to your retirement. There will I give you the token which your heart desires. But to live evermore spending our strength in public, wasting ourselves in the turmoil of this world, and to neglect the soul-refreshing ordinance of private devotion is to deprive the inner man of the richest of spiritual delights.

The third Testimony came to our Lord in His ministry. He was preaching in the temple when the Father responded to His prayer. Now while I have spoken a good word for obedience, and also have sought to magnify retirement, let it never be forgotten that public service is equally acceptable to God. Our Lord had been conversing with certain enquiring Greeks and declaring the living power of His death to all who chose to hear Him. In that same hour the Father gave an audible answer to His prayer. If you, my Brethren, are called to any form of service, I beseech you, under no pretext neglect it. The neglect of anything for which you have the talent, and to which you have the call, may deprive you of the inward witness.

Bear much fruitso shall you be His disciples consciously so. Keep His Commandmentsso shall you abide in His love and know it. Forget not to be obedient, forget not to be prayerful in retirement, but forget not, also, that you are meant to shine as a light in this world. Forget not that you must work while it is called today. Forget not that you are not sent into this life merely to enjoy spiritual recreation or even celestial refreshment but to do a work which no other can doand for which you must give a personal account.

We must now dismiss the question of the times, and briefly consider to whom the attestations were given. The first at Baptism, came to John and to our Lord, and most probably to them, only. We do not think the Voice from the opened Heaven was necessarily heard by anyone but John and our Lord. The token of the descending dove was given to John as the sign by which he should discern the Christ. And I knew Him not. But He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom you shall see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizes with the Holy Spirit.

John probably gathered from all that he had heard of Jesus that He was the great Bridegroom to whom he stood as a friend. But he was not to follow his own judgmenthe was to receive a token from God Himself and till that token came he could not act as one fully and indisputably convinced. When he had immersed our Lord he saw the heavens opened, saw the Spirit descending upon Him, and heard the confirming Voice. And then he knew beyond all doubt that Jesus was the Christ. To the Baptist, alone, that Voice was audible. And then through him it was published to all Judea.

The second Testimony had a somewhat wider rangeit came not to one, but to three. Peter, James, and John were present. What if I say to five? For there were with them Moses and Elijah. They represented the Law and the Prophets. The three Apostles were the representatives of the Christian Churchas if to show that Law and Gospel meet in Jesusand the things in Heaven and the things on earth are gathered together in one in Him. The Testimony enlarges, you see. At first one opened ear hears it, next five are assured.

The third time the Voice was heard by many. How many I cannot say, but the crowd in the temple heard it. Many heard it who did not understand it, for they said it thunderedperhaps perversely determining not to believe in the Presence of Godbut to ascribe that articulate Voice rather to a rumbling thunder than to the Divine mouth. Others who confessed that they heard words, averred that an angel spokemen will have anything but God! Thunder, or cherubim, or even devils they will welcome but Divine interpositions are irksome to them.

Many, we say, heard the third Voice. It was a Testimony to hundreds may we not learn from this that Gods Testimony to Christ is evermore a growing one? If at first He was revealed to one, then to more, then to a numerous band, expect, my Brethren, the fulfillment of that promise, the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together. For the mouth of the Lord has spoken it. If the glory of Jesus is today seen by thousands, it shall yet be unveiled to tens of thousands, and in the latter days the Voice which spoke once and again to our fathers, shall so speak as to shake not only earth, but also Heaven. And in that day, if not before, every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father!

The heavenly Testimony grows and spreads. Jesus is proclaimed as Lord in many hearts. Look not on the present littleness of His visible kingdom, despise not the day of small things. The witness of Jesus is but a spark of fire. But the conflagration thereof shall yet belt the world with holy flames. The three Testimonies were given in this wise. The first, to the greatest of menfor among those that are born of women there was not a greater Prophet than John the Baptist. Yet the voice revealed a greater than he, whose shoelaces he was not worthy to untie.

The second was heard by the best of menthe great Lawgiver, the chief of the Prophets, and the noble of the Apostlesyet the Voice bore witness to a better than they. The third time the Voice echoed in the holiest place in the templeand there it testified to a holier than the holiest shrine. Jesus is everywhere magnified beyond all others as the only Beloved Son of the Father. I need not however enlarge. There is far more of teaching than either time or ability allow me to open up to you.

We come, in the next place, to notice to what God bore Testimony. God never sets His seal to a blank. What was it, then, which He attested? First, at the Jordan, witness was borne to Christs miraculous origin. This is My Beloved Son. He comes not here as the Pharisees, and soldiers, and others have done, a mere son of man. Son of man He is, but He is also Son of the infinite, eternal God. And now on His introduction to His work He receives a spiritual anointing and a recognition from the Father. The seal was set that day to His Godhead and His relation to the Father was acknowledged.

By the second audible declaration it seems to me that the Father sealed the Sons appointment as the great Prophet, and the anointed Servant of God. For in the second Testimony these memorable words were added, hear Him. Here God commands us to accept Him as the great Teacher, to acknowledge Him as the Head of the dispensation, to yield to Him our loyal attention and obedience. When the Lord appears, it is necessary that men should know who He is. When He is actually engaged in His work it may be needful to confirm His authority.

This was done on the Holy Mount, for so Peter understood it, as he writes in his second Epistle, For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a Voice to Him from the excellent Glory, This is my Beloved Son, in Whom I am wellpleased. And this voice which came from Heaven we heard, when we were with Him in the Holy Mount.

The third Testimony bore witness to the success of His work. I have both glorified My name, says the Father, and will glorify it again. What, you say, what if Jesus should not succeed? He has come into the world to vindicate the justice of God, and reveal His love, and so to glorify Godwhat if He should miss the mark? What, if after all His life of labor and His death of agony, He should be unsuccessful?

The Fathers Word declares that the results anticipated shall certainly be produced. I have glorified it, says the Fatherall Your past life has glorified My name. Your coming down from Heaven, Your life of thirty years obedience, all the works which You have done in Your three years of toil. All these have brought renown to the infinite Majesty.

And I will glorify it again, in the most supreme sense. Amidst the glooms of the garden, amidst the terrors of Pilates hall, and amidst the sorrows of the Cross, I will glorify My name yet again. Yes, and in Your resurrection, in Your ascension, in Your majesty at My right hand, in Your judgment of the quick and the dead I will glorify My name again. The three Voices may be viewed as attesting the Sons Person, work, and success.

Some have thought that the three Voices attested our Lord in His threefold offices. John came proclaiming the kingdomJesus was in His Baptism proclaimed as the Chief of the new kingdom. On the second occasion, the Voice which said, Hear Him, ordained Him as the Prophet of His people. And on the third occasion Jesus was owned as a Priest. Standing in the midst of priestsin the Temple where sacrifice was offered Himself about to offer the true sacrifice. And praying that His sacrifice might glorify God, He receives the witness that God has been glorified in Him, and will be yet again.

My Brethren, in this threefold witness receive into your hearts the Testimony of God who cannot lie. Behold your Savior, well-pleasing to His Father. Let Him be well-pleasing to you. Hear Him proclaimed as Gods Beloved. O let Him be the Beloved of your hearts! Hear the Testimony born to Him that He has glorified God, and remember that His further glorifying God in some measure depends on youfor it is by your godly conversation, by your holy patience, by your zealous exertions for your Masters praise that God in Christ Jesus is to be glorified until He comes. Let these three Testimonies, as they make up a complete and conclusive code of evidence, have force upon your hearts and minds, and win you to a solemn confidence in your Lord and Master.   
I shall now ask your attention to the question, How were the Testimonies given? Observe that when our Lord was baptized, the heavens were opened and the Spirit descended. What if this proclaims to us that by His obedience our Lord procured the opening of Heaven for usthat our prayers might ascend to God, and all blessings might descend to us, and especially that the Holy Spirit might come down and rest forever upon the Church of God?

The Masters Baptism was the type of His death. Buried beneath the waters of Jordan, He pictured there His being buried in the deeps of agony and in the darkness of the tomb. Rising from the Jordan, He typified His resurrection. Ascending its banks He represented His Ascension into Heaven. God sees in figure all righteousness fulfilled, and answers the type by the relative type of Heaven opened and the dove descending.

Heaven was not beheld as opened when a second time the Voice was heard. In Luke 9 we read that the Voice came out of the cloud. The overshadowing cloud is a beautiful representation of the Mediatorship of Christ. He, like a glorious cloud, veils the excessive brightness of the Godhead. He shields us, so that when God speaks, He may not speak as from the top of Sinaiwith a voice of trumpet and sound of thunderbut may speak through an interposing Medium, with that still, small voice of love which we can hear with delight.

Out of the cloud, my Brethren, God speaks to His people. That is to say, He speaks to us in Christ Jesus. That was a strong utterance of Luther, but it was strictly true, I will have nothing to do with an absolute God, meaning I will have nothing to do with God out of Christ. If, indeed, we had to do with God out of Christ, what misery were it for us, my Brethren! We should stand in the same terror as Israel did when bounds were set about the Mount. Even Moses said, I do exceedingly fear and quake. It is a great mercy that the heavenly Voice, as it reaches us, comes out of the cloud.

In reading the narrative of the third Divine Testimony, our mind rests neither upon the opening of Heaven nor the cloud, but upon the Voice alone. It is as if the glory of God in the work of Christ put every other thought aside. The opening of Heaven, or the interposition of a Mediator are but means to the great end of glorifying God. O that this one great object may absorb all our souls! But, alas, the Voice, plain as it was, was misunderstood, and the clearest Revelation that God ever gave to mortals has been misunderstood by many. There will always be those who think of thunder and the so-called grandeur of natureand others who see only angels or second causes.

Once more, consider what was it that was spoken on those three occasions. There was a difference in each case, though in the first two but slight. The first time the heavenly Voice preached the Gospel, This is My Beloved Son, in Whom I am well-pleased. The old fathers were likely to say, Go to Jordan if you would see the Trinity, and we may add, go to Jordan if you would hear the Gospel. This is My Beloved Son, in Whom I am well-pleased. Observe the Gospel in this sentence! The Gospel is tidings concerning a blessed Person sent of God. Such tidings the Lord here utters.

This Man rising dripping from the water. This Man is pointed out as the Hope of the world! The Gospel is never preached except where the Person of Jesus Christ is exhibited to men. I, if I am lifted upnot truths about Mebut I Myself, if I am lifted up, will draw all men unto Me. The attraction lies in the Person of Christ, because the real power to save lies there. We have here the Gospel revealing the acceptableness of the chosen Person with GodMy Beloved Son.

What men needed was a Savior who could stand for them before God. One dear to the heart of God. It is good news to us that the Anointed One is well-beloved of the Father. Why, my Hearers, though I have not yet opened up the fullness of that utterance, does not Gospel light break in upon you already? Here is a Person sent of God to savea Man of your own race, but yet right well-beloved of God. He is so near to God as to be called His Beloved Son! But note, yet more earnestly, the Gospel of the next words, In Whom I am well-pleased. Not, with Whom, as hasty readers suppose, but, In Whom I am well-pleased.

This is the very Gospelthat God, as He looks upon men is wellpleased with all who are in Christ. God in Christ is not anger, but good pleasure. If I, a poor sinner, enter by faith into Christ, then I may be assured that God is well-pleased with methat, if I, as His child, come to Him, and by a living faith link my destiny with the life and person of ChristI need not fear the wrath of Heaven. Sinner, God is not wellpleased with you as you are. Child of God, God is not well-pleased with you as you arethere is enough about either saint or sinner to provoke the Lord to jealousy. But, Sinner, if you are in Christ by faith, God is wellpleased with you. And, O Heir of Heaven, with all your infirmities and imperfections, since you are one with Christ by an eternal and now vital union, God is well-pleased with you! Said I not well that the Gospel sounded from Jordans waves?

The second sound of the Voice uttered not only the Gospel itself, but the Gospel command, Hear Him. Matthew Henry has some very delightful remarks upon this expression, Hear Him. He remarks, in effect, that salvation does not come by seeing, as the Roman church would have it, for the disciples were not directed to behold Christ in His Glory, though the sight deserved all their attention. No, but they were bid to hear rather than see. To hear the Gospel is a most important duty, for faith comes by hearing. Salvation comes not by hearing the doctrines of men but by hearing Jesus Christ.

There stood Moses. And those three Jewish worthies, Peter, James, and John, might have longed for Moses to open his Mouthand had he spoken to them they would have been very attentive to Him. But the Word was not, Hear Moses, but Hear Him. There was Elijah, too. O for a

burning word from that master among the Prophets, whose life was flame. But it was not said, Hear Elijah, but Hear Him. They have Moses and the Prophets, let them hear them, is the word sent to careless sinners, but to sincere seekers the direction is, Hear Him.

Dear Brothers and Sisters, the great salvation of God comes to us through the Testimony of Jesus Christnot through the moral essays or philosophical treatises or doctrinal discussions of men. Hear Him, the Gospel so commands you. Let not your ears be deaf when God communicates tidings of eternal life.

On the third occasion the Testimony given was not the Gospel nor the Gospel precept, but the Gospels resultI have glorified it, and will glorify it again. I call your attention to this that you may be earnest in preaching the Gospel. It is through the Gospel that God is glorified. By the poorest Gospel sermon that was ever preached, God, through His Holy Spirit, gets to Himself a glory which the most pompous ritual cannot yield Him. You never speak well of Jesus but what you glorify God. No Gospel Word falls to the ground and is lost. It must accomplish that for which God has sent it.

He has glorified His name by the Gospel, and He will again. Let this encourage those of you who are afraid that the times are very bad and that we are all going to the pope. Do not be at all afraid. God will glorify His name by the Gospel again as He did before. Martin Luther was not, in himself, a character so lovely that one might be overwhelmed with admiration of him. Where, then, lay his power? His power lay in thisthat he grasped the true Gospeland he was a man who, when he grasped a thing, gave it a grip so firm that the devil himself could not wrench it away from him.

With the Gospel in his hands he could say, Heaps upon heaps with the weapon of the Gospel I have slain my thousands. Heaps upon heaps the foes of God are overturned. He was mighty because he declared the Gospel of Jesus Christand with this he shook the world and brought about the Reformation. You need not, therefore, despair.

If the ministers of Christ will only come back to preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, plainly, simply, and with the Holy Spirit sent down from Heaven, we shall drive the Ritualists, those cubs of the old Roman monster, back to their dens, as our fathers did their mother of old. Never lose your faith in the Gospel. Always believe that our power is gone when we get away from the Crossbut know also without a doubtwhen we come back to the Truth as it is in Jesus, God glorifies His name.

II. LET US NOW OBSERVE ONE OR TWO INSTRUCTIVE CIRCUMSTANCES connected with these three Divine Testimonies. On each occasion Jesus was in prayer.

My dear, dear young people, look at the proofs of that in your Bibles. You will find in one or other of the Evangelists that it is distinctly stated on each occasion that our Lord was in prayer. Learn, then, that if any child of God would have God speak comfortably to him, he must speak to God in prayer. If you would have the witness of the Holy Spirit in your soul, you must be much in supplication. Neglect not the Mercy Seat.

Notice next that each time the sufferings of Christ were prominently before Him. John, at the waters of Jordan had said, Behold the Lamb of God, plainly speaking of sacrifice. Baptism itself, the fulfilling of all righteousness, we have seen to be the type of His death, and of His immersion in suffering. On Tabor, on the second occasion, Matthew tells us that, Behold, there talked with Him two men, which were Moses and Elijah: who appeared in glory, and spoke of His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem.

The subject that the best of men talked about when they met was the death of Jesus. No better topic, then, for us when we meet. If we were the most talented and the wisest men that ever lived, if we met together and wanted the most select topic for an eclectic discussion, we ought to choose the Cross. For Jesus, Moses, and Elijahthree great representative mentalked of the Atoning death of the great Substitute. The third time our Lord had just spoken about the hour being come in which He was to be glorified, as you well remember. Learn then, my Brethren, that if you desire to see the glory of Christ, as attested of the Father, you must dwell much on His death.

Do not talk to me about the life of Christ in all its parity, I know it and rejoice in it. But I tell you that the death of Christ, in all His misery, is the grandest point of view. The example of Jesus should be exalted by all meansbut His Atonement is far grander. And you, Sirs, who take the Man Christ and offer your pretty, complimentary phrases about Himbut then turn round and deny His expiating SacrificeI tell you your tawdry offerings are unacceptable to Him. To be complimented by your lips is almost to be censured, for if you do not believe on Him as an Atoning Sacrifice, you do not understand His life. Thus each attestation came in connection with the Lords sufferings, as if the glory of Christ dwelt mainly there.

Once moreeach time that Jesus received this Word from the Father He was honoring the Father. In Baptism He was honoring Him by obedience. On the mountain He was honoring Him in devotion. In the Temple the very words He was using were, Father, glorify Your name. Oh, if you would see Gods glory, and hear Gods Voice in your own heart, honor Him! Spend and be spent for Him! Keep not back your sacrifices, withhold not your offerings! Lay yourselves upon His altar, and when you say with Isaiah, Here am I, send me, for any servicewhatever it may bethen shall you also feel that the Lord is with you, owning both you and your works, and glorifying Himself in it.

III. Lastly, THE PRACTICAL LESSON may be found in the words, Hear Him.

Earnestly let me speak to everyone here. God has three times with audible Voice spoken out of Heaven to bear witness to Jesus. These are historical facts. I beseech you, then, receive with assured conviction the Truth to which God bears witness. The Man of Nazareth is the Son of the Highest. The Son of Mary is the Savior appointed to bear human sin. He is the way of salvation, and the only way. Doubt not this Truth of God. Accept the Savior, for God declares that He is well-pleased in Him. Hear Him, then, with profound reverenceaccept the teaching and invitations of Jesus as not the mere utterances of fallible menbut as the instructions and the loving expostulations of God.

I pray you have respect to every Word and command of Christ. Listen to Him as spirits listen to the voice of the Most High when they bow before the Truth of God. And if He says to you, as He does this morning, Come unto Me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest, hear Him and lovingly obey the command. Hear Him, I pray you, with unconditional obedience. God attests Him as being sent from Heaven. Whatever He says to you, do it. And since He bids you believe Him, be not unbelieving. He has told us to say in His name, He that believes and is baptized, shall be saved. Despise not that double command. Attend, O Sinner, attend, for it is the Son of God who speaks to you! Trust and be baptized, and you shall be saved. There stands the Gospel stamped with the authority of Deity! Obey it now. May the Holy Spirit lead you to do so.

Hear Him, lastly, with joyful confidence. If God has sent Jesus, trust Him. If He bears the Glory of Gods Seal upon Him, joyfully receive Him. You who have trusted Him, trust Him better from this day forth. Leave your souls right confidently in the hands of Him of whom Jehovah, thrice speaking out of Heaven, declares that He is the only Savior. Receive Him, Sinner, you that would be saved! May the Lord confirm the Testimony which He spoke out of Heaven, by speaking in your hearts by His Holy Spirit, that you may rejoice in His Beloved Son, and glorify God in Him.

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THE CRISIS OF THIS WORLD   
NO. 2338

**INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, DECEMBER 10, 1893. DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, OCTOBER 6, 1889.

**Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me. This He said, signifying what death He should die. John 12:31-33.**

OUR Lord passed through His passion in a kind of rehearsal before it came. He saw those Greeks who came to Philip and whom Andrew and Philip brought to Him, and His heart was flushed with joy. This was to be the result of His death, that the Gentiles would be gathered to Him! That thought reminded Him of His approaching decease. It was very nearonly a few days would elapse and then He would die upon the Cross. In anticipation of Calvary, His soul was full of troublenot that He feared death, but His death was to be a very peculiar one. He was to die the Just for the unjust. He was to bear our sins in His own body on the tree and His pure and holy soul shrank from contact with sin! To stand in the sinners placeto bear His Fathers wraththis bewildered Him. He was very faint of heart and He cried, What shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify Your name. Without any wicked weakness, He proved how truly human He was without any sinful repining at His Fathers will, He saw how terrible that will was and He shuddered at what it included. This was a kind of rehearsal for Gethsemane. It was a sipping of that cup of which He was to drink until His sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground, while His whole soul poured out the agonized petition, O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me: nevertheless not as I will, but as You will.

When our Lord Jesus was in this great distress of mind, in anticipation of the terrible sufferings He was about to endure, His Father spoke to Him. And when you are in your direst distress, God will speak to you. If you are His child, when the weakness of your flesh seems ready to prevail over your spirit, you, too, shall have a reassuring voice out of the excellent Glory even as your Master had. He seemed to recover Himself at once and, bracing Himself up, He indulged His heart again with a vision of the glorious result of His death. Then He uttered the happy words on which we are to meditate, tonight, in which He summed up the consequences of His death in these three pointsNow is the judgment of this world. Now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me.

Let us, first, tonight, consider the threefold result of Christs death. And when we have done that, let us think about Christs death as it is described in our text.

I. First, let US CONSIDER THE THREEFOLD RESULT OF CHRISTS DEATH.   
There is, first, the judgment of the world Now is the judgment of this world. If you like, you may read it, crisis, for that is the Greek word used hereNow is the crisis of this world. The world is sick. It grows worse and the physician says that its malady has come to a climaxit is a case of kill or cure. There was a crisis in the worlds disease and that crisis was when Christ died! His death was the turning point, the hinge of the worlds history. There have been many hinges in historyevery nation has a hinge in its historythe Cross of Christ was the hinge of the worlds historyit had reached the turning point. I thank God that the death of Christ was the future death of sin. When He died, the archenemy received his death stroke. That death was the bruising of Christs heel, but in that death He bruised the old serpents head.   
Now there is hope for the worldits crisis is passed! Now will the gods of the heathen fall! Now will the dark ignorance of men yield to the Light of the world! After this crisis there shall come a new Heaven and a new earth wherein dwells righteousness, for Christs first coming is a pledge of His second coming wherein He will exterminate sin and make the wilderness and the solitary places to blossom as the rose. Thus we may render our Saviors words, Now is the crisis of this world, the turning point, the hinge, on which all its history hangs. Still, I greatly prefer to keep to our old version, which is a translation whereas mine is only a borrowing of the original word crisis.   
Now is the judgment of this world. This means that when Christ died, the world that lies in the Wicked One, the ungodly world, was judged in this sensefirst, it was convicted of being guiltiest of the guilty. I daresay you have heard people rise pretty phrases about the dignity of human nature and so on. They are lying phrases, for human nature is as bad as it can be. If you want the proof of that assertion, behold how God, Himself, came here among men, Incarnate Virtue robed in love! Did men love Him? Did they fall down before Him and do Him homage? The homage of the world was, Crucify Him! Crucify Him! The world hates virtueit cannot bear perfectionit might endure benevolence, but absolute purity and righteousness it cannot! Its native instincts are wrong. It is not towards the Light of God that men are goingtheir backs are to the sunthey are journeying into the thick darkness.   
And, next, the world was convicted of the stupendous crime of murdering the Son of God! I will not call it regicide, but Deicideand this is the crime of crimes. Truly was the world guilty of all that Prophets ever charged it with and much more. When wicked men slew the Prince of Life, the Holy One and the Just, then was it proven that the world is at heart, atheistic, that it hates God and would put God, Himself, to death if He were within its grasp. Thus did men put the Incarnate God to death when He submitted Himself to their power. You need not talk about the virtues of the worldit slew the Christand that is enough to condemn it. We need no other proof of its guilt. You cannot bring evidence more complete and overwhelming than thisthey slew the Lord of Life and Glorythey said, This is the heir; come, let us kill Him and the inheritance shall be ours.   
Christs death was the judgment of this world, next, by sentencing the world, for if Christ, who was perfectly innocent, must die when He stood in the sinners place, what do you think, O guilty men, will you not, also, die? If the Well-Beloved of Heaven, bearing nothing but imputed guilt sins not His ownmust, nevertheless, be struck of God and afflicted and a voice must be heard, Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, and against the Man that is My Fellow, says the Lord of Hosts. If He must die on yonder cruel tree. If He must cry, My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? then, be sure of this, there is wrath treasured up against the Day of Wrath and no soul of man that does evil shall go unpunished! Is there not a God who is the Judge of all the earth and who must do right? If it is right to strike the Innocent, who assumed the place of the guilty, it must surely be right that the truly guilty should die the death! The soul that sins, it shall die. So there was not only the conviction, but also the sentence of the world, when Jesus died.   
And more than that, there is the final ending of the trial when the world rejects Christ. As long as you are here, my Hearers, and Christ is preached to you, there is hope for you. But in that day when you reject Christ, finally, and will have none of Himwhen you cry, Away with Him, away with Him! We will not be washed in His blood, we will not be clothed in His righteousnessin that day you seal your doom and there remains no hope for you! There is one window in Heaven and through it streams the Light of Life, but if that is closed, no other will ever be opened! There is none other name under Heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. If you have, for the last time, put Christ away. If you have altogether done with Him, you have ended your probation, you have finished your trial, you have put out your last candleyou are forever doomed! When Christ is so rejected as actually to be made away with as He was upon the Cross, then is the judgment of this world.   
I wish that I had time to pause here to press these points upon you who belong to the world. There are but two parties, the world and the Church of God. If you are not of the Church of God, you belong to the worldand the world is judged by the death of Christ. If you are not a Christian, you are a member of that great corporation called the world. Men sometimes speak of a Christian world and an un-Christian world, a religious world and an irreligious world, a sporting world, a laughing world, a thieving world, a trading worldbut all that is really of the world is outside the bounds of the Church of God! He who believes in Christ has escaped from the world. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world, said Christ concerning His disciples. But to the unbelieving Jews He said, You are from beneath; I am from above: you are of this world; I am not of this world.   
Thus, you see the first result of the death of Christ is the world is judged, the world is convicted, the world is sentenced for its rejection of Christ. A Christ-rejecting world is a doomed worldmay none of you belong to that world!

The second result of Christs death is the casting out of SatanNow shall the prince of this world be cast out. He who holds sway over it shall now lose his throne. The prince of this world is Satan, the archenemy of God and of man, but he is not always to reign as the prince of the power of the air, the chief of the rulers of the darkness of this world. He is to be cast out of his present dominions.  
By the death of Christ, Satans accusations against Believers are answered. One of the practices in which he most delights is that of accusing the people of God and, alas, he has plenty of cause for his charges. But whenever he accuses us, our one answer is, Jesus died. He says, These people have sinned, and we reply, True, but Jesus died for them. And the Cross of Christ stops the mouth of the accuser! Even a feeble saint, looking up to His crucified and risen Savior, can boldly sing *I may my fierce accuser face,   
And tell Him you have died.*   
Next, Christs Cross spoils Satan of his universal monarchy. He could once lord it over the whole world and he does very much of that even now, but there is a people over whom he cannot sway his evil scepter! There is a race which has broken loose from him. They are free and they defy him to enslave them again. They care not for his threats, they are not to be won by his blandishments and though he worries and tempts them, yet he cannot destroy themhe can boast no longer of universal dominion! There is a Seed of the woman that has revolted from him, for Jesus, by His death, has redeemed them out of the hand of the enemy and they are free! I heard a story of an old black woman who was waiting upon a lady visiting friends in the South some time after the last great war in America. The lady said to the black servant, You may very well wait upon a Northerner with great attention, for it is through us that you are free. Free, Missy, free? exclaimed the Negress, Is a slave. I was born a slave. Oh, but you are free! Do you not know that there has been an Act passed by which you are all free? Yes, I did hear something about dat and I said to old Massa, I hear dat we is all free. He said, Stuff and nonsense, so Is bin stoppin here workin for Him. Is it true, Missy, that we is all free? Oh, yes! she answered, you are all free, every slave is now free. Then, said the woman, I dont bin serve old Massa any longer; I bid Him Goodbye. And so it is when Christ sets us freewe do not serve the old massa, Satan, any longerwe bid him Good-bye.   
When we are set free from the dominion of the devil, by the emancipating redemption of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Satans tyrannical power is crippled. He still has great influence and he does his worst to injure the Kingdom of Christ by persecution, by false doctrine and by a thousand other methods, but Christ has broken his right armhe cannot work as he once did and, more and more, as the fruit of the Redeemers passion, Satans power will be curtailed until, at last, he shall be utterly cast out and the triumphant shout shall be heard, Hallelujah, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigns! Let us never imagine that the devil is going to conquer in the great battle between right and wrong. Gods Word tells us plainly enough what his end is to beAnd the devil that deceived them was cast into the Lake of Fire and Brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever.   
Now, if any of you suffer through Satan tempting you to despair. If he comes to some of you and entices you to commit a sin which you hate, and against which you strive with all the might God gives you. If, by a mysterious force that you cannot comprehend, he seems to make you do other than you wouldtake courage and stand up against him, for when Jesus died, He said that, by His death, the Prince of Darkness was cast out and so He is! Sin shall not have dominion over you, nor shall Satan! Only be bold in resisting him, claim your liberty as a child of God and fight under the command of Christ, for the Cross is the conquering banner for all who would overthrow the power of Satan   
*By all Hells host withstood   
We all Hells host overthrow!   
And conquering them, through Jesus blood We still to conquer go.*   
The third result of Christs death is the central attraction of His Cross. I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me. Christ on the Cross has become the great magnet attracting men to Himself. What did He mean by this saying? Did He not mean that His sphere of influence would be widened? While I am here, said He, I draw a few men to Me. These fishermen have become My disciples, these Greeks have come to see Me, but when I am lifted up upon the Cross, I shall draw all men unto Memen of all sorts, men out of all nations, multitudes of men, not only of this one age, but of all agestill the world shall end! I shall become the center of a wider circle, a circle wide as the world. I shall draw all men unto Me. But why is it that Christ draws men to Himself? I answer that it is because, by dying on the Cross, He gave a new and brighter display of His love! Men came to Christ because of His love while He walked the earthlittle children especially didbut after He had died that shameful death, how could they help coming to Him? Scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet perhaps for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commends His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Herein is love. And to all the ages the masterpiece of love is the dying Christ praying for His enemies, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. Christ on the Cross draws sinners to Himself! Christ Crucified attracts through the infinite love to men which is displayed in that death!   
A part of the attraction lies in the wonderful blessings which come to us through Christs death. We were drawn to Him because we received pardon through His wounds. We came to Him because we found eternal life through His death upon the tree. Jesus bore the sin of His people, He died in our place and, by doing so, He put away all our iniquities, blotted them out, cast them into the depths of the sea! Only as He was lifted up upon the Cross could that be said to be the case. But when He was crucified, He finished transgression, made an end of all, and brought in everlasting righteousness. Beloved, this is a great attraction to perishing sinnersit is a drawing of love to which they must yield. When Jesus thus attracts us, we run to Him because pardon and eternal life are to be found through His lifting up on the Cross. I would that some here might be drawn to Christ at this moment by the mighty magnet of His death. Remember how the poet sings of the attraction of the Cross   
*So great, so vast a Sacrifice   
May well my hope revive.   
If Gods own Son thus bleeds and dies,   
The Sinner surely may live!   
Oh, that these cords of love Divine   
Might draw me, Lord, to Thee!   
You have my heart, it shall be Yours,   
Yours it shall ever be!*   
The death of Christ attracted to Him multitudes of the sons of men because it expanded the hearts of His people. While He was alive and with them, they never burned with such enthusiasm as after He had died. One of the first effects of His death was the outpouring of the Spirit of God upon them, infusing them with new life, a holy fervor and a sacred enthusiasm which made them go unto the utmost ends of the earth, publishing among the Gentiles full redemption through His precious blood! Christ, when He was lifted up, made His followers disseminate themselves throughout all populations of the globe till their line went forth to the ends of the earth and, like the sun over every clime, so did the Gospel of Jesus Christ enlighten every nation under Heaven. I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me. Christ is the Center of mankind! He is the Shiloh and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be! They shall come away from the abominations of Rome. They shall come away from the crescent of the false prophet. They shall come away from the idols of the dark places of the earth. They shall come away from infidelity and philosophy and shall come crowding to His dear feet as they feel the marvelous magnetism of His atoning death!   
These three things, then, resulted from the death of Christthe wicked world was judged, the power of Satan was broken and Christ was made the central attraction of sinners to Himselfand that attracting power is working now! Oh, that these three wonders might be worked in our midst tonight, according to our measure!   
II. Now, in the second place, I want you, for a few minutes, to quietly THINK ABOUT THE DEATH OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST AS DESCRIBED IN OUR TEXT.   
How much the Holy Spirit desires that we should read the Scriptures intelligently! He had recorded these Words of the Lord Jesus, I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me. If that had been all, we might have askedDoes that lifting up from the earth mean Christs death? Does it mean His ascension, His going up from the earth till the cloud received Him? Or does it mean our preaching of Christ, when we lift Him up before men, as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness? So, to avoid all question, the Holy Spirit added the 33rd verse, This He said, signifying what death He should die. If there is anything that the Spirit wishes us to be especially clear about, it is all expressions that have to do with our Lords death. Let us thank Him for that comment inserted here, lest we should make any mistake upon so vital a subject.   
Now looking at the words, I want you to notice that Christ went to His death with a clear view of what it was to be. There is many a man who has rushed into the battle and died without any idea of what a gunshot wound would be, or what the piercing of a lance would be. But our Lord, as it were, took stock of His death and looked it calmly in the face. He does not speak of it as barely death, but He describes the manner of itI, if I am lifted up from the earth. In His own mind, He had gone through the nailing to the wood and He had come to the lifting up of that wood into the air, the fixing of its socket in the ground and, in spirit, He felt Himself already hanging there, lifted up from the earth. Just think of this wondrous fact, as Dr. Watts puts it

*This was compassion like a God,   
That when the Savior knew   
The price of pardon was His blood,   
His pity noer withdrew.*   
Knowing that His death was to be by crucifixion, He did not turn from it He set His face like a flint to endure all that the Cross meant. He fully knew what it meant, but you and I do not. There are depths in His sufferings that must be unknown to us, but He knew them all and, with love that was strong as death, He went through it all for your redemption, O Believer! Then, love Him in return with a resolute, determined consecration of your whole being! Yield yourself up to Him, not spasmodically, but of love aforethought, to be wholly His! Somebody said to me, the other day, that all religion, nowadays, either suffered from paralysis or convulsions. I do not want you to have either of those complaints, though I like the convulsions better than the paralysis. Let us not have convulsed religion, but let us have strongly fixed principles, knowing what we have to do and why we do it, and then, like the Savior, let us go forward, expecting difficulty, expecting loss, expecting ridiculebut willingly and willfully facing it all for His dear sake, as He, on His part, endured even the Cross for our sake!   
Notice, next, that though our Savior knew the bitterness of His death, He read its issues in another light. I, if I am lifted updo you catch the thought? He does not merely mean lifted up on the Cross, He means another kind of lifting upHe means being exalted! When He was lifted up upon the Cross, men thought it degradation, but He looked into His death as one looks into an opal till He sees wondrous rainbows and flames of fire in the precious stone. So Jesus looked into His passion till He saw His Glory! Down in the ruddy depths of that blood-cup, He saw that He was really being lifted up when men thought that He was being cast down. That crown of thorns was a more wondrous diadem than monarch ever wore! His Cross was His Throne. With His outspread hands, He ruled the nations and with His feet fixed there, He trampled on the enemies of men!   
O glorious Christ, when I have had a vision of Your Cross, I have seen it, at first, like a common gallows and You were hanging on it like a felon! But, as I have looked, I have seen it begin to rise and tower aloft till it has reached the highest Heaven and by its mighty power lifted up myriads to the Throne of God! I have seen its arms extend and expand until they have embraced all the earth! I have seen the foot of it go down deep as our helpless miseries areand what a vision I have had of your magnificence, O Crucified One! As Jesus looked forward to His death, He saw more than we can even now see in it and He perceived that it was His Glory to be lifted up on the Cross of Calvary!   
Further, He beheld in it the supply of our great need. I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw. He saw that we were far away and could not, of ourselves, come near, so He said, If I am lifted up, I will draw them. He saw that we would not wish to come; that we would be so hard-hearted and stiff-necked that we would not come if we were called! But, He said, I, from the Cross, will draw them. As a magnet draws steel, I will attract them. Oh, think of the Cross of Christ in that light! Some have thought that if we preach the Gospel, we shall always have a congregation. I am not sure of that, but if the Gospel does not attract a congregation, I do not know what will. But Christ does not say, I, if I am lifted up, will draw all men to little Bethel, or to Salem. He says, I will draw all men unto Me, that is, to Himselfand we only come to Christ because Christ comes to us!   
No man ever comes to Christ unless Christ draws Him and the only magnet that Christ ever uses is Himself. I do believe that we slander Christ when we think that we are to draw the people by something else but the preaching of Christ Crucified. We know that the greatest crowd in London has been held together these 30 years by nothing but the preaching of Christ Crucified. Where is our music? Where is our oratory? Where is anything of attractive architecture, or beauty of ritual? A bare service, they call it. Yes, but Christ makes up for all deficiencies! Preach Christ and men will be drawn to Him, for so the text says, I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me. They are held back by Satan, but the Cross will draw them. They are held back by despair, but the Cross will attract them. They are held back by lack of desire, but the Cross will breed desire. They are held back by love of sin, but the Cross will make them hate the sin that crucified the Savior. I will draw them. All sorts of men I will draw unto Myself, says the Crucified Christ. Thus He supplies our great need.   
Observe, too, that Jesus knew that He would live to exercise that attraction. He says, I, if I am lifted up from the earthwhat then? Shall I be dead? No, I will draw all men unto Me. He lives! Going to death, He expects to live, He glories in His life, He tells of what He means to do after He is risen from the dead! O glorious Christ, to look beyond Your death and find comfort in Your risen life! Cannot you, my Brothers, my Sisters, sometimes look beyond the grave and find comfort in what you will do in Heaven? Oh, will we not glorify our Lord in Heaven? In the anticipation of what we will do in honor of our precious Savior, let us now take up arms against our present trouble, borrowing our weapons from the armory of the future after our earthly life is over!   
Jesus saw, too, (and here I must finish), that the day would come when He would be surrounded by a mighty company. Can you not see Him? He is lifted up upon the Cross and He begins to drawand men come to Him, a few at Jerusalemno, did I say, a few?three thousand in one day! The Crucified has pierced their hearts; the Crucified has begotten faith in them; the Crucified has drawn thousands to Himself! He is preached in Damascus. He is preached at Antioch, Corinth, Romeand everywhere He is preached, He draws sinners to Himselfand great companies come to Him! By-and-by He is preached in far-off Britainsome pioneer evangelist finds a place in these islands where he can preach to the uncivilized, the Gospel of Christand Jesus draws them to Himself! He draws men till, all over Romes vast empire, Christ crucified is drawing them from Caesars palace and from Caesars prison! From the slave at the mill to the senator who rules the city, Christ is drawing them!   
The kings who wear their crowns by permission of the Roman power some of them bow before King JesusHe is drawing them! The people on the isles of the sea and on every coast, He is drawing them. And today He is still drawing them! From the sunny islands of the southern sea, from the far north of Greenland, from Africa, from China, from everywhere, He draws them more and more! And here, in this, our favored island, He has drawn myriads to Himself, but the day shall come when that drawing power will begin to operate yet more freely. They shall run to Him! They shall fly to Him with swift wings, as doves fly to their cots. They shall come to Him as on a sudden, till the Church shall cry in astonishment, Who has begotten me these? These, where had they been?   
As the drops of the morning dew are seen, glittering like diamonds on every hedge, and on every blade of grass, when once the sun is up, so shall Christs converts be, like Abrahams promised seed, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the seashore, innumerable. Christs people shall be willing in the day of His power and the great attraction by which they will be drawn to Him will be His death on the Cross! Oh, that He would draw many to Himself tonight! Let this be our prayer to Him   
*Dear Savior, draw reluctant hearts. To You let sinners fly   
And take the bliss Your love imparts And drink, and never die!* Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 12:19-43.**

Our Lord raised Lazarus from the dead and this miracle made a great sensation among the people. They came to meet Jesus, waving palm branches before Him, and all Jerusalem was on a stir.

Verses 19-22. The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive you how you prevail nothing? Behold, the world is gone after Him. And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast: the same came, therefore, to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired Him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus. Philip went and told Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip told Jesus. These were probably Gentiles who were staying at Jerusalemperhaps proselytes who had come up to the feast. They were touched by the common feeling; they desired to see this wonderful Man who had raised to life one who had been dead four days. They proceeded courteously. They went to one of Christs disciples who, coming from Galilee of the Gentiles, would be likely to sympathize with them, and they sought an introduction to Jesus. This Philip obtained for them with the help of Andrew.

23. And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified. He knew that the hour was come when He must die. Looking through the dark glass of Death, He saw what its result would be and He called it Glory! These few Greeks were the advance guard of the great Gentile army of the LordHe regarded their coming in that sense.

24. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone: but if it dies, it brings forth much fruit. Telling them that the source of His Glory would be His death. The reason why the people would hear of Him and come to Him, was that He would be hanged on the Cross. The grain of wheat, when put into the ground, if it remains as it is, will never increaseit must die if it is to bring forth fruit. What is death? The end of existence? None but thoughtless persons imagine that! Death is the resolution of any living substance into its primary elements. It is the division of the soul from the bodyoriginally it was the division of the soul from God. In a grain of wheat, death is the separation of the particles of which it is composed, that the life-germ may feed upon that which was provided for it. If it dies, in the true sense of the word, in being separated into its constituent elements, then, it brings forth much fruit. Christs way to Glory was through the grave. He must go down that He might mount to the Throne of God.

25. He that loves his life shall lose it; and he that hates his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. Live for this world and you shall lose this world and the next, too! Live for the world to come and you shall, in the highest sense, gain both worlds!

26. If any man serves Me, let him follow Me. That is the best kind of serviceto do what Christ did and to do what Christ bids you doIf any man serves Me, let Him follow Me.

26. And where I am, there shall also My servant be: if any man serve Me, Him will My Father honor. Follow Christ, then, to the Cross. Follow Him to the grave. Follow Him in His humiliation and then the Father will honor you even as He honored His Son.

27. Now is My soul troubled. Or, puzzled. This hour of His Glory was the hour of His passion, too.   
27. And what shall I say? Such sorrow was in His heart that He asked, What shall I say? Great trouble brings astonishment, amazement, bewilderment with itand the human soul of Christ felt as ours feels when in great agony.   
27. Father, save Me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Nature suggests the cry, Father, save Me from this hour. Grace comes behind the flesh, being a little slower to speak, but it corrects the errors of the flesh and says, For this cause came I unto this hour.   
28. Father, glorify Your name. What a prayer! Jesus swallows up His temptation to escape the cup by this all-absorbing petition, Father, glorify Your name.   
28, 29. Then came there a voice from Heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again. The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered. They only heard the sound and it was like thunder in their ears.   
29. Others said, An angel spoke to Him. They distinguished the sound of someone speaking, but they did not recognize the voice of God.   
30. Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of Me, but for your sakes. To make you believe that God is with Me and that I am His Son.   
31-34. Now is the Judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me. This He said, signifying what death He should die. The people answered Him, we have heard out of the Law that Christ abides forever: and how say You, The Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man? As if it could not be true that Christ, in His Divine Nature, abides forever, and yet, as Man, could be lifted up to die! It was a sneering question, Who is this Son of Man? Our Lord did not answer it, thus teaching us that some people are not worth answering. Instead of replying to their question, Jesus gave them a practical admonition.   
35, 36. Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the Light with you. Walk while you have the Light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walks in darkness knows not where he goes. While you have Light, believe in the Light, that you may be the children of Light. These things spoke Jesus and departed, and did hide Himself from them. When people determine to reject Christ, He leaves them! Why should He tarry where He is rejected? He departed, and did hide Himself.   
37-41. But though He had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on Him; that the saying of Isaiah the Prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke, Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Isaiah said again, He has blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Isaiah, when he saw His glory, and spoke of Him. Christ is in the Old Testament in many places where, as yet, even we have never seen Him. I doubt not that He lies hidden away in many a Psalm, and many a prophetic utterance that has not yet been fully expounded, or even comprehended by our finite minds. Oh, for eyes to see Him where He sits in His ancient state! What a solemn fact this is, though, that God allows men to be given over to blindness of eyes and hardness of heart! I sometimes fear that it is so with this age. Men will not seethey will not believe! They are desperately set on skepticismit has become a fashion with them. Like a torrent, it sweeps through the very churches that bear the name of Christ! My fear is God, in His wrath, may give up our land to this curse, and then where will our hope be?   
42, 43. Nevertheless among the chief rulers, also, many believed on Him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. I wonder whether in this throng there are any of this kind who believe in Christ, and yet never come out and confess Him because they love the praise of men more than the praise of God? If so, I venture to say that they are found among what are called the more respectable people, the men of light and leading, the chief rulers. Among the common people there is very little of this evil. They will generally confess what they believe and bravely come forward to declare that they belong to Christ! It is the chief rulers, the gentlemen of the Sanhedrim, who, if they believe in Christ in their hearts, do not confess Him, lest they should be put out of society, for they love the praise of men more than the praise of God.

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CHRIST LIFTED UP   
NO. 139

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON SABBATH MORNING, JULY 5, 1857, BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE MUSIC HALL, ROYAL SURREY GARDENS.

**And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me. John 12:32.**

IT was an extraordinary occasion upon which the Savior uttered these words. It was the crisis of the world. We very often speak of the present crisis of affairs, and it is very common for persons of every period to believe their own age to be the crisis and turning point of the whole worlds history. They rightly imagine that very much of the future depends upon their present exertions. But they wrongly stretch the thought and imagine that the period of their existence is the very hinge of the history of the worldthat it is the crisis. However it may be correct, in a modified sense, that every period of time is in some sense a crisis, yet there never was a time which could be truly called a crisis in comparison with the season when our Savior spoke. In the 31st verse, immediately preceding my text, we find in the English translation, Now is the judgment of this world. But we find in the Greek, Now is the crisis of this world. The world had come to a solemn crisisnow was the great turning point of all the worlds historyshould Christ die, or should He not? If He would refuse the bitter cup of agony, the world is doomed. If He should pass onward, do battle with the powers of death and Hell and come off a victor, then the world is blessed and her future shall be glorious. Shall He succumb? Then is the world crushed and ruined beneath the trail of the old serpent! Shall He conquer? Shall He lead captivity captive and receive gifts for men? Then this world shall yet see times when there shall be a new Heaven and a new earth, wherein dwells righteousness. Now is the crisis of this world! The crisis, He says, is two-fold. Dealing with Satan and men. I will tell you the result of it. Now shall the prince of this world be cast out. Fear not that Hell shall conquer. I shall cast him out. And on the other hand, doubt not that I shall be victorious over the hearts of men. I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me. Remembering the occasion upon which these words were uttered, we shall now proceed to a discussion of them.

We have three things to notice. Christ Crucified is Christs Glory. He calls it a lifting Him up. Christ Crucified, the ministers theme. It is the ministers business to lift Christ up in the Gospel. Christ Crucified, the hearts attraction. I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me. His own Glorythe ministers themethe hearts attraction.

I. I begin thenCHRISTS CRUCIFIXION IS CHRISTS GLORY. He uses the words, lifted up, to express the manner of His death. I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me. This He said, signifying what death He should die. But notice the choice of the words to express His death. He does not say, I, if I am crucified, I, if I am hanged on the tree. No, but, I, if I am lifted upand in the Greek there is the meaning of exaltation. I, if I am exaltedI, if I am lifted on high. He took the outward and visible fashion of the Cross, it being a lifting of Him up, to be the type and symbol of the Glory with which the Cross should invest even Him. I, if I am lifted up.

Now the Cross of Christ is Christs Glory. We will show you how. Man seeks to win his glory by the slaughter of othersChrist by the slaughter of Himself! Men seek to get crowns of goldHe sought a crown of thorns! Men think that glory lies in being exalted over othersChrist thought that His Glory did lie in becoming a worm and no man, a scoff and reproach among all who beheld Him! He stooped when He conquered. And He counted that the Glory lay as much in the stooping as in the conquest.

Christ was glorified on the Cross, we say, first, because love is always glorious. If I might prefer any glory, I would ask to be beloved by men. Surely the greatest glory that a man can have among his fellows is not that of mere admiration, when they stare at him as he passes through the street and throng the avenues to behold him as he rides in his triumphthe greatest fame, the greatest glory of a patriot is the love of his countryto feel that young men and maidens, old men and sires are prepared to fall at his feet in love, to give up all they have to serve him who has served them. Christ won more love by the Cross than He ever did elsewhere. O Lord Jesus, You would never have been as much loved if You had sat in Heaven forever, as You are now loved since You have stooped to death. Not cherubim and seraphim and angels clad in light could ever have loved with hearts so warm as Your redeemed above, or even Your redeemed below. You won love more abundantly by the nail than by Your scepter. Your open side brought You no emptiness of love, for Your people love You with all their hearts! Christ won Glory by His Cross. He was never so lifted up as when He was cast down. And the Christian will bear witness that though he loves his Master anywhere, yet nothing moves his heart to rapture and vehemence of love like the story of the Crucifixion and the agonies of Calvary.

AgainChrist at that time won much Glory by fortitude. The Cross was a trial of Christs fortitude and strength and, therein, it was a garden in which His Glory might be planted. The laurels of His crown were sown in a soil that was saturated with His own blood. Sometimes the ambitious soldier pants for battle because in days of peace he cannot distinguish himself. Here I sit, he says, and rust my sword in my scabbard and win no glory. Let me rush to the cannons mouth. Though some call honor a painted bauble, it may be so, yet I am a soldier and I need it. And he pants for the encounter that he may win glory. Now, in an infinitely higher sense than that poor glory which the soldier gets, Christ looked upon the Cross as being His way to honor. Oh, He said, now shall be the time of My enduranceI have suffered much, but I shall suffer more and then shall the world see what a strong heart of love I have. How patient is the Lamb, how mighty to endure! Never would Christ have had such plans of praise and such songs of honor as He now wins, if He had avoided the conflict and the battle and the agony. We might have blessed Him for what He is and for what He wished to do. We might have loved Him for the very longings of His heart, but we never could have praised Him for His strong endurance, for His intrepid spirit, for His unconquerable love, if we had not seen Him put to the severe test of Crucifixion and the agonies of that awful day. Christ did win Glory by His being crucified!

AgainChrist looked upon His crucifixion as the completion of all His work and, therefore, He looked upon it as an exaltation. The completion of an enterprise is the harvest of its honor. Though thousands have perished in the arctic regions and have obtained fame for their intrepid conduct, yet, my Friends, the man who at last discovers the passage is the most of all honored! And though we shall forever remember those bold men who pushed their way through winter in all its might and dared the perils of the deep, yet the man who accomplishes the deed wins more than his share of the glory. Surely the accomplishment of an enterprise is just the point where the honor hangs. And, my Hearers, Christ longed for the Cross because He looked for it as the goal of all His exertions. It was to be the place upon which He could say, It is finished. He could never say, It is finished, on His Thronebut on His Cross He did cry it! He preferred the sufferings of Calvary to the honors of the multitude who crowded round about Him. For, preach as He might and bless them as He might and heal them as He might, still was His work undone. He was straitened. He had a Baptism to be baptized with and how was He straitened till it was accomplished! But, He said, now I pant for My Cross, for it is the top stone of My labor. I long for My sufferings because they shall be the completion of My great work of Grace. Brothers and Sisters, it is the end that brings the honor. It is the victory that crowns the warrior rather than the battle! And so Christ longed for this, His death, that He might see the completion of His labor. Yes, He said, when I am crucified, I am exalted and lifted up.

And, once againChrist looked upon His crucifixion with the eye of firm faith as the hour of triumph. His disciples thought that the Cross would be a degradation. Christ looked through the outward and visible and beheld the spiritual. The Cross, He said, the gallows of My doom, may seem to be cursed with ignominy and the world shall stand round and hiss at the Crucified. My name may be forever dishonored as One who died upon the tree. Cavilers and scoffers may forever throw this in the teeth of My friendsthat I died with the malefactor. But I look not at the Cross as you do. I know its ignominy, but I despise the shameI am prepared to endure it all. I look upon the Cross as the gate of triumph, as the portal of victory! Oh, shall I tell you what I shall behold upon the Cross?Just when My eyes are swimming with the last tear and when My heart is palpitating with its last pangjust when My body is torn with its last thrill of anguish, then My eyes shall see the head of the dragon broken. It shall see Hells towers dismantled and its castle fallen! My eyes shall see My seed eternally saved. I shall behold the ransomed coming from their prisons. In that last moment of My doom, when My mouth is just preparing for its last cry of, It is finished, I shall behold the year of My redeemed. I shall shout My triumph in the delivery of all My Beloved! Yes, and I shall then see the world, My own earth conquered and usurpers all dethronedand I shall behold in vision the glories of the latter days when I shall sit upon the Throne of My father, David, and judge the earth, attended with the pomp of angels and the shouts of My Beloved! Yes, Christ saw in His Cross the victories of it and, therefore, did He pant and long for it as being the place of victory and the means of conquest! I, said Jesus, if I am lifted up from the earth, if I am exalted, He puts His Crucifixion as being His Glory! This is the first point of our text.

II. But, now, secondly, CHRIST HAS ANOTHER LIFTING UP, not ignominious but truly honorable! There is a lifting of Him upon the pole of the Gospel, in the preaching of the Word! Christ Jesus is to be lifted up every day. For that purpose He came into the worldThat like as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so He might, by the preaching of the Truth, be lifted up from the earth, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. Christ is THE MINISTERS GREAT THEME, in opposition to a thousand other things which most men choose. I would prefer that the most prominent feature in my ministry should be the preaching of Christ Jesus. Christ should be most prominent, not Hell and damnation. Gods ministers must preach Gods terrors as well as Gods mercieswe are to preach the thunder of Gods Law. If men will sin, we are to tell them that they must be punished for it. If they will transgress, woe unto the watchman who is ashamed to say, The Lord comes that takes vengeance. We would be unfaithful to the solemn charge which God has given us if we were wickedly to stifle all the threats of Gods Word. Does God say, The wicked shall be cast into Hell, with all the nations that forget God? It is our business to say so! Did the loving Savior talk of the pit of Hell that burns, of the worm that never dies and of the fire that can never be extinguished? It is ours to speak as He spoke and not to mince the matter! It is no mercy to men to hide their doom. But, my Brothers, terrors never ought to be the prominent feature of a ministers preachingmany old divines thought they would do a great deal of good by preaching thusI do not believe it! Some souls are awakened and terrified by such preachingthey, however, are but few. Sometimes, right solemnly, the sacred mysteries of eternal wrath must be preached, but far more often let us preach the wondrous love of God! There are more souls won by wooing than by threats! It is not Hell, but Christ we desire to preach! O Sinners, we are not afraid to tell you of your doom, but we do not choose to be forever dwelling on that doleful theme! We love rather to tell you of Christ and Him Crucified! We want to have our preaching rather full of the frankincense of the merits of Christ than of the smoke and fire and terrors of Mount Sinai! We are not come unto Mount Sinai but unto Mount Zionwhere milder words declare the will of God and rivers of salvation are abundantly flowing!

Againthe theme of a minister should be Christ Jesus in opposition to mere Doctrine. Some of my good Brothers are always preaching Doctrine. Well, they are right in doing so, but I would not care to have as the characteristic of my preaching, only Doctrine. I would rather have it said, He dwelt much upon the Person of Christ and seemed best pleased when he began to tell about the Atonement and the Sacrifice. He was not ashamed of the Doctrines; he was not afraid of threats, but he seemed as if he preached the threats with tears in his eyes and the Doctrine solemnly, as Gods own Word. But when he preached of Jesus, his tongue was loosed and his heart was at liberty! Brothers, there are some men who preach only Doctrine, who are an injury, I believe, to Gods Church rather than a benefit! I know of men who have set themselves up as umpires over all spirits. They are the men! Wisdom will die with them. If they were once taken away, the great standard of Truth would be removed! We do not wonder that they hate the Popetwo of a trade never agree, for they are far more popish than hethey being themselves infallible! I am afraid that very much of the soundness of this age is but a mere sound and is not realit does not enter into the eyes of the heart, nor affect the being. Brothers, we would rather preach Christ than Election! We love Election, we love Predestination, we love the great Doctrines of Gods Word, but we had rather preach Christ than preach these! We desire to put Christ over the head of the Doctrinewe make the Doctrine the Throne for Christ to sit onbut we dare not put Christ at the bottom and then press Him down and overload Him with the Doctrines of His own Word!

And againthe minister ought to preach Christ in opposition to mere morality. How many ministers in London could preach as well out of Shakespeare as the Bible, for all they need is a moral maxim? The good man never thinks of mentioning Regeneration. He sometimes talks of moral renovation. He does not think of talking about Perseverance by Grace. No, continuance in well-doing is his perpetual cry. He does not think of preaching, believe and be saved. Nohis continual exhortation is, Good Christian people, say your prayers and behave well and by these means you shall enter the Kingdom of Heaven! The sum and substance of his Gospel is that we can do very well without Christ, that although certainly there is a little amiss in us, yet if we just mend our ways in some little degree, that old text, except a man be born-again, need not trouble us. If you want to be made drunkards, if you want to be made dishonest, if you want to be taught every vice in the worldgo and hear a moral preacher! These gentlemen, in their attempts to reform and make people moral, are the men that lead them

from morality! Hear the testimony of holy Bishop LavingtonWe have long been attempting to reform the nation by moral preaching. With what effect? None! On the contrary, we have dexterously preached the people into downright infidelity. We must change our voice! We must preach Christ and Him Crucifiednothing but the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation.

And yet one more remarkthe minister ought to preach Christ in opposition to some who think they ought to preach learning. God forbid we should ever preach against learning! The more of it a man can get, the better for him. And the better for his hearers if he has Grace enough to use it well, but there are some who have so much learning that if in the course of their readings they find a very hard word, out comes the pencilcasethey jot it down, to be glorified in the next Sunday mornings sermon! If they find some outlandish German expression, which, if pulled to pieces, would mean nothing but which looks as if it must be something wonderfulthat must always come outif all the Gospel goes to the wall! You ought to pray to God that they may never be allowed to read anything but their Bibles all week because then you might hear something you could understandbut this would not suit his reference! If he could be understood, he would not be a great preacher, for a great preacher, according to the opinion of some, is a man who is called intellectual. That is to say, a man who knows more about the Bible than the Bible knows about itselfa man who can explain all mysteries by his own intellecta man who smiles at anything like unction and savor, or the influence of Gods Spirit as being mere fanaticism! Intellect, with him, is everything. You sit and hear him, you go out, Dear me, what a remarkable man he is. I suppose he made something out of the text, but I did not know what it was. He seemed to me to be in a fog, himself, although I admit it was an extremely luminous haze. Then people will go again and be sure to take a pew in that Church, because they say he is such a clever man, but the real reason is because they cannot understand him!

In reading the other day a book of advice to ministers, I found it stated and very gravely, too, by some good old tutor of a college, Always have one part of your sermon which the vulgar cannot comprehend, because in that way you will have a name for learning and what you say that they can understand, will impress them the more. By putting in a sentence or two which is incomprehensible, you at once strike their minds as being a superior man and they believe in the weight and the authority of your learningand therefore they will give credence to the rest which they can comprehend. Now, I hold that is all wrong. Christ wants us not to preach learning, but to preach the good Word of Life in the simplest manner possible. Why, if I could only get lords and ladies to listen to me by preaching to them so that they alone could understand methey might go and I would not so much as snap my finger for them all! I desire to preach that the servant maid can understand, that the coachman can understand, that the poor and illiterate may hear readily and gladly receive the Word! And mark you, there never will be much good come to the ministry until it is simplified, until our Brothers learn one language, which they do not seem to know. Latin, Greek, French, Hebrew and 20 other languages they know! There is one I would recommend to their very serious studyit is called Anglo-Saxon. If they would just try and learn that, it is astonishing what a mighty language they would find it to be to move the hearts of men! Saxon before every language in the world! When every other has died out for lack of power, Saxon will live and triumph with its iron tongue and its voice of steel! We must have the common, plain language in which to address the people. And mark this, we must have Christ lifted up from the earth, Christ Crucified, without the gauds and pretensions of learning, without the trappings of attempted eloquence or oratory! If Christ Jesus is earnestly preached, He will draw all men unto Him!

III. AND NOW WE GO TO THE THIRD POINT, WHICH IS, INDEED, THE ESSENCE OF THE TEXTTHE ATTRACTIVE POWER OF THE CROSS OF CHRIST. If Christ is thus preached, thus fully held forth, thus simply proclaimed to the people, the effect will be He will draw all men unto Him! Now, I will show the attracting power of Christ in three or four ways. Christ draws like a trumpet attracting men to hear the proclamation. Christ draws like a net bringing men out of the sea of sin. Christ draws, also, with bonds of love. In the next place, Christ attracts like a standard, bringing all the soldiers round Him and, in the last place, Christ draws like a chariot. I, if I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men unto Me. Now I will try if I can, to explain these points.

First, I said that Christ draws as a trumpet. Men have been likely to sound a trumpet to attract an audience to the reading of a proclamation. The people come from their houses at the well-known sound, to listen to what they are desired to know. Now, my Brothers, part of the attractive power of the Gospel lies in attracting people to hear it. You cannot expect people to be blessed by the preaching of the Gospel if they do not hear it! One part of the battle is to get them to listen to its sound. Now, the question is asked in these times, How are we to get the working classes to listen to the Word? The answer is, Christ is His own attraction, Christ is the only trumpet that you need to trumpet Christ! Preach the Gospel and the congregation will come of themselves. The only infallible way of getting a good congregation is to do this. Oh, said a Socinian once, to a good Christian minister, I cannot figure it out. My Chapel is always empty and yours always crammed full. And yet I am sure mine is the more rational doctrine and you are not by any means as talented a preacher as I am. Well, said the other, I will tell you the reason why your Chapel is empty and mine full. The people have a conscience and that conscience tells them that what I preach is true and that what you preach is false, so they will not hear you. You shall look through the history of this realm ever since the commencement of the days of Protestantism and I will dare to say it without fear of contradiction, that you will almost in every case find that the men who have attracted the greatest mass of people to hear them have been men who were the most evangelicalwho preached the most about Christ and Him Crucified! What was there in Whitefield to attract an audience except the simple Gospel preached with a vehement oratory that carried everything before it? Oh, it was not his oratory but the Gospel that drew the people! There is a something about the Truth of God that always makes it popular. Tell me if a man preaches the Truth, his Chapel wild be empty, Sir, I defy you to prove that! Christ preached His own Truth and the common people heard Him gladly and the multitude flocked to listen to Him. My good ministering Brother, have you got an empty church? Do you want to fill it? I will give you a good recipe and if you will follow it, you will, in all probability, have your chapel full to the doors! Burn all your manuscripts, that is Number One! Give up your notes, that is Number Two. Read your Bible and preach it as you find it in the simplicity of its language. And give up all your Latinized English. Begin to tell the people what you have felt in your own heart and beseech the Holy Spirit to make your heart as hot as a furnace for zeal! Then go out and talk to the people. Speak to them like their brother. Be a man among men. Tell them what you have felt and what you know and tell it heartily with a good, bold face. And, my dear Friend, I do not care who you are, you will get a congregation! But if you say, Now, to get a congregation, I must buy an organ. That will not serve you a bit. But we must have a good choir. I would not care to have a congregation that comes through a good choir. No, says another, but really, I must alter a little my style of preaching. My dear Friend, it is not the style of preaching, it is the style of feeling! People sometimes begin to mimic other preachers because they are successful. Why, the worst preachers are those who mimic others whom they look upon as standards! Preach naturally. Preach out of your hearts just what you feel to be true and the old soul-stirring words of the Gospel will soon draw a congregation! Where the body is, there will the eagles be gathered together.

But if it ended there, what would be the good of it? If the congregation came and listened to the sound and then went away unsaved, of what use would it be? So in the next place, Christ acts as a net to draw men unto Him. The Gospel ministry is, in Gods Word, compared to a fishery. Gods ministers are the fishermenthey go to catch souls, as fishermen go to catch fish. How shall souls be caught? They shall be caught by preaching Christ! Just preach a sermon that is full of Christ and throw it to your congregation, as you throw a net into the seayou need not look where they are, nor try to fit your sermon to different cases. But throw it in and as sure as Gods Word is what it is, it shall not return to Him void! It shall accomplish that which He pleases and prosper in the thing whereto He has sent it. The Gospel never was unsuccessful when it was preached with the demonstration of the Spirit and of power. It is not fine orations upon the death of princes, or the movements of politics which will save souls. If we wish to have sinners saved and to have our Churches increased. If we desire the spread of Gods Kingdom, the only thing whereby we can hope to accomplish the end is the lifting up of Christ, for, I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me.

In the next place, Christ Jesus draws as the cords of love. After men are saved, they are still apt to go astray. It needs a cord to reach all the way from a sinner to Heaven! And it needs to have a hand pulling at him all the way. Now Christ Jesus is the band of love that draws the saint to Heaven. O child of God, you would go astray again if Jesus did not hold you fast! It He did not draw you to Himself, you would still wander. Christian people are like our earth. Our world has two forcesit has one tendency to run off at a tangent from its orbit, but the sun draws it by a centripetal power and attracts it to itselfand so between the two forces it is kept in a perpetual circle. Oh, Christian, you would never walk aright and keep in the orbit of Truth if it were not for the influence of Christ perpetually attracting you to the center! You feel, but if you do not always feel, it is still thereyou feel an attraction between your heart and Christ and Christ is perpetually drawing you to Himself, to His likeness, to His Character, to His love, to His bosom and in that way you are kept from your natural tendency to fly off and to be lost in the wide fields of sin! Bless God that Christ lifted up draws all His people unto Him in that fashion.

And now, in the next place Christ Jesus is the center of attraction. Even as a standard is the center of gathering, we need unity in these days. We are now crying out, away with sectarianism. O for unity! There are some of us who truly pant after it. We do not talk about an evangelical alliancealliances are made between men of different countries. We believe that the phrase, Evangelical Alliance, is a faulty one it should be, Evangelical Unionknit together in union. Why, I am not in alliance with a Brother of the Church of England. I would not be in alliance with him if he were ever so good a man! I would be in union with him, I would love him with all my heart, but I would not make a mere alliance with him. He never was my enemy and he never shall be. And, therefore, it is not an alliance I need with himit is a union! And so with all Gods peoplethey do not care about alliances. They love real union and communion one with another. Now, what is the right way to bring all the churches to union? We must revise the Prayer Book, says one. You may revise it and revise it as long as ever you like, you will never bring some of us to agree to it, for we hate Prayer Books as such, however near perfection! Well then, we must revise the Doctrines, so that they may meet all classes. You cannot. That is impossible! Well then, we must revise the discipline. Yes, sweep the Augean stable! And then after that, the mass of us will stand as much aloof as ever. No, but we must, each of us, make mutual concessions. Indeed, I wonder who will, except the Vicars of Bray, who have no principles at all! For if we have to make mutual concessions, who can be guaranteed that I must not concede a part of what I believe to be true? And that I cannot do, nor can my Brother on the opposite side! The only standard of union that can ever be lifted up in England is the Cross of Christ! As soon as we shall begin to preach Christ and Him Crucified, we shall be all one! We can fight anywhere except at the foot of the Crossthere it is that the order goes forth, sheathe swords.

And those who were bitter combatants before, come and prostrate themselves there and say, You dear Redeemer, You have melted us into one! Oh, my Brothers, let us all preach the Gospel mightily and there will be union! The Church of England is becoming more united with Dissenters. Our good friends at Exeter Hall have gone a very long way to bless the world and uproot the exclusiveness of their own system. As sure as ever they are alive, they have taken the most excellent step in the world to pull down the absurd pretensions of some of their own brethren, to the exclusive claim of being the Church. I glory and rejoice in it! I bless God for that movement and I pray that the day may come when every bishop may do the same. And I do not glory in it merely because I look upon it as the beginning of union but because of the preaching of the Gospel! But at the same time I know thislet their example be followed and the barriers between Dissenters and the Church of England are not tenable. Even the nationality of Episcopacy must yet come down. If my lord, the bishop of so-and-so, is to have so many thousands a year for preaching to a number of people in Exeter Hall, I have as much right as he has to a State grant, for I serve as many Englishmen as he does! There is no one Church in the world that has any right to take a farthing of national money any more than I have! And if there are ten thousand gathered here, it is an unrighteous thing that we should have no subsidy from the State, when a paltry congregation of thirteen and a half in the City of London is to be supported out of national money! The thing cannot be held long. It is impossibleChrists Church will one day reject the patronage of the State. Let all of us begin to preach the Gospel and we shall soon see that the Gospel is self-supportingand that the Gospel does not want or need entrenchments of bigotry and narrow-mindedness in order to make it stand! No, we shall say, Brother, there is my pulpit for you. You are an Episcopalian, preach in my pulpit, you are right welcome. The Episcopalian will say, You are a Baptist and my Brother, there is the parish Church for you. And I announce that the first chance I get to preach in a parish Church, I will do it and risk the consequences! They are our structures, they belong to all Englandwe can give them to whom we please and if tomorrow the will of the sovereign people should transfer those edifices to another denomination, there is nothing in the world that can prevent it! But if not, by what law of Christian love is one denomination to shut its pulpit doors against every other? Many of my dear friends in the Episcopal Church are willing to lend their edifices but they dare not.

But mark youwhen the Gospel is fully preached, all those things will be broken downor one Brother will say, My dear Friend, you preach Christ and so do I, I cannot shut you out of my pulpit. And another will cry, I am anxious for the salvation of souls and so are you! Come into my house, come into my heart, I love you. The only means of unity we shall ever get will be all of us preaching Christ Crucified! When that is donewhen every ministers heart is in the right place, full of anxiety for soulswhen every minister feels that, be he called bishop, presbyter, or preacherall he wants to do is to glorify God and win souls to Jesus, then, my dear Friends, we can maintain our denominational distinctions, but the great bugbear of bigotry and division will have ceased and schism will no more be known! For that day I anxiously pray. May God send it in His own time. As far as I am concerned, here is my hand for every minister of God in creation and my heart with itI love all them who love the Lord Jesus Christ! And I feel persuaded that the nearer we all of us come to the one point of putting Christ first, Christ last, Christ midst and Christ without endthe nearer we shall come to the unity of the one Church of Christ in the bond of holy permanence!

And now I close by noticing the last sweet thoughtI, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me. Then Christ Jesus will draw all His people to Heaven! He says He will draw them unto Himself. He is in Heaven. Then Christ is the chariot in which souls are drawn to Heaven! The people of the Lord are on their way to Heaven, they are carried in everlasting arms. And those arms are the arms of Christ. Christ is carrying them up to His own house, to His own Throne. By-and-by His prayerFather, I will that they, whom You have given Me be with Me where I am, shall be wholly fulfilled! And it is fulfilling now, for He is like a strong courser drawing His children in the chariot of the Covenant of Grace unto Himself. Oh, blessed be God! The Cross is the plank on which we swim to Heaven! The Cross is the great Covenant transport which will weather out the storms and reach its desired Heaven! This is the Chariot, the pillars wherewith are of gold and the bottom thereof silverit is lined with the purple of the Atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ!

And now, poor Sinner, I would to God Christ would pardon you. Remember His death on Calvary. Remember His agonies and bloody sweatall this He did for youif you feel yourself to be a sinner. Does not this draw you to Him?

*Though you are guilty He is good,*

*Hell wash your soul in Jesus blood.*  
You have rebelled against Him and revolted, but He says, return, backsliding children. Will not His love draw you? I pray that both may have their power and influence, that you may be drawn to Christ, now, and at last be drawn to Heaven. May God give a blessing for Jesus sake. Amen.

Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software.   
PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #775 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE GREAT ATTRACTION

NO. 775

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, OCTOBER 13, 1867, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**And I, if I am lifted up from the earth,   
will draw all men unto Me.   
John 12:32.**

THE death of our Lord Jesus Christ must have appeared to His Apostles to be an unmitigated misfortune. No doubt they conceived that it would be the death of the cause, a heavy blow and a deep discouragement. Smite the Shepherd and the sheep will be scattered. Strike the Head and what shall become of the members? But our Lord instructed His disciples that this, which seemed so dreary a circumstance, was really the most hopeful of all the points of His history. He assured them that by His death He would totally defeat the powers of darkness. Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.

He comforted them yet further by the declaration that His Crucifixion, instead of driving men away from His doctrine, would give to that doctrine a peculiar luster and a special charm. The Cross of Christ, with all its ignominy and shame, is no hindrance to His heavenly teaching but is, in fact, a matchless loadstone by which men are attracted to it. There is such a thing as the offense of the Cross, and that offense has not ceased. But listen to the Masters words, I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me. The attractive power of the Gospel lies mainly in the crucifixion of the Gospels great Teacher.

The text needs, perhaps, to be illustrated by doctrines which He concealed within itself, and by facts with which it is connected. The Prince of Darkness had drawn away the sons of men by the fascination of fleshpleasing errors, flattering delusions, alluring pleasures, glittering pomp and outward show. By these he drew all men unto him. The devil led men captive at his will, seducing them from bad to worse. He enticed poor foolish man to his own destructionas fish are taken by the bait, as birds are lured by decoysand as ships are wrecked by false lights.

An enormous whirlpool of evil had for many an age sucked into its vortex multitudes who were sailing upon the sea of life. All over the ocean of society the influence of this monstrous whirlpool of evil was felt, more or less powerfully, so that those who escaped from its horrible depths were, nevertheless, much impeded and diverted in their courseand found it hard to reach the desired haven. Even up to the very mouth of the port of peace, the power of this great whirlpool was evidently felt, drawing all men as it could.

Now the Lord Jesus came into the world to produce a counterattraction, to set in motion a counter-current. Lo, I saw in vision a mysterious hand reaching out of a mighty all-attracting magnet from the sky! It was of so marvelous a power that vessels which were being whirled towards their destruction, were, many of them, suddenly diverted in their course and drawn at once to the magnet and to safety! While others, which did not feel its power to the same saving extent, and became ultimately victims to evil, were nevertheless slowed in their course for awhile, hindered in their desperate folly and prevented from perishing so hastily as they would have done.

Alas, many of them tugged at the oar, or hoisted all sail to escape from the magnet! And so, as they willfully destroyed themselves, they did sad despite to their conscience and perished the more miserably because they despised the great salvation. Just as evil draws all of us, more or less, so Jesus Christ more or less draws all men who hear the Gospel. Some men He draws unto Himself by the effectual drawings of His Divine Grace. These are the all here meantsome of all classes, the all for whom he shed His blood. But where His name is preached, even those who do not believe in Him feel some of the influence which Christianity spreads abroad throughout society.

His name leavens the lump. The sweet perfume of His spikenard fills all the house where He is sitting. Bent upon instituting the new and heavenly attraction which should overcome the powers of evil, our Lord Jesus came into this world to be lifted up from the earthnot for Himselfbut for the sins of others. Down from the heights of Glory He descended, moved by disinterested love. Not that He had anything to gain, but that He might redeem us from our iniquity, and save us from our fearful perils.

On the Cross He effected the redemption of His people. Nailed there in ignominy, in pain, desertion and death, He worked out redemption for His chosen. But men stood at a distance from their best Friend. That is implied in the text. Why should they need to be drawn to Jesus if they were already near to Him? Some stood so far away from the dying Savior that they made His death the subject of mockery, and even found subjects for jest in His dying groans and pangs. All of us were alienated from God and from Christ, who is Gods express Image. Our evil hearts had piled great mountains between us and the Lord Jesus Christ. By nature we do not appreciate His love. We do not render to Him the gratitude which He deserves. We pass by as though it were nothing to us that Jesus should die.

Moreover, since man does not come of himself even when he perceives the gracious errand of the Lord Jesus, our heavenly Friend condescends to draw him. The Truth of God is latent in the textthat men not only are at a distance, but that they will not come to Christ of themselves. The Lord never does unnecessary work. We should never hear of Christs drawing us if we would run without drawing! But the fact is that we stand away from Christ and love the distance. Yes, we make the gulf still wider, developing our original hatred to that which is good by adding the force of habit to our original depravity.

Therefore, since men are at a distance and will not come, the Crucified Savior becomes, Himself, the attraction to men. He casts out from Himself bands of love and cords of gracious constraintand binding these around human hearts He draws them to Himself by an invincible constraint of Divine Grace. Sinners by nature will not come to Jesus, though His charms might even attract the blind and arouse the dead. They will not melt, though surely such beauties might dissolve the adamant, and kindle affection in rocks of ice! But Jesus has a wondrous power about Him to woo and win the sons of men. As out of His mouth goes a two-edged sword, so out of His heart proceed chains of gold by which He binds thousands of willing captives to Himself.

This attraction, according to the text, is to be found operating upon all classes, nations, ranks, and characters of menit is not to be excluded from remote lands, or dens of infamy nearer home. Here and there kings and princes have believingly yielded to its power, while multitudes of the poor have had the Gospel preached to them and have received it in the love of it. I trust there are many of us here, belonging, as we do, to different grades and classes of society, who can verify the truth of this text, I, if I am lifted up, will draw all men unto Me. The young, the old, the rich, the poor, the intellectual, the learned, and the ignorantsome of all sorts does Jesus draw, and thus He earns to Himself the glory of being the universal attractionthe attraction to which all hearts must yield when He draws effectually by His Grace.

Having thus skimmed over the text and endeavored to bring before you the thoughts which it kindles, we shall now speak upon what it is in the Cross which becomes attractive to men. Secondly we shall have a word to say concerning the direction in which Christ Crucified draws. And thirdly, with what power He draws.

I. First, dear Friends, WHAT IS THE ATTRACTION OF JESUS CRUCIFIED? It is asserted by our Savior that when lifted up from the earth He would draw all menHe intended by this His Crucifixionfor John tells us in the 33rd verse, This He said signifying what death He should die. Let it not be forgotten, then, that the power of the Gospel lies in that which certain persons count to be its weakness and reproach. Christ dying for sinners is the great attraction of Christianity!

Certain preachers have missed all in forgetting this. What is Socinianism but an attempt to have Christ without His Cross? Those who sat around the Cross, and said, Let Him come down from the Cross and we will believe Him, were the true ancestors of modern Unitarians who respect the Character of our Lord, and highly esteem Him as a teacher, but reject Him utterly as a Substitute, an Atonement and a Sacrifice for sin. They fondly dream that if they teach His holy life without His ignominious death, men will be attracted to Him. Such has not proved to be the case. I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me is true, and shall be true! But Christ merely as a wise teacher, and an eminent example has not drawn the sons of men who are too far fallen to be charmed into holiness by a mere exhibition of moral excellence, however perfect. Men need not so much a portrait of a man in health as medicine to remove their own diseases. It has been thought by some, of late, that the proper way to draw men to the Gospel is to preach the future glory of Christ. This, indeed, is to be preached in its place, for every part of Divine Truth should hold its position in the Gospel harmony. But it is all a mistake, and a very great and terrible mistake, too, for men to put the glorified Savior into the place of the crucified Savior. You may preach the millenniumyou may extol as much as you will the magnificence of those happy days when He shall reign from the river even to the ends of the earthbut you will never make men Christians that way! I have heard it said that the Jews will be converted to Christianity by the doctrine of the Second Coming since the second advent is to us precisely what they think the first advent should be.

But it is not so, Beloved. The only effectual attraction lies where the texts puts it, I if I am lifted up. The Savior Crucified draws the Jew as well as the Gentile. The sons of Israel shall not be converted by the doctrine of a glorified Savior, but by the Man of Sorrows who was despised and rejected of menthe Messiah who was cut off, but not for Himself the Sacrifice offered outside the gate. And from where is this supreme attraction of the Cross? I answer that by the power of the Holy Spirit many have been drawn to Christ by the disinterested love which His death manifests. Does that Man on yonder tree die without the necessity of death out of pure loveout of pure love to those who hated Him? Out of love to the very men who fastened Him to the cruel wood?

Had He nothing to gain? Was it charity in all its perfectionnothing but the milk-white lily of love? Was there nothing else but charity that could bind Him to the tree? Nothing! You know the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might be rich. Scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet perhaps for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commends His love toward us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Many a heart has been so charmed with this that it has run to Christ, drawn by the silken bonds of love! Do not some of you feel as if you could love the dear Lover of souls this morning? Do not even my feeble descriptions of His Godlike work entice you? Oh, do you not feel that you must love One who loved so truly when there was no benefit for Him to receive in return? Why I have thought that if Jesus had never died for me, I yet must love Him for having died for others! And if I had no share in the benefits which His passion procured, yet I have sometimes felt as if, out of admiration for love so amazing, so Divine, I must give my heart to Him! Here is one master attraction of the Crucified One.

Others have doubtless been brought to the Saviors feet by delight in the satisfaction which is rendered to justice by the Redeemers death. Many men reason thus with themselves: Conscience is uneasy. Offense has been committed against God. Now, in the nature of things, under all law that is at all respected there must be punishment for offenses. But how shall the exercise of the prerogative of mercy be rendered perfectly consistent with the fulfillment of the penalty? Yonder bleeding Savior solves the difficulty. He dies, The Just for the unjust, that He may bring us to God. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed.

Many men, finding their conscience rendered perfectly at ease when they have come to lean themselves upon the fact that Christ died for sinners, have been so enamored of that glorious Truth of God that the attraction has bound them to the Cross forever. I must confess that this is one of the great considerations which, in the hand of the Holy Spirit, will keep me a Christian as well as make me more and more in love with my Lord. I see not where else Justice can meet with Mercy and embrace! I know not where else Righteousness and Peace can kiss each other except on the Cross where my Master gave up His life for transgressors.

There I see the riddle all solvedfallen man brought back to Godand God, justly incensed at mans offense, able to display His love without in any way tarnishing His unsullied justice, or even diminishing the severity thereof. O my Hearers, this is a blessed attraction, indeed! I would to God that it would attract some of you! O that the thought that your sin can thus be justly forgiventhat there is No condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, since Christ was condemned in their placemay draw full many of you to Himself!

Many others have been drawn to the Gospel by a sense of the exact suitability of the Atonement of Christ to the necessities of their condition. As the glove fits the hand so does the Crucified Savior suit the necessities of a sinner. Here is exactly what the man needs. He feels himself guilty. He dreads the punishment of his transgression. His conscience, like an adder, stings him. Like a fire ever fed with fresh fuel, it blazes within him. But when he meets with Christ, he meets with peace and he says within himself, This is precisely what I require. Thirsty, here is living water! Naked, here is a robe of righteousness! Vile, here is an open fountain! Lost and undone, here is One who came to seek and to save that which was lost. Ah, I beseech my Lord to make all of you feel your condition and then you will set a high price upon my Lord!

Some of you imagine that you are rich and increased in goods and have need of nothingmay you feel your deep necessities before God! May you see how spiritual the Law of God is so that it touches your thoughts, and your words and condemns you as much for these as for outward acts of sin. When you once feel your sinnership, sweet will the Saviors name be in your ears, and you will be drawn to the Cross because the Crucified Savior is all that you need!

Further, thousands upon thousands have been effectually drawn to Christ by seeing how graciously, how readily, how wondrously, how abundantly He pardons as He hangs upon the tree. I cannot understand pardon as coming directly from God apart from a Mediator. Jehovah, the Judge of all the earth, is too high, too terrible, too glorious in holiness for sinners to deal with Him absolutely. Our God is a consuming fire! When He descends on Sinai the mountain smokes and melts as wax.

Behold, the whole earth trembles at His Presencethe pillars thereof are dissolved! Before Him goes the pestilence, at His feet are coals of fire. As He rides upon the wings of the wind He scatters from His pavilion of clouds and darkness, hailstones and coals of fire. As for His voice, it is thunder and the flash of His eyes are lightning. Who can receive pardon from an absolute God? He is great and terrible and will by no means clear the guilty. But when I see God in Christ, and know that in Himthat Man who died upon the treedwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, I can come to Him without fear! And with holy joy I can seek for and receive perfect pardonfrom that bleeding hand I dare expect pardon!

I am bold to look for great pardon from so great a Savior suffering so greatly. When I hear Him say to the dying thief, Today shall you be with Me in Paradise, I can hopefully sing

*The dying thief rejoiced to see   
That Fountain in his day.   
And there may I, though vile as he,   
Wash all my sins away!*

It becomes easy for the soul to understand how sin can be forgiven when it sees how sin has been avenged in the Person of Jesus. O Sinners, my Lord Jesus is able to forgive all manner of sins. The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men. Come now, and let us reason together, says the Lord: though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool. How blessed to hear these words preached from that unrivalled pulpit, the Cross! How sweet to hear the dying lips proclaim abounding mercy! How consoling to hear Him speak of the riches of Divine Grace who said, I thirst, and Lama Sabacthani! Oh, this is to be attracted, indeed! This wondrous pardoning power of the Crucified Redeemer is one of the master attractions of the Cross!

But I must not enlarge. One more particular must suffice. Have not many of us been wonderfully drawn to the Gospel by the intense griefs and agonies of Jesus? Beloved, when we see men in prosperity, it is natural for us to envy. But it is equally natural for us to pity those who are in sufferingand love is in the next degree to pity. So I doubt not that when we have set forth Christ Jesus evidently crucified among you, the gracious Spirit has moved many tender hearts first to pity, and afterwards to love the bleeding Lamb! What a melting power there is in Gethsemane! Can you view the bloody drops of sweat as they fall upon the frozen soil and not feel that, in some degree, invisible but irresistible cords are drawing you to Jesus?

Can you see Him flagellated in Pilates hall, every thong of the scourge tearing the flesh from His shoulders? Can you see Him as they spit into His lovely face and mar His blessed visage, and not feel as if you could gladly fall down and kiss His feet, and make yourself forever His servant? And, lastly, can you behold Him hanging upon the hill of Golgotha to diecan you mark Him as His soul is there overwhelmed with the wrath of God, with the bitterness of sin, and with a sense of utter desertioncan you sit down and watch Him there and not be attracted to Him? Ah, I wish that more of you would feel so attracted that you could resist no longer but would come at once and give yourselves up to Him!

You may not feel that you could kiss the King upon His Throne, but will you not kiss the King upon His Cross? You may revolt from Him when He wields a rod of iron, but will you not touch the silver scepter held in the bloodstained hands which bled for His enemies? O come here, sons and daughters of men, and yield yourself to Sorrows Lord! Daughters of Jerusalem, come here as of old and weep both for Him and for yourselves! O seek a portion in His sin-atoning deatha place in the Heaven which His resurrection has opened!

Before I leave this point, I must observe, dear Friends, that it renders my soul very great comfort to think that the attractive power in my Crucified Lord does not lie in the eloquence of those who preach, nor in the logic and power of persuasion of those who proclaim His Gospel! Ah, poor fools that we are, when we preach we sometimes think souls must be saved because we are fluent! And at another time we suppose no good will be done because we spoke in great mental bondage. But, it is not the man who tells the story, nor the style in which he tells itit is the tale itself which wins under God the Holy Spirit!

There is in the Cross itself a power. The Holy Spirit rests like a dove upon that blood-stained tree and through Him saving Grace comes streaming down to human hearts. It is not of man, neither by man, for the attractions of Jesus crucified are as a dew from the Lord which carries not for man, neither waits for the sons of men.

II. We proceed to enquire in WHAT DIRECTION DOES THE CROSS ATTRACT? In one wordit attracts towards everything that is good and blessed. No man was ever enticed to evil by a Crucified Savior. The emotions which are properly excited in the soul by the doctrine of the Atonement, must always be towards goodness. The preaching of the Cross does no mischief. Its sacred stream bears no man towards the rock of ruin, but its tendencies are everywhere and at all times towards mans best and happiest estate.

Let us observe that the Cross of Christ draws men from despair to hope. Many have been ready to die of despair because they have said, There is no salvation for me. To such as these the first beam of hope has come through a Crucified Saviorthey have stumbled upon that precious soul-saving text, The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanses from all sin, and have been set at liberty! That text has opened the gate of Heaven to many hundreds, and I do not doubt it will to thousands more. They have seen how Jesus suffering put aside the necessity of our suffering for sinand peace at once has bedewed the soul.

It is no mean thing to draw men away from despair, for despair is the root of many sins. When a man says, There is no hope, then he hunts after sin like an eager hound after his game. To teach a man that there is hopethat there is hope for himis to give him a fair breeze heavenward!, Jesus Crucified presents this to anxious souls. It attracts men, in the next place, from fear to faith. They have been accustomed to think of God with trembling, and to be constantly alarmed at His Presence. Sin has become a burden, but they have not known how to be delivered from it and have feared that they must bear it foreverbut the Savior lifted up upon the Cross inspires faith.

We think of Him, and as we think we believe! We meditate, and as we meditate we trust! Confidence comes in by the way of Calvary. The means of creating faith, through the power of the Holy Spirit, is the Cross itself. God works faith in us, but it is through His dying Son. That was a terrible scene in Edinburgh when those lofty houses were filled with occupants who were unable to escape from the smothering smoke and the spreading fire. Suppose a fire escape could have been brought to the rescue, yet there is one thing the fire escape could not have done. If these poor creatures had been too faint and stifled to get out of the windows, it could not have lifted them onto itself and yet that would have been one of the things required for their rescue.

But this the Gospel of Jesus does! It not only comes to men and says, Now I will save you, if you will get into Me, but it takes hold of a man and puts him into itselffor Jesus Christ attracts men to Himselfnot only comes near enough to them for them to grasp Him, but, as the magnet does with the iron, so Jesus lays hold on sinners hearts. Jesus Crucified conducts the man from dread to love. Before God he stood shivering like a slave, crying, How shall I escape from His Presence? O that I had the wings of the morning that I might fly even to the uttermost parts of the sea, or dive beneath Hells darkest wave that I might hide from the yet more terrible Hell of the glance of Gods fiery eyes!

But when he sees God reconciled in Jesus, then the sinner sings *Till God in human flesh I see,   
My thoughts no comfort find.   
The holy, just, and sacred Three   
Are terrors to my mind.   
But if Immanuels face appears,   
My hope, my joy begins!   
His name forbids my slavish fear,   
His Grace removes my sins.*

In this way the soul is led to love God. We love Him because He first loved us. Then the attractions of the Cross bring us up from sin to obedience. When we are washed in the precious blood we feel grateful to our Lord Jesus and we cannot live to sin. We are dead to it. We cannot any longer take pleasure in that which cost Him His life. It is impossible for us to count that sweet which we know was bitterness to Him. What will you have me to do? becomes the question. We submit ourselves with our whole heart to His gracious sway, and to run in the way of His Commandments becomes our souls delight.   
Thus we are led constantly, also, by the Cross from self to Jesus.

Nothing will kill self like a sight of the Crucified. Lift up the Savior and down self must go. High thoughts of Christ are always attended by low thoughts of self and vice versa. Think much of yourself? You will think little of the Savior! But a very low esteem of our own merit brings a very high esteem of the merits of Christand it is a blessed thing when self is wholly beaten down! It is a victory which altogether is not won by us, I fear, till we lay down our bodies. But if anything can hang up King Self upon the tree until the evening, it is a sight of the tree upon which the Savior bled.

Finally the uplifted Redeemer draws us away from earth to Heaven. Earth holds us fastwe cannot escape from its hold, but we feel a heavenward drawing. It is Jesus Christ who is drawing usthat same Christ who has gone up to the Throne after having trod the winepress. He daily attracts us upward to Himself. Do you not feel His drawing? Oh, I think you do! When the boys kite goes up very high into the air and gets into the clouds, he cannot see it. Yet he declares, It is there. Why? Why, he says, I can feel its pull. And we know the Lord Jesus Christ is thereHe that was crucified, for we can feel Him pullwe can feel Him draw.

O that we could give ourselves wholly up to Him and mount towards Him! I trust we have experienced some of that mounting, for He has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Him. We know what the resurrection-life means. We do not forever grovel in worldly cares and carnal thoughts, but sometimes, at least, we get up into the higher atmosphere and have near and dear communion with the Well-Beloved. Savior, draw us more and more!

We return to enquire with what order of power does the Savior lifted up draw men? What are the characteristics and qualities of this power? In brief, first of all, the power with which Christ draws us is, according to the text, a very gentle power. I, if I am lifted up, will draw all men. Drawing is very different from driving. The way by which Jesus leads His followers is by soft, gentle influences. I will draw men. The Law is a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. And the preaching of the terrors of the Law are very useful in their way. But whenever a sinner really comes to Christ, the last action is never a driveit is always a draw. The dove may have been driven part of the way to the ark by the wind, but the last act of getting into the ark was when Noah put out his hand and pulled the dove into the ark.

The real act which brings us into connection with Christ is always a drawing actan act of gentleness. Every converted man may say, when he is converted, Your gentleness has made me great. The heathen pictures one of their goddesses in her chariot drawn by doves. Surely it is by doves that we are drawn in the chariot of the Gospel towards the Lord Jesus! How very gentle, though all but Omnipotent, is the influence of the sun upon the earth and all the planets! How they constantly revolve around and follow him in his wondrous marchyet you never feel that he draws!

If you harness a horse to your chariot, he tugs and pulls by fits and starts. But the father of lights draws all the ponderous planets along their appointed ways, and yet there is not enough of a jar to shake an aphid from a rosebud! So there is no noise in the loving drawing of the Savior. Much of the fanaticism which comes with religious excitements is not of God. The genuine dew of Heaven falls calmly

*As in soft silence vernal showers   
Fall to refresh the fields and flowers,   
So in sweet silence from above   
Drops the sweet influence of His love.*

Christs drawings are gentle.

In the next place, observe that Christs drawings are gracious, for is it not of Grace that He should draw at all? If any of you were about to give away bread to the poor and they would not come for it, I think you would say, Let them go without it. You would not attempt to bring them to the feast. No, you would say, It is good enough on my part to be ready to relieve them. But if they will not come, then let their starving be upon their own heads.

But see what Jesus does! He does not throw a life belt to poor drowning men. Yes, he doesbut he does more, for this life belt has the wonderful quality of attracting the man unto itself so that though, at first, he might be unwilling to be rescuedthis mystic life belt changes his will so that he is willing to be saved. But, next, Jesus draws with a widespread power. I will draw all men unto Me. Not every man. Every man is not effectually drawn, for millions of men never heard the name of Jesus Christ at all but men of all sortsall men, that is Jews and Gentiles. It is an all signifying all sorts of men. And what a wonderful thing it is that the Cross of Christ does draw all men!

Many thought it never could draw the roughsthe harlots the street Arabsbut there have been found for Christ some of His mightiest trophies among the lowest of the low! Nor should we think that the Cross cannot attract the rich, and that it is of little use putting the Gospel before the fashionable classes. Ah, do not tell us this! There is a boundless power in the Cross of Christ. If we preach it to kings and princes, we need not be ashamed. If we could have a parliament of men who were as bad as devils, as proud as Pharaoh, and as furious as Saul of Tarsusif we preached Christ Crucified to themit would not be in vain!

This attraction has, in the fourth place, an effectual power, for Jesus Christ, in His own elect ones, draws most effectually. I said very gently, but none the less mightily because of the gentleness! The swallows fly across the sea to distant lands. Did you ever feel the influence which attracts them? It is not perceptible by the most delicate of instruments and yet how effectual it is! They cannot lag behind when the time has come. See how they twitter over the gables of our houses and leave those neatly built habitations beneath our eaves. Many a weary mile lies the goal of their pilgrimage across the sea, but there they go! A mysterious influence draws them and He who thus draws the swallow to other lands, and guides it in its flight, draws men to the Cross so that they never rest till they have left their haunts of sin and come to live where Jesus Christ distributes peace!

I will add, for the comfort of some who are here, that Jesus Christ draws today with a present power. I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me. That means that He is drawing them NOW! He does not say that He will, sometimes. He draws now! Oh, I know not whom He may be drawing, but I do trust He is drawing some of you! Here I stand with the Gospel to preach to you like one with a magnet in his hand. Now, do I know who are Gods elect? I do not, but I shall soon find out! Are you not like a great heap of steel filings and ashes mixed together? I cannot separate you, neither need I put the filings on this side and ashes on the other! I have only to thrust in the magnet and the division will be effectually made.

Jesus Crucified is the great discriminator! His Atonement is the great detector of Gods elect! The Gospel reveals the eternal purpose. If God intends to save you, you will fly to His dear Son. If you are left to perish, it will be because of your own willfulness in neglecting the Savior and turning your back upon the fountain which cleanses from all sin. Jesus draws today, and Jesus will draw still. Happy days are coming when He will draw more mightily, when they shall run unto Him! Even multitudes that knew Him not shall run unto Him, because of the Holy One of Israel who has magnified Him. He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied.

Dear Savior, this morning  *Draw reluctant hearts!   
To You let sinners fly,   
And taste the bliss Your love imparts,   
And drink and never die.*

The lessons to be drawn from the whole we will give you in two or three words. First, to Believers working for Christ. Learn from the text that if you would win souls you must draw them rather than drive them. Very few people are bullied into Heaven! The way to bring men to Jesus Christ is not by rough words, and dark looks, and continually warning them but rather by gentle invitations. Tenderly as a nurse with her child must we seek to win souls.

In the second place, if we would win souls, Jesus Christ must be our great attraction. In the class in the Sunday school, visiting from house to house, or elsewhere, we must keep close to the text, and the text must be the Cross. I must confess there is a very great sweetness to my soul in preaching about Christ. I hope it is never a weariness to preach any part of Divine Truth. But oh, it is delight itself to preach up the Master! Then we have to deal with the kernel of the matter. When we preach Jesus Christ, oh, then we are not putting out the plates and the knives and the forks for the feastwe are handing out the bread itself!

Now we are not, as it were, working in the field at the hedging and the ditching and the sowing, but we are gathering the golden sheaves and bringing the harvest home. If we want a hundredfold harvest we must sow seed which was steeped in the blood of Cavalry! And, dear Friends, if you want to be drawn nearer to Christ yourselves, do not go to Moses to help you, but get to Christ! Go to Christ to get to Christ. I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all menwhere?unto Me. Jesus draws to Himself! Remember, you have never experienced the fullness of the drawing unless you are drawn to Christ. If you are only drawn to holiness, or drawn to a Church, or to good experiences you have not obtained the fullness and soul of the matter. You must be drawn to Christright away from ordinances and everything elsetill you get into His bosom. Then you wall have found the summum bonum! Then you will have reached that which Christ would have you obtainthat for which He died that you might obtain when He, on the tree was lifted upthat He might draw you unto Himself.   
And now, Sinner, if you would come to Jesus, let the text whisper a comfortable word in your ear. He must draw you! Think much upon His death. Turn, this afternoon, to those chapters in the Evangelists where His death is recorded. Picture that dying Savior to yourself, and ask yourself, Is this anything to me? Have I a share in it? Then cover your face with your hands, and kneel down and cry, O God, be merciful to me a sinner! Wash me in the precious blood. Before long you shall feel that the precious Christ has drawn you to Himself and that you are saved! The Lord bless you for Jesus sake. Amen.

Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #1717 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE MARVELOUS MAGNET   
SERMON 1717

BY C. H. SPURGEON,   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, On an evening when the regular hearers left their seats to be occupied by strangers.

**I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me. This He said, signifying what death He should die. John 12:32, 33.**

JESUS is the spokesman here. He tells of His own death by crucifixion and of the result which will follow. It appears, then, that our Lords power to draw all men to Himself lies mainly in His death. By being lifted up from the earth upon the Cross, He was made to die and He also was made to draw all men unto Himself. There is an attractive power about our Lords Person, about His life and about His teaching. But, still, the main attractive force lies in His death upon the Cross! Most certainly this is rare and strange, for when a great religious leader dies, a large measure of his personal power is gone. The charm of the mans manner, the impressiveness of his personal conviction, the lofty tone of his daily enthusiasmthese are immense helps to a cause while they are with us! But to lose them is a fearful drawback such as makes it perilous for a religious leader to die.

Men may remember a leaders life for a time after his deaththey will do so most emphatically if he has been eminently good. We say of the righteousEven in their ashes live their habitual fires. From many a tomb there rises a silent voice more eloquent than the choicest speech He being dead yet speaks. But there is a measure and boundary to the influence of a mere memory. How often is it the case that, after a little while, the leader having gone, the feebler folk gradually drop away; the hypocritical openly desert; the lukewarm wander and so the cause dies out. The mans successors desert his principles, or maintain them with but little life and energy and, therefore, what was once a hopeful effort expires like a dying taper. For a mans work to prosper it is not desirable that he should die.

Is it not strange that what is so often fatal to the influence of other men is a gain to our Lord Jesus Christ? For it is by His death that He possesses His most powerful influence over the sons of men! Because Jesus died, He is, this day, the mightiest ruler of human minds, the great center to which all hearts are being drawn! Remember, too, that our Lord Jesus Christ died by a most shameful death. We have come to use the cross as an ornament and, by some, it is regarded as an object of reverence. But the cross, to speak very plainly, was to the ancients what the gallows are to usan odious instrument of death for felonsexactly that and no more!

The death on a cross was one never allotted to a Roman citizen except for certain heinous crimes. It was regarded as the death penalty of a slave. It was not only painful, it was disgraceful and ignominious. And to say that a man was crucified was, in our Lords time, exactly tantamount to saying in our speech today that he was hanged. It means just thatand you must accept the death of the cross with all the shame that can be connected with the gallows and the tree of death, or else you will not understand what it meant to Jesus and His disciples.

Now, surely, if a man is hanged, there is an end to his influence among men. When I was looking through all the Bible commentaries in the English language, I found one with a title page attributing it to Dr. Coke. But on further examination I perceived that it was the commentary of Dr. Dodd, who was executed for forgery! After He had been hanged, of course the publishers could not sell a commentary under his name and so they engaged another learned doctor to take it under his wing. The man was hanged and, therefore, people would not read his bookand you are not at all surprised that it should be so.

But here is an amazing thing. The Lord Jesus has lost no influence by having been hanged upon the Cross! No, rather it is because of His shameful death that He is able to draw all men unto Himself! His Glory rises from His humiliation! His adorable conquest from His ignominious death! When He became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross, shame cast no shame upon His cause, but gilded it with Glory! Christs death of weakness threw no weakness into Christianity! Say rather that it is the right arm of her power! By the sign of suffering unto death, the Church has conquered and will conquer still! By a love which is strong as death, she has always been victorious and must, forever, remain so. When she has not been ashamed to put the Cross in the forefront, she has never had to be ashamed, for God has been with her and Jesus has drawn all men to Himself.

The Crucified Christ has irresistible attractionswhen He stoops into the utmost suffering and scorn, even the brutal must relenta living Savior men may love, but a crucified Savior they must love! If they perceive that He loved them and gave Himself for them, their hearts are stolen awaythe city of Mansoul is captured before the siege begins when the Prince Emanuel uncovers the beauties of His dying love before the eyes of the rebellious ones! Let us never be ashamed, dear Friends, to preach Christ Crucifiedthe Son of God lifted up to die among the condemned! Let those of us who teach in the Sunday school, or preach at the street corner, or in any other manner try to set forth the Gospel, always keep a dying Christ to the front!

Christ without the Cross is no Christ at all. Never forget this! He is the eternal God, but bind with that Truth of God the fact that He was nailed to a Roman cross. It is on the tree He triumphed over Satan and it is by the Cross that He must triumph over the world. I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me. This He said, signifying what death He should die. The great Truth of the text I have stated to youlet me enlarge thereon.

I. I shall try to speak, first, upon the ATTRACTIVE FORCE WHICH LIES IN A CRUCIFIED SAVIOR. You will observe that it is briefly summed up in these wordsHimself to Himself. I will draw all men unto Me. It is not written that Christ will draw all men to the visible Church, for the universal profession of our holy faith is slow enough in coming. Certainly the Lord Jesus Christ will not lend Himself out to draw men to your sect or to mine. He will draw always towards truth and righteousness, but not to dead forms or meaningless distinctionsnor to the memories of former wrongs or party victories.

If the Lord should draw men to the Cathedral or the Tabernacle, the Abbey or the Chapel, it would be of little service to them, unless, in each case they found Him! The main thing that is needed is that they be drawn to Him and none can draw them to Him but Him. Himself drawing them to Himselfthis is the soul of the text. I dare say that you have heard the oft-recounted story of the missionaries among the Greenlanders. Our Moravian Brethren, full of fire and zeal and self-denial, went right away among the ignorant folk of Greenland, as those people then were, longing to convert them. Using large prudence, they thought, These people are so benighted that it cannot be of any use to preach Jesus Christ to them at first. They do not even know that there is a God, so let us begin by teaching them the nature of the Deity, showing them right and wrong, proving to them the need of atonement for sin and setting before them the rewards of the righteous and the penalties of the wicked.

This was judged to be most fit preparatory work. Watch for the result! They went on for years, but had no converts. What was there in all that fine preparatory teaching that could convert anybody? Jesus was being locked out of the Greenlanders hearts by those who wanted Him to enter! But one day one of the missionaries happened to read to a poor Greenlander the story of Jesus bleeding on the Cross and how God had sent His Son to die, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. And the Greenlander said, Would you read me that again? What wonderful words! Did the Son of God die for us poor Greenlanders that we may live? The missionary answered that it was even so and, clapping his hands, the simple native cried, Why did you not tell us that before?

Ah, just so! Why not tell them this at once and leave it to clear its own path? That is the point to begin with! Let us start with the Lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. To my mind that is the point to begin with and the point to go on withyes, that is the Truth of God to conclude with, if there can ever be any conclusion to the grand old story of the Incarnate God who loved His enemies and gave Himself to die in their place, that they might live through Him! The Gospel is Jesus drawing sinners to Himself that they might live through Him!

Dear Hearers, do you know what this means? I know that many of you do and you are happy, for in this knowledge there is life. Would to God that all knew this power of love in Christknew it so as to be drawn by almighty love to return that love with all their heart, soul and strength! The best thing that can happen to any of us is to feel Christ drawing him to Christ and to find himself sweetly yielding to the gentle drawing of the Saviors love! The text says that Jesus Christ will draw all men unto Himself. Now, all men who hear of Jesus Christ at all are drawn, but they do not all yield. Some of them pull back and the most awful thing that ever happens to a man is when he pulls back till Jesus lets him go! What a fall is that, when the drawing power is taken away, and the man fails backward into a destruction which he, himself has chosen, having refused eternal life and resisted the Saviors power!

Unhappy is the wretch who strives against his own salvation! Every man that hears the Gospel feels some measure of its drawing power. I appeal to any one of you who has been accustomed to hear it. Does not Jesus sometimes tug hard at your conscience and, though you have pulled back, yet has He not drawn and drawn again? I remember how He drew me as a child and, though I drew back from Him, yet He never let me go till He drew me over the border line. Some of you must well remember how you were drawn by a mothers gentle wordsby a teachers earnest pleadingsby a fathers admonitionsby a sisters tearsby a pastors entreat

ies. Permit your memories to aid me. Bring up before your minds eye the

many dear ones who have broken their hearts to win you for Jesus. Yes, you have been drawn! I suppose that all of you have felt a measure of that drawing. Why, it is not merely those that hear the Gospel, but whole nations have been drawn, in other respects, by the all-pervading influence of Jesus and His love! At this instant the influence of Christianity is being felt in every corner of the earth to an extent which it is not easy to exaggerate. If I had an orators power, I would picture my Savior casting golden chains of love over all nations, wherever the missionary goes preaching His name! The Lord is taming the nations as a man, by degrees, subdues wild beasts!

Jesus is gradually drawing the heathen to Himself. He has had a long tug at India. That dead weight still lies in the furrow. But it must come! It must yield! All those that watch it know that if there is any cause that makes progress in India, it is the cause of Christ. The East appears never to move, but if there is any move, it is Christward. Jesus is drawing China slowly. Japan is being drawn as in a net. Where the testimony of Christ has been borne, the idols begin to shake and their priests confess that a change is coming! Every century sees a marked advance in the worlds condition and we shall progress at a quicker rate, yet, when the Church wakes up to a sense of her responsibility and the Holy Spirit is poured out upon the Church to turn us all into missionaries, causing us all, in some way or other, to preach the Gospel of Christ!

Jesus is drawing, drawing, drawing! When God meant to scatter the individuals of our race, they would not be scatteredthey built a tower to be the center of union! And only by their tongues being so changed that they could not understand one another could their resolve to remain in one company be defeated. But now, behold, the whole earth has the race of men to cover itthe sons of Adam dwell in every region and it is the Fathers will to gather together in one the redeemed of the Lord. Therefore He has set in their midst the great Shiloh, of whom it was prophesied of old, To Him shall the gathering of the people be.

The roaming races do not answer to the Fathers call. They do not want to come to the elder Brothers rule, but they will have to come, for He must reign! Gentile and Jew, African and Europeanthey shall all meet at the Cross, the common center of our entire manhoodfor Christ is lifted up and He is drawing all men to Him. But all men are not saved. No, for when drawn they do not come. Yet Christ Crucified is drawing some men of all kinds and sorts to eternal life. When Jesus died on the Cross it was not for my lord and lady onlynor was it only for the working manit was for all sorts of people

*While Grace is offered to the prince,   
The poor may take their share.   
No mortal has a just pretense   
To perish in despair.*

He that is best taught and instructed has often been drawn to Jesus by the Lords overpowering charms. Some of the most learned of men have been delighted to come to Christ. But the most illiterate and rude have equally been drawn by Jesus and it has been their joy to come. I love to hear of the Gospel being preached to the poorest of the poorand so preached that it reaches those who never were reached by it before. Godspeed every effort by which Jesus is set before the fallen and degradedso long as it is the Gospel and not mere rant, we wish Godspeed to the most irregular of witnessesour fears begin only when Jesus is no longer in the front!

We greatly need to have the Gospel preached in the West of London and so preached that our great ones may receive it and find life through Jesus Christ. May such a movement soon take place! How I should like to hear of a converted duke telling out the Gospel, or a reclaimed Knight of the Garter proclaiming mercy for the chief of sinners! Why not? And, blessed be God, the Savior, lifted up, draws all sorts of men to Himselfsome of every kindnot the Jew alone, as at the first, but the Gentile too!

*None are excluded but those   
Who do themselves exclude.   
Welcome the learned and polite,   
The ignorant and rude.*

There is no exclusion of any class or creature from the mercy of God in Christ Jesus. I, if I am lifted up, will draw all men unto Meand the history of the Church proves how true this isthe muster roll of the converted includes princes and paupers, peers and pot men

But what is this force that attracts men to the crucified Savior? They comethere is no doubt about it. Look, Sirsthere is nothing in the world that men will hear so gladly as the Gospel. How many years have I stood in this place to preach to a congregation precisely similar to the present! The crowds have been here as regularly as the hours, Sunday after Sunday, morning and evening, year after year! Suppose that I had been appointed to preach upon a scientific subject? Could I have gained or held such audiences? I should have been spun out a long while ago if I had been bound to draw upon myself for my matter. If I had preached any other than the doctrine of Christ Crucified, I should, years ago, have scattered my audience to the winds of Heaven.

But the old theme is always new, always fresh, always attractive. Preach Jesus Christ! That is the recipe for catching mens ears and laying hold upon mens hearts. The name of Jesus is to mans heart the most mighty of charmsmans ears wait for it as the morning hour waits for the sun, or as the parched earth waits for the shower! Ring out the name of Jesusit is the sweetest carol ever sung. Ring it out without fear or stint, for it is always welcome as the flowers in May! Men will never tire of it till the flowers are satiated with sunlight and the grass grows weary of the dew! The music of that blessed silver bell rings out over hill and dale as sweetly as when, on the first Christmas night, the angels sang, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

There is about Calvary and its infinite stoop of Divine Love a power that never dies out and never will while the world stands. What is it? From where does this universal attractiveness come? Well, first, it is the force of love, for Jesus Christ is Incarnate Love. In Him you see One who divested Himself of all His Glory that He might save the guiltywho came down upon earth, not seeking wealth and fame, but simply seeking to do good by saving menwho, having laid aside His honor and His Glory, at last laid aside His life! And all for lovefor love which met a sad returnfor love which has, however, saved its objectives with a great salvation!

One of the school men says that whenever we know that another person loves us, we cannot help giving back a measure of love in return, and I believe that the statement is true. Certainly, such love as the love of Christ, when it is told out simply, and men can understand it, is certain to excite an interest, to win a degree of attention and so to lead up to better things. Full often this love proves its power over observers by transforming them from enemies into friends and, though they at first despised the Redeemer, His love compels them, at length, to believe and to adore! If I were asked the secret of the attracting power of the Crucified Savior, I would answer that it is invincible love.

The only crime that ever could be laid to Jesus charge was that of which the poet singsfound guilty of excessive loveloving beyond all reason and beyond all boundariesloving as none ever loved before! So that if all the rivers of human love ran together, they could not fill such another ocean of love as was in the heart of Jesus the Savior! This it is this unique, unrivaled lovewhich draws men to Jesus! The pierced heart of Christ is a loadstone to draw all other hearts. No doubt there is also

this about the Crucified Saviorthat He draws men by the wonderful rest which His death provides for men.

The most earnest Christian man must, sometimes, have his doubts as to whether all is right with him. The more sincere a man is, the more does he tremble lest he should deceive himself. You, good Brother, have your personal anxieties; certainly I have mine. But when I turn my eyes to Jesus upon the Cross and view the crown of thorns, the sacred head, the eyes that were red with weeping, the hands nailed fast to the wood and the feet dripping with goreand when I remember that this shameful death was endured for love of meI am so quiet and so happy in my spirit that I cannot tell how peacefully my life-floods flow! God must forgive my grievous fault, for my Redeemer has so grievously answered for it!

When I see Jesus die, I perceive that from now on Divine justice is on the sinners side. How can the Lord God punish the same offense twice first the Substituteand then the men for whom that Substitute has bled? Christ has bled as Substitute for every man that believes in Him therefore is every Believer safe! Oh, Brothers and Sisters, when you are troubled, rest with us by looking to Calvary! And if the first glance does not quiet you, look, and look, and look againfor every grief will die where Jesus died. Not to Bethlehem, where the stars of Christmas burn, do we look for our greatest comfort, but to that place where the sun was darkened at midday and the face of Eternal Love was veiled! Because the Lord of Life and Glory was dying in siremis, suffering the most deadly pain for our sakes, therefore His wounds distilled the richest balm that ever healed a sinners wounds!

Men know this. Reading their Bibles, they soon find it out. There is no comfort for them against the anger of God and against their guilty consciences, until they see Christ in their place, suffering for them. The conscience sees with unspeakable delight the Victim provided! She gladly lays her hand on Jesus head and sees her sin transferred to Him, punished in Himand thus it finds restthe rest of God. In the expiatory death of Jesus, the Law is vindicated and God is just, and yet the Justifier of him that believes. Dear Friends, believe me, Jesus bestows the peerless pearl of perfect rest on every heart that comes to Him! He fills the soul so that it has no more longings.

You know the horseshoe magnet and you have seen how rapidly it picks up pieces of iron. Have you ever put a piece of iron right across the two ends of the magnet? You will then have noticed that it ceases to attract anything else. The magnetic circuit is completed and the magnet rests perfectly quiet, refusing to go beyond its own circle of pure content. When my soul is filled with Jesus, He completes the circuit of my souls passions and longings! He is all my salvation and all my desire! Have you found it so? Has not your soul come to an absolutely perfect rest when it has gotten to Christ? When He, Himself, has drawn you to Himself, have you not entered into rest? Because men perceive that such a rest is to be had, therefore they come to Christ. He Himself uses this as an argument why they should come! Remember His cheering words, Come unto Me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. This is part of the attractive force which dwells in the Crucified Savior.

Then I am sure that there is a great attraction about Christ when we see the change which He works in men. Have you known a drunk become a Christian, or a thief become upright? Have you seen a harlot made chaste? Have you marked any of the modern miracles which are always going on around us in the form of conversions? If you have taken pleasure in these signs and wonders, I know that you have said, Lord, I, too, will come to You to be converted. The sight of His power to elevate and sanctify has attracted you to Jesus and you have fallen at His feet. There is no true, deep, tender, living conversion except through the Cross and, therefore, those that are taught of God do love to come to Christ, that sin may be conquered in them, that the heart of stone may be taken away, that the heart of flesh may be given and that they may walk the happy way of holiness according to the example of their adorable Master.

I could continue thus to show what this attractive force is, but, lest I should weary you, I will only say that it lies much in His sufferings, themselves. Is it not a strange thing that suffering attracts? Yes, morelowly Suffering conquersshe sits as a queen upon her throne and reigns by the royalty of her resignation! The ship of the Church has plowed its way through seas of blood. With the blood-red Cross at the masthead, she has pushed on, even in the night, throwing the crimson spray about her. She has never paused because of persecution, affliction, or deaththese are the rough winds which fill her sails. No progress is surer than that which comes of holy suffering. The enemies of the Church have taken her disciples and burned them, but their deaths yielded a sweet savor of life.

It is questionable if a mans influence can be better promoted than by sending him aloft in a chariot of fire. What made us a Protestant nation for so many years? I do not say that we are Protestant nowbut what made us enthusiastically Anti-papist for so many years? The stakes of Smithfield did it! Men and women stood and saw the martyrs burned and as they saw them die, they said, These men are right, and the cause for which they burn is trueand into the very heart of England martyrdom cast up a way for the Lord Jesus and He entered then and there into Old Englands secret soul!

What the martyrs did, in their measure, by their bitter death-pangs, is being done on a Divine scale by the sufferings of the Chief of all martyrs and Head of all witnesses! By the agonies of Jesus, mens affections are moved and their hearts enthralled. Are any of you unconverted and do you wish to be converted? I cannot suggest a better exercise than to read over the story of the death of Christ, as it is told by the four Evangelists. When you have read it once, read it again! And as you read it say, Lord, I must have a sadly hard heart, or else this would move me to tears. I pray You, change my heart.

Then read the story again, for surely, at last it will touch you. God the Holy Spirit blessing you, it will move you and you will be among the all men that shall be drawn to Jesus by His own personal force! So much, then, about what this force is.

II. Very briefly, my second head is to beHOW IS THIS FORCE EXERCISED? This force is exercised through the Holy Spirit. It is the Spirit of God who puts power into the Truth of God about Christ! And then men feel that Truth and come to Christ and live. But our blessed Lord and Master uses instruments. The force of Christs love is sometimes shown to men by those who already love Him. One Christian makes many. One Believer leads others to faith. To come back to my metaphor of a magnet you have sometimes seen a battery attached to a coil and then, if you take a nail and put it on the coil, the nail has become a strong magnet. You notice that the nail turns into a magnet, for you take another nail and you put it on the end of it and it holds the second nail fast.

Now number two is turned into a magnet. Try it. Put a third nail upon it. See, it is held fast! Number three has become a magnet. Try the next nailit holds on to it like grim deathand now number four has become a magnet! Bring another nail within the influence. Number five has become a magnet. And so it continues. On and on and on the magnetism goes, from one nail to another. But now, just go to your battery, detach one of your wiresand the nails drop off, directly, for the coil has ceased to be a magnet and the nails have ceased to be magnets, too! All the magnetism comes from the first place from which it startedand when it ceases at the fountainhead, there is an end of it altogether.

Indeed, Jesus Christ is the great attractive magnet and all must begin and end with Him! When Jesus lays hold upon us, we get hold of a brother and before long he turns into a magnet, also. Thus from one to another, the mystic influence proceedsbut the whole of the force abides in Jesus. More and more the Kingdom grows, ever mighty to prevail, but all the growing and the prevailing come out of Him! So it is that Jesus worksfirst by Himselfand then by all who are in Him. May the Lord make us all magnets for Himself. Jesus says, I, if I am lifted up, will draw all men unto Me, but He leaves room in His figure for the co-working of all grateful hearts.

Jesus draws men gradually. Some are brought to Christ in a moment, but many are drawn by slow degrees. The sun, in some parts of the world, rises above the horizon in a single instant. But in our own country, at this season of the year, it is beautiful to watch the dawn, from the first gray light to the actual break of day. Is it dark, or is it light? Well, it is not quite darkit is visible darkness! By-and-by there is light. No sun is up as yet, but yet the light increases till the East begins to glow and the West reflects the radiance! Then, by-and-by, up rises the great king of day. So does the Lord bring many to Himself by gentle degrees. They cannot tell when they were converted, but they are converted, for they have come to Christ!

Rest assured that He will not send you back. Do not say, I am not converted, for I do not know the moment of the great Change. I knew an old lady, once, who did not know her birthdaybut I never told her that she was not born because of that, for there she was! And if you do not know when you were made a Christian, yet, if you are a Christian, it little matters how or when. If you are really born of God, the date of your new birth is interesting to curiosity but not important to piety. Salvation is often accomplished by a lengthened process. I have heard that when they wanted to bridge a great chasm they shot an arrow or a bullet, which drew with it a tiny thread, across the river. That was all the communication from bank to bank and the rolling torrent was far below.

Despise not the day of small things! The insignificant beginning was prophetic of grand results. By means of that little thread, they drew across a piece of twine and, when they had safely grasped it on the other side, they bound a small rope to the end of the twineand then they drew the rope across! And then to that rope they tied a cable and they drew the cable acrossand now, over that chasm, there strides an iron bridge along which the steam horse rattles with his mighty load! So does Jesus unite us to Himself! He may employ, at first, an insignificant thread of thought. Then a sense of pleasant interest. Then some deeper feeling. Then a crushing emotion; then a faint faith; then stronger faith; then stronger yet, until, at last, we come to be firmly bound to Christ! Oh, be thankful if you have only a thread of communication between you and Jesus, for it will lead to more! Something more hopeful will be drawn across the gulf before long!

Christs attractions are often very gradually revealed and their victorious energy is not felt all at once. Moreover, the cords of our Lords drawings are very secret. You see the swallows twittering round our roofs, hawking in the air, shooting up into the clouds, or flashing by our ears. It is summer and they are paying us their annual visit. They will be with us for a time, but all of a sudden we will see them getting together about the gable of an old house, holding agitated congregations and evidently discussing matters of importance. The Lord of birds is gently drawing every swallow in England down towards the African coastand they will all go, without exceptionas the secret summons reaches the flying host! They know but little of the way, but their flight is not, therefore, delayed or its course left to uncertainty! Over thousands of miles of sea and land they pursue their course until they come to their resting place.

And then, next spring, the same power that drew them southward will draw them all northward again! And here they will come and we shall hear their joyous twitter and say to ourselves, Summer is coming, for here are the swallows, again. By a secret power of that order does Jesus draw home the strangers and the foreigners whom His Grace has chosenthey say to one another, Come, and let us go up to the House of the Lord. Let us seek the face of the Savior. The mystic attractions of the power of Christ are secretly drawing many who knew Him not and now they ask their way to Zion with their faces Christ-ward!

Look how the sun draws along the planets. He hastens on in his mighty career in spaceI know not where, but drawing with him all the worlds which compose the solar systemall these silently attend his majestic marches. Such is Christ, the great central Sunall His people follow, for He draws. Stand by the seashore and notice what the moon can do. You do not even see her, for it is high noonbut here comes a wave, and then another, and then another, and the tide rises a little higher today than it did yesterday. What is it that causes this pulse of life, these heart-throbs of the deep? The moons attractive power is drawing up the waters from the sea! Even so our glorious Christ, in ways unknown to us, draws the hearts of men by His mighty Spirit wherever He pleases, I, if I am lifted up, will draw all men unto Me.

Fail not to observe how gently He does it! The classic heathen adored a goddess whom they represented as riding in a chariot drawn by doves. Surely the most tender mode of impulsepower without force, motion born of emotion! Certain of us were wafted to Jesus by some such zephyr. We could not but yieldthe softness and tenderness of every touch of Jesus affected us infinitely more than force could possibly have done! Hearts are tender things and are not to be forced open with crowbarsthe doors of the heart open gently to Him that holds the keyand who is that but He who made the heart and bought it with His precious blood? The gentleness is equal to the power when Jesus draws men to Himself!

But, oh, how effectually! I thought, as I mused upon my text, that I saw a great whirlpool like the maelstrom in the north of Norway. I thought I saw an enormous whirlpool so huge that all the souls of men, like ships of many different forms, were being drawn towards it. With strained sight I gazed upon this monstrous death! Woe to those who are sucked in by that dreadful whirlpool, for there is no escape! The abyss has no bottom, destruction is sure to all who are caught in the tremendous down-rush! Even ships far out at sea on other tacks, though they escape this maelstrom, are hindered in their course by it! This one monstrous devourer labors to absorb all and leaves no bay, nor harbor, nor foreign main unaffected by its perpetual draught.

As I was thinking of this giant evil and wondering how I could navigate my own boat so as to avoid this mouth of Hell, I saw a hand that had the mark of a nail upon its palm, and lo, it held a mighty magnet which attracted every vessel with a force greater than any born of sea or storm! This magnet attracted many ships so that they flew to it at once and were gently drawn towards their desired haven in the very teeth of the maelstrom! I saw other vessels in which the mariners hoisted sail to try to escape the influence of this magnetand even put out their oars to strive to get awayand some of them did so escape. Alas, they floated farther and farther into the maelstroms destructive power, to be sucked down to their perdition. These were so besotted that they labored against mercy and resolved to be destroyedwe are glad that all are not left to act so madly.

You must have seen an instance of drawing very often down in the river. A grand vessel is bound for the Indies, but how can it be taken down to the Nore? It is difficult to move the heavy craft. There it must lie. But here comes a steam-tug. The large vessel hands a rope on board the tug and now the steam is up. Tug, tug, tugthe paddle-wheels revolve and the big ship begins to follow the lead! It is no longer motionless; it will soon be walking the waters as a thing of life! A pleasant sightthe tug draws it gently out to sea and then leaves it to pursue its distant voyage. Just so may Jesus draw you away from sinful pleasures and from selfrighteousness.

III. I shall conclude by drawing one or two lessons. Then I have done. WHAT DOES ALL THIS IMPLY? I, if I am lifted up, will draw all men unto Me. Well, it means this, firstthat men, by nature, are a long way off from Christ. You were not born converted. Of that I am sure! Nor were you born a Christian and, though they took you to the font and said that they made you a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven, there was not a word of truth in it, for you were such a child of God that you loved sinand such a member of Christ that you knew nothing of Himand such an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven that, unless God saves you, you will never get there!

I may say of Christians who are made in that way, Eyes have they, but they see not. Mouths have they, but they speak not, neither speak they through their throats. And I fear that I must add, They that make them are like unto them: so is everyone that trusts in them. It is a poor Christianity that is created by such monstrous folly! You must be born again, and you must be born again of the Spirit of God, or you cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven! Man is a long way off from Christ and Christ must draw Him. Friend, ask Him to draw you.

I gather another lessonthat men will not come to Christ unless He draws them. Sometimes, when I am trying to prepare a sermon to preach, I say to myself, Why must I take all this trouble? If men were in their senses they would run to Christ without calling! Why must we put this business so temptingly? Why must we plead? Why must we be so earnest? Because men do not want to come, not even to their own Savior! They do not wish to have their sins forgiven! They do not wish to be renewed in heart. And they never will comeno, not one mothers son of them unless He that sent Christ to them shall draw them to Christ. A work of Grace in the heart is absolutely necessary before the Sacrifice of the Lord Jesus will be accepted by any one of us. Jesus said, You will not come to Me that you might have life. What our Lord said is true to this hour man has not improved an atom!

But, then, learn another lesson. If there is any man here that Christ is drawing, he need not ask, May I come? Of course you may, if you feel drawn to come! Are you coming? Come, and welcome! Christ never yet turned away a soul that came to Himnot one! Him that comes to Me, I will in no wise cast out. If He is drawing you, run, for you have Scriptural warrant for so doing! Draw us: we will run after You. If tonight you feel any kind of tugging at your heartstrings, do not hesitate a moment! Come along with you! When God draws, then is your time to move. What do the sailors say? Theres a breeze, Jack. Yes, yes, boys. Up with the anchor! Now for every stitch of canvas. We can make headway now.

Do you feel any kind of breeze? Is the breath of the Holy Spirit moving upon you in any degree? Do you feel inclined to say, I will go to Jesus? Then, fly away with you, like a full-sailed ship before a fair wind! And by Gods help may you soon make the port of Everlasting Salvation! Let us finish up by saying that if Christ has said thus He will draw, then He will draw tonight! The attractions of the Lord Jesus are continualHe draws, and He will always draw. He is drawing now! Do not pull back, lest His drawing should ceaseand you should perishbut rather let your heart sing

*He drew me, and I followed on,   
Charmed to confess the force Divine.*

Oh Spirit of God, draw men to Jesus! This is the way of salvationtrust Christ and you are saved! Rely wholly upon what Christ is and what He has doneand you are saved! In that very act there is a change effected within you which will show itself forever in your character, for he that believes in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is born again!

The faith which looks to Jesus and the life which lives upon Jesus come together. I cannot tell you which is firstthe new birth, or faith. Can you tell me which spoke of a wheel moves first? No. And these are spokes of one and the same wheel. He that believes in Him has everlasting life. Oh, believe Him! Trust Him! Lay hold upon Him! Accept Him and go your wayand the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singingand all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Amen! So let it be!

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DESPISED LIGHT WITHDRAWN   
NO. 2413

**INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS DAY, MAY 19, 1895. DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, MAY 15, 1887.

**While you have light, believe in the light, that you may be the children of light. These things spoke Jesus, and departed, and did hide Himself from them.   
John 12:36.**

OUR Savior was very gentle with those who had real difficulties. He would argue with them over and over again. He would state a Truth of God, and re-state it. He would cast it into the form of a parable, or He would condense it into a sentence comparable to a proverb, or He would enlarge and expand it, for He was gentle with seeking souls as a nurse is with her child. I do not believe that there is any real difficulty in the hearts of those of you who are sincerely seeking Jesus that He will despise. He will not quench the smoking flax, nor break the bruised reed and, therefore, come to Him with your doubts and your anxieties, believing that His tender heart so loves you and so desires your good, that He will sit at your feet that He may induce you to sit at His feetHe will come down to your level that He may lift you up to His level!

I notice, however, that, while it is true that our gracious Master was very gentle and patient with those who had real difficulties, yet He did not always answer everybodys objection. When the difficulty was raised for the sake of questioning and disputing, when it was mere quibbling, when the enquirers were not in earnest and did not really wish to know the Truth of God, He often declined to answer them. My Master has no desire to be merely victor in a debateHe did not come into the world to fight a battle of logic just for the sake of winning it. It is you and your salvation that He is seeking!

So was it in the case of these Jewswhen they came with fresh objections, saying, Who is this Son of Man? our Lord, instead of replying to them, exhorted them to believe and walk in the light while they had it. He assumed that He was the LightHe took that as a thing which had been provenHe did not go over that ground, again, but He let the quibblers know that He claimed to be the Light of Life, the Light of God whereby men can come to God. And He pressed them to cease from questioning and to begin to practice real and true dealing with Himself. While you have light, He said, believe in the light, that you may be the children of light.

I am not going, on this occasion, to attempt to meet any difficulties, or to answer any questions. The most of you have no difficulties about the way of salvation and many whom I address, here, have done with asking questions about Christ. The point is, how to come to a practical decision. Spirit of the Living God, make this the day and this the hour when many shall believe in the great Light of God, and shall be made the children of Light once and for all!

I. First of all, I shall call your attention to a very solemn matter which may be described as THE THREATENED END TO A TIME OF PRIVILEGEwhile you have the light. You have no freehold possession of it. You have the light, but the time of light will come to an end. Observe the 35th verse, Yet a little while is the light with you. You have it at present, but it will soon be gone from you. Take heed lest it be gone before you have used it, for when it has once been withdrawn, darkness will come upon you and, He that walks in darkness knows not where he goes.

Now what was this light of which our Lord thus spoke? To the Jews, it was the light of the Presence of Christ. It was a great privilege, indeed, for the people living in that age and in that country to have the Son of God among them bodily. John tells us that there were some few who beheld His Glory, the Glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth, but the vast multitude were so blinded that, with God, Himself, in their midst in the Person of His Son, Jesus Christ, they did not perceive who the illustrious Stranger was! He came and He went away, again, and they knew not who it was that they had rejected, for, as Paul said in writing to the Corinthians, had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory. That was the Light of God that the Jews hadand which they lost.

Christ has never personally come to you, dear Friends, in the flesh, but the light of His Gospel is still with you, and in a sense, that is His Presence, for Jesus is the very Life of the Gospel. There is also a light that comes to some men, I might even say in human form, for there are some ministers whom God specially appoints as His representatives to bless others. I cannot help looking back in history to such men as Whitefield and Wesley and their companions in that great revival period. It was a time of bright light while they were among the sons of men! They flew like flaming seraphs over this land, leaving a trail of light behind them which banished much of the darkness in which England had been shrouded. It was a great privilege to have heard those men and, when they were gone, to a large extent, and to many people, the Light of God went with them. There are some preachers still on the earth whom God blesses very greatly in the conversion of souls, men whom you cannot hear without being profited in your souls.

Without exalting anybody or depreciating anybody, it is a fact that there are some preachers who do not touch your heart and do not stir your spiritthey may be very useful to others and useful in other directionsbut they are not of service to you. On the other hand, there are those whom God does bless to your soul and if you find anywhere, in this Tabernacle, or in any other House of Prayer where Christ is preached, a voice that really moves you, it is, so to speak, a manifestation of the Light of God to you. Do not, I beseech you, play with it, or trifle with it, for whoever the preacher may be, however humble the instrumentality, if it is instrumentality that is adapted to your case, it should be honored in your conscience and it should be highly regarded in your heart! That light may readily enough be quenched. The preacher and his hearers may be separated. He may be taken from you, or you may be taken from him. In either case, it may be a very sorrowful experience for you to have to look back upon all you heard and saw in those days when there was an instrumentality exactly suited to your case and yet you refused to be moved by it.

We have always with us the Gospel of Jesus Christ that you can read in this Book whenever you will, but the Holy Spirit must go with the Gospel to make it the power of God unto salvation! You cannot see the Light that is in the Word unless the Holy Spirit reveals it to you. Some of you have been under the influence of the Holy Spirit in some measure and degree. There have been times when you have seen sin and have stood aghast at it, when you have seen the Savior, and have admired His blood and righteousness. There have been times when you have been strangely inclined to come away from yourself and your sin, and to come to Jesus and be saved, You remember those powerful drawings, those inward strivings. Remember that this work of the Holy Spirit is but for a time, it lasts not forever. Those solemn words are still true, My Spirit shall not always strive with man. A day may come when the same preaching that now greatly stirs you, will have no influence over youand when the Spirit of God, Himself, will seem to be entirely absent, both from the means of Grace and from the Bible when you read it. Therefore I put before you this serious consideration, that you are at present favored with the Light of God, but you are only favored with it for a certain term.

Do not reckon upon always having it, for the Light may be removed from you. My dear Hearer, the day may come when you will have to go away from this country and be found far off in the bush of Australia, or the backwoods of America. Or you may even, in this country, be located where you will not be able to hear the Gospel, for what you will hear will not be the Gospel, and you will be obliged to confess that it is not! Therefore, while you have the Light of God, remember that it is a favorable season for your decision for Christ. The day may come, as I said before, when the voice that has thrilled you, again and again, and that wakes the echoes of your souls most secret chambers, shall be silent in death. The time may come when, although your minister and you, yourself, are still left in the same place, yet, so far as you are concerned, the Holy Spirit will be gone, and so the Light will have departed from you.

Take heed, I beseech you, lest it really be so, and use the Light while you have it. It may, perhaps, seem to some of you that I am raising a needless alarm, but, indeed, it is not so. I do not think that, for many a day, I have come to this platform to speak to you without being informed, during the day, of some one or two who have passed into eternity out of this congregation. Years ago the bulk of us, as Church members, were young, and we lost comparatively few by the stroke of death. But, as it is with the pastor, so is it with the peoplewe are all getting older. We have entered middle life, the great mass of us, and, consequently, our mortality is largely increasingand every time we meet we may be positively certain that we shall never, all of us, meet again here!

Between this Sabbath and next Sabbath some in the ranks of our membership will have passed into Heavenand some out of our congregation will have been called to stand before God. I feel, therefore, like the guard of a train that is just ready to start. The time is up for us to be off and the guards whistle has been blown, but there is somebody who wants to talk to me about politics, or there is another person who wants to discuss a theological difficulty, and I feel bound to say, Sir, the time is up. We must start at oncewill you come on board, or must you be left behind? While the train is here at the platform, enter it, take your place, and journey with us to Zion, for now it is time for us to go! We cannot stop here forever. Time and tide wait for no man! Neither will God forever wait for men to turn unto Him and livethe hour shall come when all opportunities will be pastwhen the gate of mercy will be finally shut. You remember how it was with the wise virgins and the bridegroom, they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.

God bless that Word of warning! He can bless it, however feebly it may have been spoken!   
II. Now, secondly, I take you a little further into our theme. Here is AN ACT OF GRACE COMMENDEDWhile you have the light, believe in the light. This believing is the most essential act of a mans life! Therefore our Lord said, Believe in the light.   
First, believe that it is the true Light of God, believe the Gospel to be of God! Many here have proven in their own experience that it is of God and that, it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes. That Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came into this world and was made Man. That as Man He took upon Himself the sin of His people and suffered for us, the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God, is most assuredly true! And, that in His name there is salvation, that in Him we have eternal life is, also, equally true. He that believes on the Son has everlasting life, even now. Believe this to be true.   
Well, I do believe it to be true, says one, but I am not saved for all that. Then, next, I pray the Holy Spirit to help you to go a little further. Not only believe the Gospel to be of God, but believe Jesus Christ, Himself. There is a text that is often misquotedI have many a time heard it said, I know in whom I have believed, but Paul wrote, I know whom I have believed. He had not only believed in Christ, but he had believed Christ! I want you, dear Friend, if you are sincerely seeking salvation, to believe Christ. Believe Him to be what He says He isbelieve that everything He says is truebelieve that He, Himself, does save, and can save, and will save you! So believe Him as to hand yourself over to Him and take Him to be your Savior! In a word, as our text says, while you have light, believe in the light.   
It is essential, also, that you should believe for yourselves. It is no use for people to try to believe the Gospel for their friends or for their children. Believe it for yourselves! I notice that some unsaved persons will read with great interest accounts of conversions and even feel pleasure in hearing of this and that man being saved. My dear Friend, why not believe Christ yourself? Why not take Him to be your own Savior? Remember that it is true to you that, He that believes in the Son has everlasting life. May you be led at this moment to make it true to yourself! You stand in a banqueting-hall tonightthe tables are delightfully spread with every kind of food that your hunger can crave and every drink that is suitable to quench your thirstyou have been up and down those tableand admired the generosity of Him that furnished them so liberally. And you have rejoiced as you have seen others sit down and feast!   
Now I want you to do this. There is the chair for you. What is next? Sit down at the table and begin to feast. It is you, yourself, who will find the Gospel true! It is your own personal participation in this feast that shall be to you, your joy and your salvation! You do not simply need a Savior knock that little letter a out and put in the blessed pronoun, my, and say from your heart, my Savior! Do not merely say, I believe that there is pardon for sintake Christ to be your own Savior and then you are pardonedyour sin is gone! All that is said in the Word of God to sinners in general is meant for each sinner in particular when he comes and takes it to himself by his own individual faith. There is a passage in Bunyans Pilgrims Progress where he saysThese are the generals; come to particulars, Man. That is just what I want to say to you! All that you have heard, all that we have preached, may be put down as generals. But if it is to benefit you, you must come to particulars, you must personally appropriate the general Truth of God and say, This is for me. This I believe. This I will take. This Savior is mine.   
Still, says one, suppose that I should take what was not mine. That is a supposition which every honest man might fairly suggest, but, in this case, so free is the Gospel that you may freely take it and there will be no question about whether you had a right to it. Look, there is a hungry dog! He rushes into a butchers shop, jumps up, steals a piece of meat and runs off with it. It is hardly worth the butchers while to run after him, to take it away, but if the dog has actually eaten the meat, then I am sure that no sensible butcher will even think of taking it away from him. Now, I would advise you to make a snatch at the Gospel and hungrily devour it by a ravenous faithand I am sure that no one will ever take it away from you! Have you ever read that promise of our Lord, Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out? I see the Savior standing there and His different disciples come to Him, one after another, and He does not put one of them away from Him!   
At last there comes a filthy beggar, leprous as snowthe white scales are on his brow and men flee in terror from him! He comes right up to the Christ and tries to get into His arms. Will He not push Him away? No, for He says, Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out, and He embraces this filthy, leprous beggar and, wonder of wonders, as He presses Him to His breast, the leprosy is healed, the filth is all gone and His rags are transformed to shining raiment! Wonders of Grace belong to Christ! Come along with you, then, and try Him for yourselves! Did He not Himself say, While you have light, believe in the light? If you dare to believe in that Light, you shall make no sort of mistake, for Jesus, Himself, bids you to do so!   
Very often, at the bottom of our unbelief, there lies this thought, I am, after all, somebody of importance. It is the old story of Naaman all over again. He went to the house of Elisha, we are told, with his horses and with his chariot. That equipage was a very important part of the real Naamanhis horses and his chariot went to show that he was a great man with his master and he would have Elisha to know that he was a great man and honorable, albeit that he was a leper. Such a great man, when he goes to the Prophets door, down that narrow street in the city of Samaria, must still have his horses and his chariot! The coachman thought he never would get down that lane but Naaman said, You must drive right up to the door. I must go with my horses and with my chariot. The man of God was indoors and Elisha knew how to treat the proud warriorhe did not even go out to himhe sent a message to him, saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall come, again, to you, and you shall be clean.   
Naaman thought that Elisha should have come out to him! He said, I thought, he will surely come out to me; the proudest man in all Syria has been glad to unloose the laces of my shoes! Did I not come to the Prophets door with my horses and my chariot? Yet he sent out a bit of a boy, or a servant girl, with a message to me! Then, besides, he tells me to wash! Does he think that I do not wash? I, a prince of Syria, need washing? And if I needed washing, must I come all the way to Jordan to wash in that paltry stream? No, there are Abana and Pharpar, back there at Damascus, the rivers of my very respectable countrymay I not wash in them and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage. Yet you know that when he came to a proper state of mind, he did as the Prophet bade himhe washed seven times in Jordan and his leprosy was cleansed. Thus, proud sinner, obey the Gospel command, Believe and live, and you, too, shall be made whole!   
III. I want you, now, to advance another step. I have almost anticipated this third pointWhile you have light, believe in the light, that you may be the children of light. Here is A RESULT OF FAITH MENTIONED.   
They who believe in Christ receive a change of nature. They were born heirs of wrath, but, by Grace they become children of the Light of God. You were sometimes darkness, but now are you light in the Lord, as soon as you have believed in Jesus Christ! This new birth, this regeneration, is a great puzzle to many poor sinners. One asks, How can I make myself a new creature in Christ? Of course, you can do nothing of the kind! This is a miracleit is as much a work of God to make us children of light as it was to make light in the first place! Only God can work this miracle, but mark you this, there never was a soul, yet, that truly believed in Christ, but at the same time it underwent the change called the new birth or regeneration. Christians have often been asked about which is first, faith or regeneration, belief in Christ or being born again. I will tell you, when you answer me this questionWhen a wheel moves, which spoke moves first? Oh, they all start together! you say. So these other things all start together, whether it is the hub of the wheel, which is regeneration, or the spokes of the wheel, which are faith, repentance, hope, love and so onwhen the wheel moves, it all moves at once!

If you believe in Jesus Christ and Him crucified, in the moment that you believe, this great change of nature is effected in you, for faith has, in itself, a singularly transforming power. It is a fact in everyday experience that when a man comes to believe in his employer, he becomes, at once, a better employee. A person whom I disliked, because I suspected him, becomes, at once, pleasing to me as soon as I trust him. So, faith towards God, in itself, produces a total change of mind in the man who has

it. But, beside that, there goes with faith a Divine energy which changes

the heart of man . I have heard of an old sinner who had been in prison many a day, growing gray in his iniquity, who took a little child up in his arms, and, as he put his hand upon the boys curly head, he said, There would be some hope for me if I could become like this little child. Now, that is exactly what God can do for you! If you believe in Jesus Christ, you shall receive a new and childlike nature. There shall be created in you something better than what is called the primitive innocence of infancyit shall be a really pure and holy life that shall be given to you and you shall become a new creature in Christ Jesus!

Is not this very wonderful? The text says, Believe in the light, that you may be the children of light. The children of lightwhat a wonderful picture that might be if I were an artist and could exercise the power of word painting which some have! The children of light. Why, in the morning, when the sun first shines forth, those myriads of dew-drops, all brighter than diamonds of the first waterthese are the children of light! And those innumerable flowers that open their cups and sweeten the air with their dainty perfumethese are the children of light! And those birds that have been slumbering away, there, during the night, in their hidden corners in the grove, come out and begin at once their charming minstrelsy, for they are the children of the light! I cannot tell you how many and how bright are these things in nature which are the children of light, but God can make us, by His Grace, to be like these things, only far better, children of light spiritually.

What are the children of light spiritually? Well, I have met with some of them and it has been a great joy to know them, for these children of light have a great delight in the Truth of God. They are not afraid of it, they love to dive into it! As children of light they like to know, they wish to know, even the deep things of God. They do not shut their eyes to the Truth of God about eternity. They do not refuse to search their own hearts. They are children of the Light of God and they desire the Light of God to shine! They come to the Light of God that their hearts, their thoughts and their works may be made manifest. They delight to know the Truth of Goderror and falsehood are loathsome to thembut that which is true is charming to their judgment.

Children of light. They are those who move in a world of knowledge. They have come to know what others do not know. To them the world is peopled with invisible beings! To them eternal things are no dreams, but they have become realities. Their eyes have been opened to a Light that shines not from the sun and they move in an atmosphere in which they behold things which the telescope cannot reveal. They are children of the Light of God who have come into a world of perception and discoveries to which others are strangers!

Children of light. I will tell you, again, how you may know them. They practice truth. They speak the truth. It is said that an ambassador is a gentleman who is sent abroad to lie for the good of his country. I suppose that common saying is so nearly true that we need not correct it. And a politician is often a gentleman who has learned the art of concealing his thoughts, or who expresses opinions which he trusts will be in accordance with those of his constituency! A child of God is a man who says what he believes, let the world believe it or not! He does not understand, policy. He is no mariner who trims his sail to every shifting wind but, believing in the difference between right and wrong, he chooses the right and eschews the wrong, for he is a child of the Light of God! He has made up his mind to follow the right, the true, the good and the gracious at all costs. Now, that is what faith in Christ will do for you. It will make you, by the good Spirit of God, to be a child of light!

A child of light, further, is one who exhibits the mind and character of God. He is not an earthworm, hiding himself away in the mold. He is not a rat which loves to be behind the wainscot except at nighttimehe is a child of light. He wears his heart upon his sleeve where birds may peck at it and they will do so, but that will not affect him. It is not for him to conceal anythingwhat has he to conceal? He lives in the sight of the eternal God and, as for how he appears in the sight of men, what is that to him? Such an one condemns me, but God acquits me, so let the other condemn if he will, what does it matter to me? Such a man acquits and applauds me, but if God condemns me, the acquittal of man is less than nothing and vanity! A child of light should be very bold for his Lord.

You remember that the times were horribly dark in the days when William Farel lived in Switzerland and young John Calvin had written his weighty volumes of treatises called the Institutes. They were the product of his early days and he wrote in a flowing style, either in French or Latin, and he thought, if he wrote books and sent them forth, he would have done his part towards the Reformation. But Farel discovered this young writer and said to him, You must take up the work of the Reformers and carry it on by preaching the Truth. Calvin replied, I am a bookish man, I have not the courage and the strength to stand out in the front of the battlethat is for men like Martin Luther. I am a studious person and not so much a man of action.

Farel reasoned with him and said, You must come out and take the lead in this Reformation fight, and he asked him, Are you afraid of losing your life? Calvin protested that he had no such fear, he would willingly lay down his life for Jesus Christ if that were necessary, but he shrank from the tumult of controversy. Then Farel pronounced upon him a curse so terrible, if he did not immediately come and take his proper place, that John Calvin had to yield and he never doubted afterwards, but was always to the front, and always the bravest of the brave! I have often admired the noble veteran, Farel, who could not tolerate that this young man, with so much in him, should simply hold the pen and keep in the background, but threatened that the Lord would follow him with all the vials of His vengeance if he did not take his place at the post of duty. I should like now, if I could, to put my hand upon the shoulder of some young Brother, and call upon him to come out to serve his Lord. I feel myself, tonight, like an Elijah to youand I charge you, Elisha, quit the cattle and betake yourself to this prophetic ministry! God calls you to it and woe be to you if you stay back from it!

Again, a child of light is one who, by Gods Grace, is bright, happy, restful, full of joy, life, fruitfulness. These are the children of the Light of God and if we believe in Christ, who is the Light of God, and take Him to ourselves with all our hearts, then we shall be the children of Light. I pray that some of you may become the children of Light even tonight. O God, work miracles of mercy in this house! Jehovah, true God, when You answer by fire, then are You known to be God and the priests of Baal flee away. If you will convert men by Your own Omnipotent Grace, they will worship and adore You. If You will not do this, what can my voice do? Pray, O you people of God, that He may bring those who have His Light to believe in the Light and to become the children of Light! These people to whom Christ spoke were bigoted persecuting Jews, yet He said, even to them, Believe in the light, that you may be the children of light. Whoever may be in my congregation tonightand doubtless there is a mixed medley herethere are none within these walls whom the power of Divine Grace cannot at this moment save! Our Lord Jesus Christ is as able to save the most abandoned as the most moral and to bring to Himself the most skeptical as well as the most credulous! May that miracle be worked in our midst by His great Grace!

IV. My last point is, A GRIEVOUS CLOSE TO A SERMON. Christ Himself was the Preacher on this occasiondo you, therefore, infer that these people believed? Let me read to you what happened when the sermon was done. They gathered about that extempore pulpit from which Jesus had addressed them, but, all of a sudden, they could scarcely tell how, He was gone! They said one to another, Where is He? According to the latter part of our text, this happened at the close of Christs sermonThese things spoke Jesus, and departed, and did hide Himself from them. So, although He had preached as never man preached, though His very soul had run over at His lips in a mighty cascade of love, yet His hearers were not converted, but the Divine Preacher had to go and hide Himself from their malicious violence! The preacher, on this occasion, will not have to do that. No one will seek his life, or try to do him injury, but it is a sad reflection that the same result may follow as followed from Christs own preaching. Men may go their way with their eyes blinded and the question of Isaiah may have to be repeated again and again, Who has believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?   
Do you blame Jesus because these people rejected His testimony? Do you blame Jesus because He had to escape from their violence? No, no, noa thousand times, no! And in that day, in that last dread Day of Judgment, I trust that you will exonerate me from all blame if you are lost, for I have earnestly exhorted you to believe in Jesus, and in Jesus only! There is salvation to be had in Himwill you have it, or will you not? I would gladly grip your hand, to detain you, as that ancient mariner, of whom Coleridge tells us in his weird poem, transfixed with his glittering eyes the wedding guest, and held him when he wanted to be gone, and I would pray you to remember that tonight may be the turning point, the deciding hour, of your eternal destiny! The scales, I see, are quiveringwhich way shall they turn? O blessed Christ, cast Your Cross in the balance and turn it, tonight, for the salvation of each one before You, and unto Your name shall be praise forever and ever! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON:  
**JOHN 12:20-50.**

Verses 20-24. Now there were certain Greeks among those who came up to worship at the feast. Then they came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and asked him, saying, Sir, we wish to see Jesus. Philip came and told Andrew, and in turn Andrew and Philip told Jesus. But Jesus answered them, saying, The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified. Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain. I think that our Savior looked upon these Greeks as a sort of vanguard of the great army of Gentiles who would come to Him as the result of His death, but He fixed His eyes upon the cause rather than the result, and so He began to talk about that death of His, and how it was that it would work such glorious results. If you want a corn of wheat to grow, you must put it into the ground. It must be resolved into its primary particlesfor that is what, to die, meansand then it must spring up, again, with newness of life, or else it can never be multiplied. It was so with the Lord Jesus, Himself. It is still so with us, it is in proportion as we, ourselves, shall be prepared to die that we shall be prepared to give life to others.

25. He that loves his life shall lose it; and he that hates his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. To hoard your energies will be really to destroy them, like hoarded wheat which, in the end, becomes useless. But to give up your energies, to expend your life forcesthis is to sow the wheatand this is the way to ensure the harvest.

26. If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me. Do not let him invent some new method of serviceLet him follow Me. If you would do Christ a service, it cannot be by will-worship, or by any way of your own devising! If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me.

26. And where l am, there shall also My servant be. He shall be with Me in tribulation. He shall be with Me in humiliationand he shall ultimately be with Me in triumph and in Glory.

26. If anyone serves Me, him will My Father honor. Those servants of Christ who follow at their Masters heel and do His bidding at all times, are the true knights of the King who win the honors that God alone can give.

27. Now is My soul troubled and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour? But for this cause came I unto this hour. Often, my Brothers and Sisters, should we be checked in prayer if we would be as wise as our Lord. What shall I say? Shall I ask to be delivered from sickness? Shall I ask that I may not endure the troubles which are the common lot of men? Shall I pray to be screened from persecution? You see, I am rendering our Lords question into our language, bringing it down from the lofty height of His Divine thoughts to the level of our poor humanity! We must often pause before we pray, and say with our Lord, For this cause came I unto this hour. Have I not been brought here on purpose to suffer? Have I not been led to this place that I may glorify God by submitting to all His will? Therefore, sometimes let us check ourselves in prayer lest we should ask what is not for our own good or for Gods Glory. The next word of the Savior will give us liberty enough, for He went on to say

28. Father, glorify Your name. When we are pleading about that glorious name of Jehovah, we may pray with vehemence and importunity Father, whatever I do or suffer, glorify Your name.

28, 29. Then came there a voice from Heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again. The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spoke to Him. Ah, they did not understand the voice of God, or the cause of the voice speaking to them. If the men of the world in our Saviors day did not understand the Fathers voice to the Only-Begotten, do not expect that the men of the world, today, will understand the Divine voice in your heart. They will reckon that you are in error and that God has not spoken to youit has only thundered. They will be ready to invent all kinds of stories of angels and I know not what, so as to get rid of the voice of God to you. But you know itif you are Gods children, you know His voice and you also know what He means when He speaks!

30-32. Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of Me, but for your sakes. Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me. This is the sermon which has the Greeks for a text. They are already coming, being drawn to Christ, but when He dies, when He is lifted up upon the Cross, instead of losing His attractive power, He will have greater drawing force than everI, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me.

33, 34. This He said, signifying what death He should die. The people answered Him. As they were always doing, capaciously answeringnot answering Him with sentiments that responded to His, but replying against Him with their caviling.

34-41. We have heard out of the Law that Christ abides forever: and how can say You, The Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man? Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walks in darkness knows not where he goes. While you have light, believe in the light, that you may be the children of light. These things spoke Jesus, and departed, and did hide Himself from them. But though He had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on Him: that the saying of Isaiah the Prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke, Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Isaiah said again, He has blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart, that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Isaiah, when he saw His Glory, and spoke of Him. It is an awful thing to resist the Spirit of God, for if His softening influences are withdrawn, the heart grows hard! If His enlightening influences are taken away, the eyes of the understanding are darkened! I believe there are many who have so long trifled with conscience and violated the best instincts of their nature that they are given up as those who are past hope. I pray God that it may not be so with any here. But it was so with many in the generation among which Christ labored.

42. Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on Him. Christ has His secret followers in the darkest days. There are men who believe in Him even when the current of infidelity runs most strongly.

42, 43. But because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. For which they deserved great censure! Yet some of them cast away their cowardice at the last, for Joseph of Arimathaea and Nicodemus were among those who confessed their love to the Crucified Christ.

44-49. Jesus cried and said, He that believes on Me, believes not on Me, but on Him that sent Me. And he that sees Me sees Him that sent Me. I am come a Light into the world, that whoever believes on Me should not abide in darkness. And if any man hears My word, and believes not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejects Me, and receives not My words, has that which judges him the words that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken of Myself, but the Father which sent Me. He gave Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. Christ did not pride Himself upon being a great original thinker. He took His words from His Fathers mouthand the preacher of the Gospel is to be no inventor of new thoughts. The thoughtful man of whom we hear so much is just a man who is rebellious against God. The Lords true servant is to repeat Gods thoughts, not his ownto borrow from the Scriptures, to borrow from the teaching of the Holy Spiriteven as the Lord Jesus Christ did.

50. And I know that His commandment is life everlasting: whatever I speak, therefore, even as the Father said unto Me, so I speak. If the great Head of the Church was thus only a Messenger, the Deliverer of a message from the Father, should not we, who at our best are such poor ministers of Christ, take heed to it that we, also, can say, Even as the Father said unto me, so I speak? God grant it! Amen.

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #1844 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

ISRAEL AND BRITAIN A NOTE OF WARNING   
NO. 1844

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, JUNE 7, 1885, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**But though He had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on Him: that the saying of Isaiah the Prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke, Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore**

**they could not believe, because that Isaiah said again, He has blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart, that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Isaiah,**

**when he saw His Glory, and spoke of Him.   
John 12:37-41.**

THE blindness of Israel concerning our Lord was sadly remarkable. It was a blindness of the eyes, for they saw His many miracles and yet believed not. Their ears, also, seemed to be stopped, for they heard His words and did not understand them. And their hearts, also, were heavy, for they did not relent under the plaintive admonitions of a Saviors love. Their hearts were cruel towards the Messiahthey hated Him without a cause. No door was open to the heart of Israel; they had hardened their heart, they had shut their eyes, they had stopped their ears, and even He that spoke as never man spoke gained no access to their souls. They went so far as to crucify Him and cried as they did so, His blood be on us, and on our childrenwords so sadly verified when Jerusalem was destroyed and her children slaughtered, sold as slaves, or scattered to the four corners of the earth. It was, indeed, a terrible blindness which happened unto Israel.

Her rejection of the Lord Jesus is the more amazing because Isaiah gave so clear an account of the Messiah and so clearly pictured Jesus of Nazareth. Descriptions of Him could not have been more explicit than were the prophecies of Isaiah. It would be very easy to construct an entire life of Christ out of the book of Isaiah, beginning with, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel, and ending with, He made His grave with the wicked and with the rich in His death. Isaiah spoke of John the Baptist as the voice crying in the wilderness, prepare you the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. And he foretold our Lords ministry by the way of the sea beyond Jordan in Galilee of the Gentiles, where the people who sat in darkness saw great light. The Prophet portrayed his Lord as despised and rejected of men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.

Clearest of all is he upon His vicarious sufferings, concerning which he uses a variety of most definite expressions, such asThe chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. Isaiah saw so clearly the day of our Lord Jesus that he spoke rather as an evangelist than as a Prophetas an eyewitness, rather than as one foretelling a faroff event. Yet all this clearness was lost upon the men of his generation and upon those who followed after. The nation had so long been fickle towards God and had trifled so long with Gods Truth, that it was, at last, given up to a judicial hardness of heart, so that it could not understand or perceive! They refused the plainest messages of Grace and were so confirmed in unbelief that all their Prophets cried with one plaintive voice, Who has believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?

Nor was it alone grievous that Israel sinned against the Light of God which shone in Isaiahs testimony, but, alas, she closed her eyes against the meridian splendor of our Lords own life! Jesus bore His own witness in His Person, teachings, works and gifts. A sad wonder lies in the fact that they did not know the Lord of Glory although they saw His miracles, which were sure witnesses to His claims. He worked among them works which no other man did. There is about our Lord a likeness to Godin all that He does the Godhead shines forth! He is so pure that He can say, Which of you convicts Me of sin? How like to Him who is saluted as, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts! His teaching is so full of tenderness and gentleness that since God is Love, we conclude that Christ is God! His many miracles touch upon every point in the great circle of Omnipotence. What is there that God can do which the Christ did not do? Was He not multiform and multitudinous in His works of power and Grace? Herein lay the wonder, that though He did so many miracles before them, not in secret but actually before their eyesthough He fed them with bread which they could see and handle, and eatthough He healed the sick and raised the dead, they yet believed not on Him.

How sadly far can men go in unbelief, prejudice and hardness of heart! How dim can human eyes become when men refuse to see! How darkened the understanding when men are unwilling to comprehend! Let us tremble at this, lest we, ourselves, by imitating the chosen people in their unbelief, should fall into like bondage to prejudice and ignorance; lest we, by tampering with the Truth of God should come, at last, to be incapable of perceiving it; lest we, also, by rejecting the testimony of God, should be given up to our own willfulness to believe a lie and refuse the Truth. Such, then, as Isaiah had foreseen, was the state of Israel in our Lords daynever clearer evidence and never more obstinate refusal to see itnever truth more plain and never rejection so determined!

Woe to those who close their ears, for the day comes when they shall no longer hear! Woe to those who shut their eyes to the Light of God, for they shall, before long, be made blind! Isaiah was informed that such would be the outcome of his ministrythe Lord bade him say to the people, Hear you, indeed, but understand not; and see you, indeed, but perceive not. This must have been a very sad business for so generous and tenderhearted a man of God. It was painful to him to be so clear and yet to be so little understood. He was the Paul of the Old Testamentto him belonged fullness of knowledge, clearness of vision, plainness of speech and faithfulness of spiritand yet none of these things could make the people understand his message and receive it into their hearts. He was sublime in thought, attractive in word and affectionate in spiritand yet they did not believe his testimonyso that he must have often been astonished and heart-broken as he spoke in vain to a people who were determined that they would not hear!

This morning I shall draw certain lessons for ourselves from the great evangelical Prophet, his ministry and the people to whom he ministered so vainly. Our first meditation shall be concerning Isaiah and his ministry. Our second shall be concerning the people to whom he spoke. Alas, I fear that we who speak in the name of the Lord in these last days have, also, to deal with hearts that are gross, ears that are heavy and eyes that are dimmed! Upon this generation, also, there is falling a measure of judicial withdrawal of light and discernmentand we, also, have to cry, Who has believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?

I. First, then, let me speak with you CONCERNING ISAIAH AND HIS MINISTRY. Oh, that the Spirit of God may speak with power through me! Our text says two things of Isaiah. First, that He saw His Glory, and secondly, that He spoke of Him.

The first statement is that Isaiah saw. Isaiah was a great Seerhis prophesy begins thusThe vision of Isaiah, the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. All Prophets were more or less Seers and saw what they foretold. But Isaiah, above others, was endowed with the seeing and foreseeing faculty. He had the clearest sight and for that reason he had the clearest speech. When a man speaks so that you cannot understand him, the usual reason is that he does not understand himself. And when a man speaks so as to be readily comprehended, it is because the thought in his own mind is well defined. He that could speak well must see well. Mark the two things in the textWhen Isaiah saw His Glory, and spoke of Him.

In what sense is Isaiah said to have seen that which he spoke? Does it not mean that he realized his thoughts? That they stood out vividly so as to make a deep impression upon his own mind? Things to come were already come in his apprehensionhe beheld what he believed, felt what he foretold. He was not a dreamy person, maundering about half-fashioned, undeveloped thoughts, but he was a person who knew, perceived and felt what he preached. He saw with his soul what he set forth with his lips.

But what did he see? It is a most important thing that in these days you and I should see the same, for the same work lies before us among a people who are a repetition of that disobedient and gainsaying nation! Read, then, with care the sixth chapter of Isaiah. Open your Bibles and refer to the passage, verse by verse.

First, what Isaiah saw was the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up. When the Prophet went abroad among the people, he heard them speaking against the Lord God. Some were contending for one deity and some for another. Some were leaning upon an arm of flesh and others despising the promise of Jehovah, the God of Israel. All this, I say, he saw out of doors and he was troubled. But when he went into the sanctuary of God, he saw the Lord sitting upon a thronestill reigning, still glorious, undisturbed by opposition. He must, then, have felt like David when he said, Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against His anointed. He that sits in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Yet have I set My king upon My holy hill of Zion.

As David saw Christ upon the throne amid the strivings of the people, so did Isaiah see the Lord Jesus, not only upon the lowly Mercy Seat, but upon a throne high and lifted up! I pray you, Brothers and Sisters, settle this in your heartsour Lord is highly exalted as Lord of All! When you see evil occurring, do not imagine that it defeats the eternal purposes of Jehovah! When you hear blasphemy and your blood runs cold, do not think that Christ has lost His Glory! When men riot in sin, do not dream that the reins of affairs are out of Jesus hands, for He is still God over all, blessed forever. My heart exults this day, as, by undoubting faith, I am assured that He who died on Calvary is now exalted on high, far above all principalities and powers! You are the King of Glory, O Christ! To You our spirits ascribe infinite honor, world without end! Though the earth is removed and the mountains are carried into the midst of the sea, yet the Lord reigns! He that died upon the Cross is crowned with majesty and all the angels of God worship Him! He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. Let us have no question about this, for if we have, we shall not be prepared to speak in the Lords name with this evil generation. Amid the anarchy of the ages we see the glorious high Throne of our redeeming Lord unmoved, unmovable! This is the Rock of our refuge when the unsettled times rage about us like the waters of the troubled sea. We cannot be afraid, for Christ is on His Throne!

Observe that in Isaiahs vision he not only saw the Lord upon a throne high and lifted up, but he saw that His train filled the temple, so that in that temple there was room for no one else! The robes of this great King filled all the holy place and neither priests nor offerers could find standing room there. It is a great thing to see how Jesus fills the heavenly places. In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead! Let it be acknowledged to be so in Heaven, for the Glory of our Redeemer fills every street of the upper city, every mansion of the Fathers house. In the Church below, which is also His temple, among His spiritual people, the Glory of the Lord Jesus engages and occupies every heart. They feel that there is none other in whom they can trust, none other whose words they will receive, none other in whom they glorythe Lord Christ is All in All to us and we know no other Master or Savior. His train fills the temple.

I trust it is so among us. From Sabbath to Sabbath the one Glory of this Tabernacle is the Person and work of Jesus. What a Glory has God put upon the Only-Begotten Son, whom He has raised from the dead that He should be Head over all things to His Church, which He fills with His life, light, and love! Nor may we forget that all the things that exist are, in a sense, His temple, and the whole universe is filled with His train, for He has ascended up far above all heavens that He might fill all things. Glory be unto our ascended and reigning Lord!

In His vision Isaiah saw the flaming spirits that wait upon the Christ of God. He calls them, seraphims. The best interpretation we can give is, burning onesthey burn in the sense of consuming. They burn up that which ought to be consumed, namely, all kinds of evil. There are powers around our Lord which will destroy evil. You ask me to tell you something about these seraphimhow can I? They have covered their faces and covered their feet! Since nothing is to be seen, what can I tell you? Neither would it be right for us to speak concerning them, for, manifestly, it is their desire to be hidden. Who will violate their wish to be concealed? They covered their faces, they covered their feet and therein they did as good as say, Look not on us, but look on Him who sits upon the Throne, whose attendants we are. This much is all we knowexalted intelligences are in waiting upon our Lord and are able to fly swiftly at His bidding. Tremble not concerning this error, or thatit shall be burnt up by those agencies which are at the command of our exalted Lord. Spirits from God shall run to and fro and smite, as with the fire of God, those powers of darkness which now oppress our race. God Himself is a consuming firewho can dwell with Him but those that are like He? He makes His ministers a flame of fire! Around our Lord are the chariots of God, which are 20,000, even thousands of angels. His power knows no limit! His word runs very swiftly. He speaks and it is done! He commands and it stands fast! Glory be unto You, O Christ! We will not fear nor be discouraged, since these, Your servants, are ready to flame forth at Your bidding. Truly You are Jehovah of Hosts!

This vision of the bodyguard of the Prince of Peace was enough to strengthen Isaiah. Thus comforted, he would calmly confront that rebellious generation. If the Prophet, when he opened the young mans eyes strengthened his heart by making him see horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha, shall not we be comforted as we behold legions of burning ones surrounding our King and standing ready to fulfill His decrees?

Further, we find that Isaiah saw in that vision the perpetual adoration which is rendered unto Christ concerning His holiness. Those bright spirits had never tasted of His mercy, for they had never sinned. They understood nothing of His Grace, for they had not been guilty. But being pure in heart, they gazed on the Lord with opened eyes and adored His holiness! Their whole souls were filled with the contemplation of that one allembracing attributeand in responsive song they said, each one, to his fellow, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts. They emphasized their words by repeating them three times and, perhaps, they alluded, also, to the Trinity in Unity as they cried, Holy, holy, holy. This is the supreme Glory of Christ, that in Him is seen the holiness of God!

Oh my Friends, let us be like these seraphim, ravished with the holiness of the Atonement, awe-struck with the justice of God in the great Sacrifice! Reflect with reverence that God, when He willed to save His elect, would not commit a breach upon His Lawsthough He would redeem them from going down into the Pit, yet He would not violate His Word, nor change that most righteous penalty of deathwhich is the due desert of sin. Rather than stain His holiness, He spared not His own Son, but freely delivered Him up for us all! Consider the great love of holiness which must have been in the heart of the Father, that He would give up His Son to bleed, sooner than His Law should be dishonored! And think of the great holiness of Christ, that He would rather give His back to the smiters and His cheeks to them that pluck out the hair, yes, rather stretch out His hands to the nails and expire, forsaken of His God, than suffer sin to go unpunished! God would not even, for mercys sake, issue an unjust pardon to the souls He loved!

As I stand here this morning I, also, have visions of Godand the Cross seems to me transformed into a burning Throne whereon justice is high and lifted up to the uttermost, as I see God, Himself, in Christ Jesus, bowing His head to death, that He might be just and yet the Justifier of him that believes. Around that Cross I see troops of angels gathering and I hear one crying unto another and saying, Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah Jesus, the great Sacrifice for sin! Do you not unite in their reverent homage? If you do, you will go forth and tell of pardon bought with blood and of the Atonement finished, once and for all! With hallowed confidence you will tell out among the people that the holy Lord reigns from the Cross until all creatures fall down and worship Him that was slain, because His holiness was thereby revealed in noonday splendor!

This was not all that was revealed to the Prophet, for he heard the seraphim say, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts; the whole earth is full of His Glory. Even when men rejected Christ; even when hearts were fat, eyes were dim and ears were heavyeven thenthe whole earth was full of the Glory of Christ! When scientists tell us that they cannot see God, I am amazed. To me it is impossible not to see Him. Though I cannot pry with scalpel into the anatomy of the human frame, yet when I look upon the mere skin of the human countenance, I see the handiwork of God! Though I cannot dig into the lower strata of the earth and disentomb the fossil and decipher its stone-preserved memorial, yet to me, rock, clay, sand and relics of the past bear the sure hieroglyph of God! Though I cannot inform you of all the interesting details of insect life, or descant upon the secrets of botany, yet to me, bees bring honeyed thoughts of God and flowers breathe the perfume of His love! Where is God? Ask, rather, Where is He not?

Not with these grosser senses, but by higher faculties, I see and hear my God! Yes, He does surround me and my faith embraces Him. I am no fool for thisthe best authority declares that he is the fool who says in his heart, There is no God. Yes, the whole earth is full of the Glory of Christ and above the earth in every cloud it is seen! And above the cloud every star shines out concerning Him! Alas for the blind eyes that cannot see that which is evidently set forth in every place. Alas for the ears which cannot hear when earth, sea, Heaven and Hell are all echoing to the tread of the Omnipotent Christ of God! Oh Brothers and Sisters, have you ever seen this vision? Have you ever seen Gods Glory filling the whole earth? If so, you are prepared for the times that are and are to be times of gloom, darkness, sin and blasphemyand yet your heart does not tremble for the Ark of the Lord.

When all this was seen by the Prophet, he noticed that the posts of the doors moved. If I am rightly informed, there were two huge columns before the Temple called Jachin and Boaz. These were made with singular skill and were the wonder of the age. They were of brass, cast by Solomonbut in the course of ages they had no doubt mellowed into bronzeand there they stood, two tremendous erections, bearing up massive doors! We are told, I know not whether it is correct, that the gates that swung upon these columns required at least 20 men either to open or to shut them. But as the Prophet saw that vision, he noticed that these massive columns trembled and thus did obeisance to the God who was within their gates. Our Revised Version reads it, The foundations of the thresholds were moved. Even to its foundations, the house trembled with solemn awe of the Divine Presence! Brethren, Heaven, earth, Hell and all created things reflect the Glory of the Lord and thus adore Him! Oh Lord Jesus, You are worthy of all honor. All the earth does worship You. If it were so with posts and doors, shall not our hearts rejoice with trembling? Shall not our souls be moved in the Presence of the Most High? And will we not fall down before the glorified Christ, as John did, who wrote, When I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead? Everything is filled with awe in His majestic Presence, save only man, the impious rebel who dares defy his God!

Then came the best part of the vision for Isaiah. At the glorious sight, he felt, Woe is me, for I am undone, I am stricken dumb. I can never speak again, for my lips are unclean, and I dwell among an unclean people. Then, swift as lightning, flew a seraph, bringing a coal more burning than himself from off the Altar of Sacrifice, with which he touched the Prophets lips. Beloved, this is what we need! We need to feel the Atonement laid home to us; to feel the power of the great Sacrifice of Christ; to hear a voice saying within our spirit, Your iniquity is put away and your sin is purged. Though that live coal must have blistered the lips which it covered, yet it made them eloquent. Common fire would destroy the organs of speech, but the fire of Sacrifice does notit unloosens a grateful tongue and helps a grateful heart to tell of the Love immense and unsearchable which offered itself upon the Altar of Sacrifice, that holiness and love might save the sinner. Our peace comes from the Holy, Holy, Holy One, who is just and yet forgives His peoples sin. Brother, if you are to proclaim the Glory of your Lord, you must feel the sacrificial coal applied to the place where your impurity is most seen, even to your lips! You must know that you are forgiven, for your conviction that you are clean before God will give you confidence in telling others the story of the Cross. This is what Isaiah saw.

Listen for a minute to that further word that followsIsaiah, when he saw His Glory, spoke of Him. He that has seen this sight must speak!   
He spoke in deep humility. Never braver man than Isaiah, but never one who walked in lowlier reverence before His God. He never forgot, to His dying day, that, Woe is me! For I have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts.   
Yet, observe that he spoke with very willing obedience. Here am I, he said, send me. He offers himself to be Gods mouth to the people, whatever the message may be. He seems to say, Here am I in the entirety of my being, purchased to You by Your great pardoning love. Use me as You will and send me where You will. He continued to report his Lords message under constant rebuffs and despite the ceaseless obduracy of Israel. Though he cried, Who has believed our report? yet he continued that report! That chapter which begins with his complaint has in it not only a continuation of the report, but a fuller version of it than he had ever given before. He was sad but resolute, grieved yet persevering, broken in heart, but not broken down in constancy. Brothers, it needs great Grace to go upon a fruitless errand. One had need see the Glory of the Lord to be enabled to fight a losing battle! I am sometimes afraid that I have to do this, myself, but if it is so, it is not ours to bargain for success, but to yield implicit obedience! It is ours to abide faithful to our commission, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear. Brothers, be it ours to serve the Lord gladly and testify to what we have seen, even though no man should receive our witness.   
But then it is said of Isaiah that he, spoke of Him, that is, of our Lord Jesus Christ. In all that Isaiah said he had an eye to Christ. It was all his business among men to speak of glories of the coming Son of God. May the Lord give us such a sight of Christ in His Glory, that from this day forth we shall be absorbed in glorifying Him! May our life be a perpetual ministry concerning Christ. Remember that word concerning John the Baptist? John did no miracle, but all things that John spoke of this Man were true. If we can do no miracles and achieve no success, let us at least cry without ceasing, Behold the Lamb of God. Though we decrease, it matters not so long as He increaseswe are glad to disappear, as the morning star is lost at the rising of the sun. It is our delight to imitate the seraphim and with veiled face and covered feet to attend about the Throne of Jehovah Jesus our Lord!   
II. I now ask your kind attention to the second part of my subject, which is a very painful one, CONCERNING THE NATION TO WHICH ISAIAH SPOKE. Their terrible sin lay in this, that they were willingly blinded by the Light of God which ought to have been to them a help to see Christ. And they were hardened by those very Truths which ought to have melted them. They became more and more adverse to Christ through beholding in Him such a Character as ought to have won their hearts. To the Prophets teaching they were entirely dead. A specimen of this we find in the succeeding chapters of Isaiah. Israel and Syria attacked Ahaz, whose reign followed those of Uzziah and Jotham. The Prophet came and said to Ahaz, Take heed, and be quiet; fear not, neither be faint-hearted for the two tails of these smoking firebrands. Ahaz was assured that God would help him if he would but trust in Him. But instead of doing so, the king determined to petition for the help of the great king of Assyria, with the result, in the long run, that, the king of Assyria came unto him and distressed him, but helped him not.   
Isaiah, to confirm his message, bade the king choose any sign either in the depth or in the height above, but the infidel king replied, I will not ask, neither will I test Jehovah. He had so defiantly cast off allegiance to the true God that he would not even accept a sign, though it was left to his own choice! Thus Isaiahs message was rejected though put in the most winning form, for the hearts of the people were blinded and hardened so as to choose the way of destruction. Ultimately, as you know, the Assyrians carried the whole people away, for they had rejected Gods message willfully and wrath came upon them. What a grievous task to be called to preach to such a people!   
They went on from bad to worse as a nation. They turned aside grievously from God and when they appeared to cleave to Him, it was in name, only, but not in heart, so that when Christ came they were unable to discern Him, for had they known Him, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory! This blindness was, in part, a punishment for their long rebellion. If men willfully shut their eyes, do you wonder that they become blind? If men will not hear, do you wonder that they grow deaf? If men will not understand, do you wonder that they become stupid? He that perverts the Truth of God shall soon be incapable of knowing the true from the false! If you persist in wearing glasses that distort, everything will be distorted to you   
*Hear the just Law, the judgment of the skies! He that hates Truth shall be the dupe of lies.*   
But although this blindness was a punishment for former sin, it was, itself, a sin. They willfully rejected the testimony of God against themselvesthey refused the self-evident Christ who would so greatly have blessed them. This willful rejection was carried out so effectually that it became impossible to convert and heal themthey could not be instructed or reformed and, therefore, they were given over to destruction. Nothing remained but to allow the Romans to burn the Temple and plow the site of the city. It was a dreadful thing that they should deliberately choose destruction and obstinately involve themselves in the most tremendous of woes.   
Poor Israel, we pity you! It was sad, indeed, to fall from so great a height! Yet we are bound to admit that God dealt with you justly, for you did choose your own delusions. The Lord cries, Oh that My people had hearkened unto Me. Our Savior weeps and cries, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered your children together, even as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, but you would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.   
What I have to say this morning is thisthat I am growingly fearful lest our own country should famish a parallel to all this. Read the story of England, beginning where you will, and see how gracious God has been to us. Note well our great deliverances from the destruction of the Spanish Armada to the overthrow of Napoleon. Do not forget how often this little country has been made victorious in wars against great peoples who thought to swallow her up. Then reflect how God sent His Light to us how the Gospel spread all over Englandand how it has, in many ways, been rejected. How often since the days of Cromwell, Rome has been allowed to dim the light of our Protestantismand how it labors to do so still! See how this people have received the Truth of Heaven, but again and again have proved false to it, turning at one time to superstition and at another time to infidelity.   
At this moment we are rich and, despite depression in business, we are less tried by it than any other nation. And what causes all of this mercy but increased sin? Why, at this moment we have sin rampant among us almost beyond precedent! Think how the poor are oppressed and ground down with awful poverty in many parts of this great city. Shall not God avenge the cry of starving women? Worse still, if worse can bethose who dare walk our streets after sundown tell us that Sodom, in its most putrid days, could scarcely exceed this metropolis for open vice. To our infinite disgust and horror, the names of certain of the greatest in the land are, at this hour, openly mentioned in connection with the filthiest debauchery! This is not the place for details, nor can I mention the matter, or even think of it without feeling my very soul on fire. Faithfulness requires plain speechbut it is a hideous evil that the dregs of vice should be the chosen luxury of certain of our hereditary legislators and rulers.   
Woe unto you, oh land, when your great ones love the harlots house! Deep is our shame when we know that our judges are not clear in this matter, but social purity has been put to the blush by magistrates of no mean degree. Yes, it is said that the courts of justice have lent themselves to the covering and hushing up of the iniquities of the great. Shall not God be grieved by such a nation as this? He who has read a certain story which is but too well-known, must have felt his ears tingle and his heart tremble! What is coming over us? What horrible clouds are darkening our skies? There were judges, once, who would not have suffered the laws to be trampled on by the great, but would have dealt out equal justice to rich and poor! I cannot persuade myself that it will be otherwise, now, and yet I fear the worst. O God, have mercy upon the land whose judgment seats and palaces are defiled with vice!   
This is not alla general indifference to all religion is creeping over the countryat least over this vast metropolis. Ask those who visit from door to door among our crowded populations and they will tell you that never before in their lives were there so few persons attendant upon the means of Grace. Street after street of this city scarcely possesses more than one regular attendant upon the preaching of the Word of God. The Sabbath is no longer a day of worship with millions! What continual efforts are made to rob us of the Sabbathto degrade it into a common work-day and to make a slave of the working-man. Today the Revelation of God is treated with indifference, or talked of as if it deserved no reverence or credit. Unbelief has sapped the foundations of the social fabric.   
Worst of allI must not hold back the chargemany of the avowed ministers of Christ are no ministers of faith at all, but promoters of unbelief! The modern pulpit has taught men to be infidels! What Truth of God is there which has not been doubted by divines, questioned by doctors of divinity and, at length, been denounced by the priests of modern thought? Nothing remains upon which a certain school of preachers have not spit their skepticism. The experience of the unbelief of Germany is being repeated here! Among those who are ordained to be the preachers of the Gospel of Christ there are many who preach not faith but doubt and, therefore, they are servants of the devil rather than of the Lord! Think not that I am aiming at the Church of England! With all my objection to a State-Church, I am not so unjust as to conceal my belief that I see in the Episcopal Church, at this time, less of unbelief than among certain Dissenters! In fact, Nonconformity in certain quarters is eaten through and through with a covert Unitarianism, less tolerable than Unitarianism, itself! So frequently are the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel assailed that it becomes necessary, before you cross the threshold of many a Chapel, to ask the question, Shall I hear the Gospel here, today, or shall I come out hardly knowing whether the Bible is inspired or not? Shall I not be made to doubt the Atonement, the work of the Holy Spirit, the immortality of the soul, the punishment of the wicked, or the deity of Christ?

I know I shall stir a hornets nest by these honest rebukes but I cannot help it. I am burdened and distressed with the state of religiona pest is in the airno Truth of God is safe from its withering infection! No signs can be more alarming than the growing infidelity and worldliness which I see among those who call themselves Christians. Does this nation really intend to cast off the fear of God and the doctrines of Holy Scripture to follow the vain imaginings of the sophists and the fashionable follies of the great? Are we to see, again, unbelief and luxurious sin walking hand in hand? If so, there are some of us who mean to take up our sorrowful parable and speak as plainly as we can for truth and holiness, whether we offend or please! Be it ours to still thunder out the Law of God and proclaim with trumpet clearness the Gospel of Jesus, not bating one jot of firm belief in the Revelation of God, nor winking at sin, nor toning down the Truth of God, even though we fear that the only result will be to make this peoples hearts gross, their ears heavy and their eyes blind! If it must be so, my soul shall weep in secret, but still, O Lord, here am I, send me! Be of good courage, O my Heart, for the faithful have not ceased from among men! Other voices will cry aloud and spare not, if haply our land may be purged of its present defilement.   
Hearken yet again while I press this subject personally home to you. Has not this word a personal bearing upon some of you? Certain of you have heard the Gospel preached plainly and honestlyand yet you have never received itis there not creeping over you a fatal indifference? Are not your hearts turning to stone? Possibly you are professors of religion and yet you do not feel the power of itwhat does this mean? If you are not a praying people, nor a holy people and yet are a professing people, what an awful doom awaits you! Shall my ministry be a savor of death unto you? It may be that my voice grows stale to you and what I say seems common-placeis this to be the reason for your refusing Christ and His salvation, refusing the power of His Word, refusing holiness which He would work in you? Oh, shall it be so? Will you die?   
Dear Hearers, I should not like to meet one of you at the Day of Judgment and have to feel that I preached you into a greater blindness than you might have known! Oh, be converted! Turn you, turn you, why will you die? May God in infinite mercy speak to you that you may believe in Jesus, now, lest that should come upon you which is spoken of by the Prophet, Behold, you despisers, and wonder, and perish!   
Before I have done, hear the sweet whisper which closes the sixth of Isaiah. Notwithstanding all the terrible work that Isaiah had to do, he was not left without comfort. The Lord said to him, In it there shall be a tenth. You know how the Prophet cried, Except the Lord of Hosts had left us a seed, we had been as Sodom, and been made like unto Gomorrah. The Lord has His sacred tithe and these He will not lose. The tree has lost its leaves, for it is winter time, but still, it is alive, and the sap will flow again, for its substance is in it! The tree is leveled by the axe, but weep not despairing tears, for it shall sprout again, for life is still in it! Even so the Church must live, the Truth of God must be victorious, purity must conquer, the Christ must reign!   
Behold, He comes with clouds and every eye shall see Him! Reject Christ if you will, today, oh you who think yourselves so exceedingly wise, but there is a people who love Him, a secret people who cling to Himand when He comes, as come He must before longthey will welcome Him and partake in His Glory. As for you that refuse Him this day, how will you stand when He appears? Where will you flee? You shall ask the hills to cover you, but they will refuse! You shall bid the mountains hide you, but they will not yield a cavern for your shelter! Be wise, now, therefore, and no more resist your Lord! Kiss the Son lest He be angry, and you perish from the way while His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him! May you and I and all of us be of that blessed number. Amen and Amen!

**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 12:37-50; Isaiah 6.** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK93, 12, 518. Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #2377 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

LOVE STRONGER THAN DEATH   
NO. 2377

**A SERMON INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS DAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 1894.   
DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON THURSDAY EVENING, JULY 5, 1888.

**When Jesus knew that His hour was come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end. John 13:1.**

THIS is a kind of preface to the story of the foot-washing, and a very wonderful preface it is, when coupled with the third and fourth verses, upon which I commented. Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God, and was going to God, rose from supper and laid aside His garments; and took a towel, and girded Himself. This is the frame of the picture that is here presented to us. To what shall I compare it? It is like unto a gate of the Golden Cityeach gate is one huge pearl and surely this verse is a jewel of inestimable price! The foot-washing picture is set within this precious frame.

This memorable and symbolical act took place at the end of our Lords sojourn here below. The Passion was the end of His life and we may consider that the Passion was about to begin. That same night He would go to Gethsemane and, in less than 24 hours, the dear hands that washed the disciples feet would be nailed to the accursed wood and He who spoke so tenderly to His little band of followers would be in His death agonies.

It is an important thing to know how a man feels when he comes to the real crisis of his life. He has cultivated a great variety of feelings during his career, but what has been his ruling passion? You will see it now. It has passed into a proverb that, The ruling passion is strong in death, and there is great truth in the saying. In the light of the mans departure, we shall see what power really ruled him. It was precisely so with our Divine Master. He had almost reached the end of His earthly life. He had come to a season of awful agony. He was about to endure the great and terrible death of the Cross, by which He was to purchase eternal redemption for all His people. What will be uppermost in His mind, now? What will He think of His disciples, now that He has so many other things to think ofnow that the thought of His approaching death comes over Himnow that the agony and bloody sweat of Gethsemane are so near?

What will Jesus think of His disciples at such a time as this and under such circumstances as these? Our text is the answer to that questionJesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God, and was going to God, rose from supper and laid aside His garments; and took a towel, and girded Himself. His love was burning as brightly at the Paschal Supper as ever it burned before! Yes, and it seemed as if, in that wondrous prayer that is recorded in the 17th Chapter of John, and in the wonderful discourse which accompanied it, the love of Jesus had never before flamed out so clearly! Then were the great beacon fires lit and the fierce winds that blew around the Savior fanned them to their full force of flame. Now can you say of Jesus, Behold how He loved His disciples! for even at the end of His life He still loved those whom He had loved before!

With that thought in your minds, will you follow me while I take the text to pieces and dwell upon almost every word of it?   
I. First, then, concerning our blessed Master, let us consider WITH WHOM HE ASSOCIATED and of whom this verse now speaks. They are called, His own. It is a brief description, but it is wonderfully full Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end.   
His own. There was a circlesometimes a wide circleround the Savior. It was made up of publicans and sinners and He had a measure of love to all of them, a benevolent desire to bless them, but there was an inner circle, containing the 12 Apostles and some godly women who had joined themselves unto Him. These were, His own. To them He often expounded the hidden meaning of a parable which He left unexplained to the crowd. To them He often brought many a dainty dish which was especially reserved for their table and not intended for the multitude. Bread and fish would do for the crowd, but Jesus had choicer fare for His own. They were a special peoplemany knew them, many despised thembut Jesus loved them, and this was the main thing which made them His own.   
You know how they came to be His own. He chose them before the earth was. A man may surely choose his own wife and Christ chose His own spouse. He chose His own Church and, while the Scripture stands, that doctrine can never be eradicated from it. Before the day-star knew its place, or planets ran their rounds, Christ had made His choice and, having made it, He stood to it! He chose them for His love and He loved them for His choice.   
Having loved them and chosen them, He espoused them unto Himself. They shall be Mine, He said. I will be married to them, I will be bone of their bone and flesh of their flesh. Consequently, in the fullness of time, He came here, made one with our humanity, that He might be seen to be a true Husband to His ownHis own by choiceHis own by espousal.   
They were His own also, for His Father gave them to Him. The Father committed them into His hands. Yours they were, said Jesus, and You gave them to Me. The Father loved the Son and committed all things into His hands, but He made a special committal of His own chosen people. He gave them to Him and entered with Him into surety engagements on their behalf, that as they were His sheep, committed to His charge, He would deliver them up and not one of them should be torn by the wolf, or die by the frost or the heat, but that all should pass, again, under the rod of Him that counts them. That Great Shepherd of the sheep will take care of the whole flock that was entrusted to His care! He will not lose one of His sheep or lambs. At the last, Jesus will say, Here am I, Father, and the children that You have given Me; of all that You gave Me, I have lost none. Thus, they are His own by His own choice, His own by espousal and, His own by His Fathers gift!

But these whom He called, His own, were soon to be His by a wondrous purchase. He looked upon their redemption as being already accomplished, for in His prayer He said to His Father, I have finished the work which You gave Me to do. Beloved Friends, have you ever thought how dearly we are Christs by His redemption of us? You are not your own; you are bought with a price. Have you ever realized the price that was paid for you? I sometimes think that if I could have been there, I would have said, O great and glorious Lord, I beseech You not to pay such a price for me! It is too great a sacrifice that You should be made sin for me, that I might be made the righteousness of God in You! But He would do it. He loved us better than He loved Himself! He would do it and He has paid the purchase price for us, and we are Hisand we will not run back from the glad confession! Well may He call us, His own, when it cost Him so much to redeem us!   
But we have become His own by His conquest of us. He had called His disciples by His Grace. He had drawn each one of them by cords of love and they had run after Himand it is the same with you and me. You remember when He drew you, do you not? Can you ever forget when, at last, you yielded to the power of those bands of love, those cords of a Man? Often since then have you sung

*Oh, happy day, that fixed my choice   
On You, my Savior, and my God!   
Well may this glowing heart rejoice   
And tell its raptures all abroad!   
Tis done! The great transactions done!   
I am my Lords, and He is mine   
He drew me, and I followed on,   
Charmed to confess the voice Divine.*

Beloved, you are His own, now, because you have yielded yourselves to Him. You delight to think that you are His. There is no greater joy to you than to feel that you belong to Christ! The fact that you are truly Christs is the fountain of innumerable pleasures and blessings to your heart! Jesus calls us, His ownHis own sheep, His own disciples, His own friends, His own brethren, the members of His body! What a title for us to wear, His own! I have heard of some who have felt it an honor to be called, The Devils Own. I trust that you have escaped from such a title as that and now you are Christs own. How many regiments have felt pleasure in being called, the Kings Own, the Queens Own, the Princes Own! Oh, but we are HIS OWN! He owns us! He calls us, His own. Thus He distinguishes us from the rest of mankind and sets us apart unto Himself. My name shall be named on them, He says. We are His own. Surely, this is the highest honor that can be put upon us even in the Last Great Day. They shall be Mine, says the Lord of Hosts, is that day when I make up My jewels.

Now I trust we can say that we desire to serve Christ in our vocation. I feel happy to be among the favored few whose vocation it is to serve Christ, those who are permitted to spend all their time and all their strength in that dear service. We are, His own, but so are you, His own, if you believe in Him. You, also, are Christs own, up in an attic. Christs own at the washtub. Christs own in the fields at the plow. Christs own making the hay. I am not wandering from my subject when I say this, for Christ has His own among all these classes! His own were fishermen. His own cast the net into the Sea of Galilee. His own drew it to shore. His own were the poor of this world. His own, His very own, His choicest and His best friends and followers, were just such! They were unlearned and ignorant men, yet they were His own. So the Apostle says, God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confuse the wise; and God has chosen the weak things of the world to confuse the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, has God chosen, yes, and things which are not, to bring to nothing things that are: that no flesh should glory in His Presence.

Oh, the wondrous sovereignty of Divine Love! I trust that there are some here, tonight, who Christ calls His own although they do not yet know that it is so! Bought with His blood and they are not aware of it? Chosen before the foundation of the world and yet they have not discovered it? May the Lord reveal to you His everlasting love and help you to make your calling and election sure from this time forth!

I have said as much as time will permit me to say about our Lords dear associates, the disciples, whom He calls His own.   
II. Now, in the second place, you have a full description of how Jesus had felt towards them up to that momentHaving loved His own.   
How much can be done with one stroke of a pen! I have sometimes marveled to see how much a great artist can do by a single touch. His work has seemed unfinished, but he has come with a brush and just thrown in a few strokesand the canvas that was dead has seemed to live before you! Now, John is a great master of the art of word-painting and he gives you the whole history of Christs dealings with His disciples in these few words, Having loved His own.   
For, remember, that is how He began with them. They were poor and inconsiderable, but He loved them, and He showed His love to them by calling them to be His disciples. That love worked upon their hearts and made them obedient to His call. He began by loving them. David says, You have loved my soul out of the pit. I do not know a more beautiful description of conversion and salvation. The love of God loves us up out of the pit and loves us to Christ. Thus Christ loved His people from the beginning and proved His love by drawing them to Himselfand the cords He used to draw them were the bands of His love.   
Having begun by loving them, He went on teaching them, but all His teaching was love, for they were such dull scholars, quick to forget, yet slow to remember, that He had to keep on loving them or He would have been tired of trying to train them! Have I been so long time with you and yet have you not known Me, Philip? There is a mass of love in that question! So was it when He was dealing with Thomas. In His tenderness He submitted without question to the doubting disciples test. He said to Him, Reach here your finger, and behold My hands; and reach here your hand, and thrust it into My side: and be not faithless, but believing. All His teaching was uttered with lips of loveand all His instruction consisted of lessons of love.   
The Lord kept on loving His disciples although their natures were amazingly imperfect, all of them! There was not one among them who had what one would call an all-round nature, unless it was John, and even he was nasty in temper and would have called down fire from Heaven upon certain Samaritans. Yet the Master kept on loving them. He had made up His mind to love them and He never ceased to love them as long as He was with them! And He has gone on loving them ever since. At the time when He was about to depart out of the world unto the Father, they still needed to have their feet washed, and He loved them enough to render even that lowly service for them. All the infirmities, the imperfections, the carnality, the dullness and the slowness of their nature which He saw much more clearly than they saw it, did not make Him cease to love themHaving loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end.   
Strangest of all, when He opened His eyes and looked into the future and saw that they would soon be cowardly and faithless, He loved them all the same! He said, All you shall be offended because of Me this night, and so it came to pass, for, they all forsook Him, and fled. He told Peter that he would deny Him three times and so he did. Yet it was true all the while, Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end. That sums it all up! There was never a touch of hate, there was never any anger, there was never any weariness, there was never any lukewarmness in Jesus towards His disciplesit was always just thisHaving loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end. That is the love of Christ to His chosen and that is the love of Christ to me! I do not think that those gentlemen who have written a, Life of Christ, could write this part of it. This is a portion of the life of Christ that needs not so much to be written as to be known in the heart and in the soul.   
How have you found Christ, my Brothers and Sisters? If you have known Him, what has been His conduct towards you? You answer, Love. As for me, I never knew, I never heard of such a Lover as He is! I never dreamed that He could be such as He has been to me! Oh, how I must have vexed and grieved His gracious heart and caused Him pain! But never, never, never once have I had anything from Him but love! Having loved His own. That expression sums up the whole of Christs conduct towards His chosen people! It is like a miniature paintingit has every feature of His character. There it is, all of it. You may apply a microscope and look as long as you like, but you will find that it is all there. Having loved His own.   
So then, you have seen your Lord associated with His disciples up to this point, and you have learned that He has manifested nothing else towards them but love.   
III. But now, thirdly, WHAT A CHANGE WAS COMING OVER HIM! Jesus knew that His hour was come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father.   
Dear Friends, it was an amazing change that was coming over Him, for, in the first place, though it is so tenderly described here, yet He knew that He had to die. You do not wish me, I am sure, to tell you of all the surroundings of the Cross, of all the bitterness and woe that culminated in that cup of mingled wormwood and gall. Your heart can never fail to remember the wounds He endured when suffering for you.   
Well, now, if you and I had to bear all that Christ had to suffer, it would engross our thoughtswe should not be able to think of anything else but thatbut it did not engross our Lords thoughts! He still thought of His own. He loved His own unto the end! He went on with that same calm, solid, resolute love which He had shown towards them before. He set His face like a flint to go up to Jerusalem, but there was no flint in His

heartit had all gone into His face. He had undertaken the work of His peoples redemption and He must go through with it! Death, itself, could not change His love. You know the love of which Solomon sings at the end of the CanticlesMany waters cannot quench love, neither can the deeds drown it. And he says, Love is strong as death. Truly, in our Lords case, love was stronger than that death of deaths which He deigned to die that He might make us live! Now is His great hour of trial, but He is true to His own even in this dread hour. He is about to die, but He still loves His own.   
Dear Brothers and Sisters, that is not all! Jesus was about to depart out of this world, to go away from His disciples. After a while He would see them no more with His bodily eyesneither would they hear His voice leading them and teaching them. It may be true that, Absence makes the heart grow fonder, but, alas, we have met with many instances in which mortal men have quite forgotten those whom they professed to love when once the sea has rolled between them. Many hearts are dependent upon eyesight. It is a pity that it should be so, but it was not so with Christ. All the distance between earth and Heaven was soon to intervene between our Lord and His disciples, but still He loved them and He loves them still. No distance makes any difference between Jesus and His own. Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end.   
Yet, remember, that the Savior was about to undergo a very amazing change in another respectHe was going to the Father. Have any of us the slightest idea of what He is, now, with the Father? I will not attempt to describe the supernal splendors of His Throne, the glories which His redeemed delight to lay at His feet, the songs which angels and cherubim and seraphim continually present before Himbut this verse we love and we can truly sing   
*Now though He reigns exalted high,   
His love is still as great;   
Well He remembers Calvary,   
Nor lets His saints forget.*   
I cannot describe these wonderful changes of our Lord, from life to death, from death to resurrection, from resurrection to ascension, from ascension to the glories of His Fathers Throne. Would all these changes make any alteration in Him? No, none of them! Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end.   
I shall try to speak of that, presently, and that will be my last point. But before we come to that theme, we must see what would be the condition of His own. I have shown you what would be Christs condition, and the change that would take place in Him.   
IV. Now, fourthly, WHAT WOULD BE THEIR CONDITION?   
Why, they would remain where they wereHis own which were in the world. To me, there seems to be a great abyss of meaning in that expression, in the world. Some of you know more about what this means than others of us do. The Church of God in London is nothing but a camp in the midst of heathendom. The sooner we believe that terrible truth the better, because it is really soand the Church of God in the world is nothing but a traveling tent in the midst of a world that lies in the Wicked One. We are in the world. Now, some of you know what it is to be in the world. When you get home, tonight, there will be little but oaths and cursing. Some of Gods dear people, whom He loves with all His heart, are still in the world, seeing that which vexes them as much as Lot was vexed by the filthy conversation of the men of Sodom. In the world! Now, those whom Christ was about to leave in the world would be left in the midst of all the abounding wickedness, idolatry and blasphemy in about as ungodly an age as man could live inyet He left them in the world.   
Being in the world, you see, they began to be persecuted. They were stoned. They were shut up in prison. They were dragged into the amphitheatre to be torn apart by lions. But He loved them unto the end. You know how that blessed eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans concludes. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For your sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.   
In addition to being persecuted, they were liable to be severely tempted. All kinds of bribes were put in their way and all sorts of pleasures and lusts were presented to them. They were men of like passions with ourselves, so those temptations were very real to them. They were in the world and Jesus had gone to Heaven. They were in the world, also, in affliction. Ah, dear Friends, we find that we, too, are, in this sense, in the world. However closely we live to God, we have pains of body and we have to grieve as we see our dear relatives suffering. We have losses and crosses because we are in the world. Gods curse still rests upon the earthThorns, also, and thistles shall it bring forth to you. You may do what you like with it, but you cannot make it stop bringing forth thorns and thistles! They will continue to spring up as surely as the dust will return to the dust from whence it was taken.   
In the world, of course, they were in great labor, for they were left in the world to seek to convert it, or, at least, to call out the redeemed of Christ from among men by preaching the Gospel to every creature. And, being in the world, they were surrounded by much weakness weakness of body and weakness of mindalways needing to call to their Lord for help. He was up there upon the Throne of God and they were down in the dungeon! He was up there, clothed with all power, and they were down here in all weakness!   
V. NOW, HOW WILL JESUS BEHAVE TOWARDS THEM? That is our last question. We began with it and we will finish with it. Well, here is the answer. Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end. And we may rest sure that He always will love them and that He will never change from the tenderness of His heart towards them! He loved them unto the end. What does that sentence mean?   
I think it means, first, that He loved them right on. The Hebrew, His mercy endures forever, might be rendered, His mercy endures to the end. That is, to the end which has no end, for there never will be an end to His mercyand His love is continual, everlasting love, it will never come to an end! Christ, Himself, in His Passion, may be said to have come to an endand He loved His disciples until His deathbut it means that He loves them without any end, forever and ever. Having loved them while He was in the world with them, He loves them right straight on and always will love them when time shall be no more!   
I am sure, dear Friends, you believe in the everlasting love of God towards His people. If any of you do not, you are robbing yourselves of one of the greatest comforts that are to be found in the Scriptures. If the Lord can change, where are we? Everything has gone when His everlasting love is gone! I delight to believe that the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed but His kindness shall not depart from us, neither shall the Covenant of His peace be removedit stands fast forever and ever!   
But the sentence may be rendered, He loved them to perfection. Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them to perfection. He could not love them any betterthat was impossible. He could not love them more wiselythat would be out of the question. He could not love them more intenselythat is not supposable. Whatever the perfection of love may bethat is what Jesus Christ bestows upon His people! There is no such love in all the world as the love of Christ to His people! And if you were to gather up all the loves that ever were, of men and women, of mothers and children, of friends and friends, and heap up all these loves, the love of Jesus is of superior quality to them all, for none of those loves are absolutely perfect, but Jesus Christ loves to perfection!   
Those of you who have the Revised Version will find in the margin the following words, to the uttermost. Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them to the uttermostto that which is uttermost, farthest and most distantor, if I turn the word in another way, He loved them utterly, unutterably, in such a way that you cannot tell, or conceive, or describe, or imagine how much He loved His people! He loved His people to the utmost stretch of love! So is it, there is no love like His and, as I said just now, all the loves in the world, compressed into one, would not equal it! Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them to the uttermost.   
Now, it seems to me that this Truth of God ought to tempt some poor soul to wish to enjoy Christs love. Oh, says one, if I did but get that love, I would never lose it. He would love me to the uttermost. Oh, if I could but creep in among His people! The way to discover Christs love to you is that you should begin by trusting Him, and surely He will help you to do this. He is so true, so good, so able to save unto the uttermost, that if you will come and trust Him, trust Him wholly, trust Him, now, trust Him just as you areHe will save you to the uttermost and show His love to you to the uttermost! I have been preaching what I trust will comfort Gods people, but I wish that some poor soul would come to Christ through it. I believe that is the right way to preach the Gospel.   
Have you not noticed, in the story of the Prodigal Son, that the father said, Bring forth the best robe and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet, and so on? But he did not go on to say, Feed him. Do you notice what he said? It was, Let

us eat and be merry. Well, but I thought he was thinking about his son. Yes, and he says, Let us eat. So, dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, let us eat and then sinners will begin to feel their mouths watering and they, also, will want to eat, and to have a share of the feast! This is the only way to make them eat! You can bring a horse to the water, but you cannot make him drink. But you are very likely to do so if you set another horse adrinking! So, if you and I enjoy the sweetness of the love of Christ, there may be some in the gallery, and some downstairs who will say, We wish that we knew it, too, and they will be wanting it! That is the way to make them eat. I pray the Lord, by His Spirit, to lead them to put their trust in this loving Savior, and each one to say   
*Jesus, lover of my soul,   
Let me to Your bosom fly.*   
He will let you fly to His bosom! therefore

**Come, and welcome, sinner, come.**   
EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **John 13:1-19**

Verse 1. Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour was come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end. Our Lord Jesus Christ had a clear foresight of all He had to endure. Future things are happily hidden from our eyes. We do not even know the moment when we shall die, nor how it will be. It is well that it is so, but our Lord was able to anticipate His sufferings by knowing all about themJesus knew that His hour was come. It was all appointed and nothing happens to any of us by accidentchance is banished from the Believers creed! There is an appointed hour for each one of us and it will come in due season. Jesus knew that His hour was come, that He should depart out of the world unto the Father. What a beautiful way of describing death! Christs death was certainly a more trying one than ours will be, so that this description may apply to ours as well as to His.

2. And supper being ended. I suppose that was the Paschal Supper.   
2. The devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simons son, to betray Him. What a horrible purpose for Satan to put into the heart of Judas even in the Presence of Jesus! I hope that the devil will not put any such purpose into your hearts or into mine while we are in this House of Prayer, but no place is sacred from his intrusion, he will come in anywhere. Even where Christ, Himself, is at the head of the table, Judas may be sitting at that same table and Satan may then and there, put into his heart the horrible purpose of betraying his Master.   
3, 4. Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He was come from God, and went to God, He arose from supper and laid aside His garments; and took a towel, and girded Himself. Notice those words, Jesus knowing...He took a towel, and girded Himself. If He had not known how great He was, there would not have been such condescension in His action, but He knew who He was and what the Father had entrusted to HimThe Father had given all things into His hands. You might suppose that He would stand up, in a very dignified manner, and put on a purple robe and a golden belt, but, instead of that, He rose from the supper table, laid aside His garments, and took a towel, and girded Himself. He knew that He had come forth from God and that He was going back to Godand He performed this action on the way home to His Father. O dear Brothers and Sisters, if Christ thus stooped, how humble ought we to be! No office should be counted too lowly, no work for His servants should seem to be too humiliating, since Jesus took a towel and girded Himself.   
5. After that, He poured water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded. You see that Jesus does His work well. He omits none of the details of it. He puts Himself in the place of a slave and He performs a slaves duty very thoroughly. I am afraid that, sometimes, we do our work for Him in a slovenly way, but Jesus was not satisfied with simply washing His disciples feetHe must do the wiping, too. I bless Him that He did so, for this is a picture of what He has done for us. He has washed our feet and He often repeats the gracious act. The feet that Jesus washes, He will wipeHe has not begun His task without intending to finish it. I know that He will complete in my soul the work which He has undertaken, for He fulfilled, on the feet of His disciples, the office He had undertaken He began to wash the disciples feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded.   
6. Then came He to Simon Peter: and Peter said to Him, Lord, do You wash my feet? I do not wonder that he said that. Would not you have been equally astonished had you been there? Peter had some faint idea who Christ was. He had confessed Him in such a way that Jesus had said to Him, Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona: for flesh and blood has not revealed it unto you, but My Father which is in Heaven. Knowing so much about Christ, Peter marveled at His action. He felt so astonished that He asked, Do You wash my feet?

7. Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do, you know not, now; but you shall know hereafter. I have heard this saying of our Lord applied to affliction and it is very true that what Jesus does, we do not, at present, understand, but we shall know, by-and-by. I do not think, however, that this sentence is very applicable that way, for there was no affliction in having his feet washed. The fact is, Brothers and Sisters, though it is a very humbling thing to say, we do not understand that which Jesus doeseven His simplest actions are a mystery to us. We have never gone into the very depths of them so as to comprehend them. What I do even though I only wash your feet, plain and simple operation as that isyou know not now; but you shall know hereafter. Our knowing times, dear Friends, are to come. We need not be so very anxious to know

at presentthis is the time of love. I would forego the filling of my head,for a while, if I could have my heart full, but, alas, we are generally so busy trying to attain merely head knowledge! My most intense longing is for a growing heart, a heart that truly loves the Savior. That is the way for the head to learn, for knowledge that comes by the way of the heart, and so enters the head, is the best of knowledge! Jesus said to Peter, What I do, you know not, now; but you shall know hereafter.

8. Peter said to Him, You shall never wash my feet. That is just like Peter. If John had not told us who it was that said this, we would have known that it was Peter! He was always in such a hurry and he spoke so quickly that he made many mistakes, yet he was always so honest and so true, that his Master forgave his faults and helped him to correct them.

8. He answered him, If I wash you not, you have no part with Me. If Christ does not cleanse us, we do not belong to Him. If He does not, day by day, exercise a purifying influence over us, we are not His.

9. Simon Peter said to Him, Lord, not my feet, only, but also my hands and my head. How that pendulum swings to and fro! It went this way just nowYou shall never wash my feet. Now it goes right away to the other extremeLord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. Go more gently, Peter, be more quiet! Why do you go so far in one direction and then rush off so far in another way? Your Master knows better than you know what is right for you.

10. Jesus said to him, He that is washed, needs only to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and you are clean, but not all. Dear Friends, when we believe in Christ, we are washed in the Fountain filled with blood, and we are clean. But this world is such a sinful place that we cannot walk through it for even a day without some of its mire and dust clinging to us. Besides, Gods lilies are so pure that they are hardly fit to bloom in such a defiling atmosphere. Oh, how we need that the dew should wash the lily when the night comes! How greatly we need to have the footwashing administered to us every day! We need not repeat the first great washingthe bath by which our sins were cleansedwhen that was done, it was done once and for all. Our sin was pardoned as before a Judge, but we need it to be taken away as before our Father, for we are now under His loving discipline!

Christ further said to His disciples, You are clean, but not all. Does He say that to us at this time? You are clean, but not all. Where sits the man, in this House of Prayer, who is not clean? The sinner who has not yet been washed by Jesus Christ? Where sits the woman who is not clean? The Lord have mercy upon you, dear Friends! You know, that in the olden days, they put a red cross on the door of the house where the plague was. We cannot put a cross upon you, but I pray you to consider yourselves as marked men and marked women in the sight of God. And I pray the Lord to take that mark away by causing you to be washed, that you may be clean every whit. How quickly He can wash the foulest sinners! He that believes in Jesus is washed in the precious blood and he is clean. God cleanse us all for His great names sake!

11-15. For He knew who should betray Him; therefore said He, You are not all clean. So after He had washed their feet, and had taken His garments, and was set down again, He said unto them, know you what I have done to you? You call me Master and Lord: and you say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; you, also, ought to wash one anothers feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. Christs actions are the pattern for us to imitate! Oh, that we followed them more closely!

16. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. Sometimes we think that we are a deal too great to wash anybodys feetwe would like to see a person dare propose it to us, such big people as we are! If we talk like that, there is great need that we should be taken down. That would be the true way to rise in the likeness of Jesus! Oh, that we were lowlier in humility! We should be higher in Grace if we were.

17. If you know these things, happy are you if you do them. Peter needed to know them. Jesus would have us do them.   
18. I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen. Christ has a chosen people, though some will not believe it. Yet it is so, for He says, I know whom I have chosen.   
18, 19. But that the Scripture may be fulfilled, he that eats bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me. Now I tell you before it comes, that when it has come to pass, you may believe that I am He. That I am. So, you see, even the great trouble of the early Churchthe betrayal by Judaswas used by Christ for the strengthening of His disciples faith. He foretold that it would be as it came to pass. So, dear Friends, in these latter days, many forsake the Gospel, but Jesus told us that it would be so. He taught His servants to write that there would be a falling away and that in these last days there would be scoffersand as we read the prophecies and compare them with the fulfillmenteven the doleful fact, itself, confirms our faith in our Lord! God bless to us this brief reading of His own Word! Amen.

HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK731, 815, 377. Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #810 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE FAITHFULNESS OF JESUS   
NO. 810

**DELIVERED ON SUNDAY MORNING, MAY 10, 1868, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
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**Having loved His own which were in the world,   
He loved them unto the end.   
John 13:1.**

We shall consider these words first in their evident relation to the Apostles and those who were the companions of Jesus during His sojourn on earth. Afterwards we shall take them in their broader significance as relating to all the Lords own whom He loves and will love even to the end. Having loved His own. Those four words are a brief but complete summary of the Saviors conduct towards His disciples. He always loved them. There was never a single action or word which was contrary to the rule of love. He loved them with a love of pity when He saw them in their lost estate, and He called them out of it to be His disciples. Touched with a feeling of their infirmities He loved them with a tender and prudent affection and sought to train and educate them so that after His departure they might be good soldiers of His Cross.

He loved them with a love of complacency as He walked and talked with them and found solace in their company. Even when He rebuked them He loved them. He subjected them to many trialsfor His sake they renounced all that they had. They shared His daily cross-bearing and hourly persecution, but love reigned supreme and undiminished in it all. On Tabor or in Gethsemane He loved His own. Alone, or in the crowd, His heart was true to them. In life and in death His affection failed not. He loved His own which were in the world. It is a mullum inparvo, a condensed life of Christ, a miniature of Jesus the Lover of Souls.

As you read the wonderful story of the four Evangelists, you see how true it is that Jesus loved His ownlet me cast in by way of interjection this sentencethat when you come to read your own lifes story in the light of the New Jerusalem, you will find it to be true, also, concerning your Lord and yourself. If you are, indeed, the Lords own, He at all times deals lovingly with you and never acts in unkindness or wrath

*He may chasten and correct,   
But He never can neglect.   
He May in faithfulness reprove,   
But He never can cease to love.*

Our Saviors faithfulness towards the chosen band whom He had elected into His fellowship was most remarkable. He had selected persons who must have been but poor companions for one of so gigantic a mind and so large a heart. He must have been greatly shocked at their worldliness. They groveled in the dust when He mounted to the stars. He was thinking of the baptism with which He was to he baptized, and He was straitened until it was accomplishedbut they were disputing which among them should be the greatest! He was ready to deny Himself that He might do His Fathers will, and meanwhile they were asking to sit on His right hand and on His left hand in His kingdom! They often misunderstood Him because of the carnality of their minds. And when He warned them of an evil leaven they thought of the loaves which they had forgotten.

Earthworms are miserable company for angels. Moles are but unhappy company for eagles. Yet love made our great Master endure the society of His ignorant and carnal followers. They were but babes in Christ and possessed but slight illumination, and yet for all that He who knew all things and is the Wisdom of God, condescended to call them His mother, and sister, and brother. Worse than the fact of their natural worldliness, perhaps, was the apparent impossibility of lifting them out of that low condition! For though never man spoke as He spoke, how little did they understand! And though He took them aside and said to them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God, yet after many and plain teachings He was compelled to say to one of the best of them, Have I been so long a time with you, and yet have you not known Me, Philip?

They were dull scholars. There is no teacher here who could have had patience with such heavy intellects, but our Lord and Masters love remained evermore at flood tide, notwithstanding their incorrigible stupidity! His love was stronger than their unbelief and ignorance. My Brothers and Sisters, when we love a person we expect to have some little sympathy from him in the great design and aim of our life. I suppose it would be difficult to maintain any deep affection towards persons who had no sort of communion with us in our all-absorbing passion. And yet it was so that our Lord loved disciples who could not be brought to enter at all into the spirit which ruled and governed Hi m.

They would have taken Him and forced upon Him a crown, while He sought only for a Cross. They imagined and desired for Him the worldly splendor of a terrestrial thronebut He foresaw the reality of glory in sweat of blood and a cruel death. Our Lord was all for self-denial, employing Himself and acting as the Servant of servants. They could not comprehend the rule of self-sacrifice which governed His actions, nor could they see what He aimed at. Had they dared, they would rather have thwarted than assisted Him in His self-sacrificing mission.

They were fools and slow of heart to understand, even though He plainly told them of His decease. When He set His face steadfastly towards Jerusalem, humanly speaking He needed friends to have aided and abetted Him in His high resolve, but He found no help in them. When, in that dark, that dreadful night He bowed in prayer and sweat the bloody sweat, He went backward and forward three times, as if seeking a little sympathy from men so dearly lovedbut He had to complain of them, What? Could you not watch with Me one hour?

Still, having loved them, neither their worldliness nor their stupidity nor their lack of sympathy with Him could prevent Him from loving them unto the end. Many waters could not quench His love, neither could the floods drown it. The Redeemers love was made to endure even sterner strains than these. On one or two occasions certain of them were even guilty of impertinence. It was no small trial to the Saviors affection when Peter took Him and began to rebuke Him. Peter rebuking his Master! Surely your Lord will have done with you, you son of Jonas! The Lord turned him about and said, Get you behind Me, Satan! But after using that strong expression to rebuke a temptation which was evidently Satanic, His affection to Peter remained unabated.

That was a stern trial, too, when at a later period than our text, all the disciples forsook Him and fledwhen not even the loving John remained constant to his Master in the hour of betrayalwhen one, the boldest of them, with oaths and cursing said, I know not the Man. Carrying the text beyond its original position we may say that over the head of all infirmities, ignorance, selfishness, desertion, and denial, Jesus Christ, who had loved His own that were in the world, loved them to the end. It was not possible for them, with all their follies, failings, and sins, to break through the magic circle of His affectionHe had hedged them in once and for allHe had bound them to Himself with bonds firmer than brass and stronger than triple steel. And neither the temptations of Hell, nor the suggestions of their own corruptions could tear them from His heart.

The attachments of Jesus were abidingfickleness and instability could never be charged to Him. Others love for a little while and then grow cold. They profess eternal attachment and yet forsake. They admire and esteem us till a slight misunderstanding snaps every bond of friendship. But our Lord was the mirror of constancy, the pattern of fidelity, the paragon of unchanging love. As Jonathan clave to David, even so did Jesus cleave to His people. The proofs which our Lord gave of His love to His people were very many and for a little while we will ponder them. They will all go to prove that He loved His people, even to perfection, as the text may be read.

Observe how our Master, having chosen to Himself a people, proved His love by His continual companionship. He sought no other company than theirs among the sons of men. There were minds far deeper in philosophic lore but He communed not with them. There were the great and mighty of this world but our Savior did not court themHe was content to dwell among His own people. He had made His choice and to that choice He keptfishermen and peasants were His bosom friends!

You would not expect a master to find rest in the society of his scholars. You do not expect men of mind and mark to affectionately consort with those who are far beneath them in attainments. And yet here was love, that Jesus, passing by angels, and kings, and sages chose for His companions unlettered men and women. Those fishermen of Galilee were His companions at all timesand only when He withdrew Himself into the silent mount, and the shadows of midnight did He remove the link of companionship from themand then only that He might make

intercession for them with the Eternal God.

Yes, it was a deep proof of the unlimited love of Jesus! A sure sign of its going to the end and verge of possibilities that He abode so long in affectionate fellowship with so poor, so illiterate, so earthbound a company of men! He proved His love by being always ready to instruct them on all points. His teachings were very simple because He loved them so well. The Epistles of Paul, are, in some respects, far deeper than the teachings of Jesus. For instance, Paul more explicitly lays down the doctrine of justification by faith, of total depravity, of election, and kindred Truths of God. And why?

Observe the humility and loving kindness of the Master. He knew infinitely more than Paul, for He is essential Wisdom, but He was pleased, because their weak eyes were not able at that time to bear the full blaze of light, to leave the fuller manifestation of Gospel mysteries until the Spirit had been given. And then He raised up His servant Paul to write, under His guidance, the deep things of God. His love to His disciples is shown as clearly in what He kept back from them as in what He revealed to them. How loving it was on the part of the great Teacher to dwell so often upon the simpler truths and the more practical precepts. It was as though a senior professor of the university should sit down in the family and teach boys and girls their alphabet day after day, or spend all his time in teaching village urchins simple addition and subtraction.

A man who is thoroughly acquainted with the highest branches of knowledge finds it a terrible drudgery to go over and over the first principlesand yet our Lord did this very thing and made no trouble of it. He, by the space of three years, taught the simplicities of the faith and thus indisputably proved His condescending love to perfection towards His own which were in the world. How willing He always was, all His life long, to render any kind of assistance to His followers! Whenever they were in trouble He was their willing and able Friend. When the sea roared and was tempestuous, and He slept for awhile hard by the helm, they had but to wake Him and He rebuked the sea and straightaway the winds and waves were still.

When Peters wifes mother was sick of a fever, He did but enter the house and speak the word and the fever left her. And when one of His dearest friends had passed beyond ordinary bounds of hope, and was not only dead, but had been buried four days, yet He loved even to that farreaching end and proved that He was the Resurrection and the Life by effectually crying, Lazarus, come forth. Everywhere, at all times, He was at the beck and call of His disciples whom He truly called His friends. They might freely express their desiresif they were right, they were granted and if they were wrong, they were reproved with such gentleness that a refusal was better than a grant.

The Master displayed His love to His disciples throughout His life by the way in which He sought to comfort them when He foresaw that they would be cast down. Especially was this true at the period before His passionwhen one would have thought He might have sought comfort, He was busy distributing it! Those choice words which have flown like a dove into many a mourners window bearing the olive branch of peace were the fond utterances of a thoughtful heart. Let not your heart be troubled: you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Fathers house are many mansions.

Many such bottles of oil and wine did He apply to the wounds of His disciples. He would not have them suffer any kind of spiritual turmoil. In the world you shall have tribulation, said He, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. His peace He distributed right liberally and left it as His last legacyPeace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you. Not as the world gives give I unto you. In the private life of every one of those chosen men there must have been incidents of matchless tenderness. But they are not recorded because if all were written which Jesus did, even the world itself would not contain the things which should have been written! Enough is written to let us see that no tenderness of mothers, or care of friends could match the ever generous forethought of the Friend of man.

That He loved His disciples to the end is seen further in the fact that He constantly pleaded for them when He poured out His strong cries and tears. He watched them with an eye that was quick to perceive their perils and before they knew their danger He had already provided a refuge from it. Before the poison was injected by the old serpent, the antidote was at hand. Satan has desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat. The temptation had not reached the stage of actual factit was only a desire on Satans partbut the Lord outran the enemy with His intercessions and so saved poor Peter from the sieve.

The High Priest, chosen from among men, pleaded in His midnight wrestling for all His people, mentioning their names one by one before the Majesty of Heaven, and so averting evils which otherwise had destroyed them. Surely those sacred pleadings brought down upon the Apostolic band those matchless blessings which qualified them in after years to be the spiritual fathers of the Church and the heralds of salvation to nations! Who doubts the love of such an Intercessor? The text affords us one other illustration, for Jesus took the towel and washed His disciples feet. This is, no doubt, marked out by our text as a clear proof of boundless love, in that He humbled Himself, made Himself of no reputation, took upon Him the form of a servant and fulfilled a menials office.

But yet, Beloved, all these things put together do not amount to so overwhelming a proof of abounding love as the fact that, after having lived out His love, the Lord Jesus then died to exhibit it yet more. From Gethsemane to Golgotha, along the blood-sprinkled road, you see proof that having loved His own He loved them to the end. Not all the pains of death could shake His firm affection to His own. They may bind His hands but His heart is not restrained from love! They may scourge Him, but they cannot drive out of Him His affection to His beloved! They may slanderously revile Him, but they cannot compel Him to say a word against His people! They may nail Him to the accursed tree and they may bid Him come down from the Cross and they will believe on Him, but they cannot tempt Him to forsake His work of love! He must press forward for His peoples sake until He can say, It is finished.

Oh, that tragedy upon Calvary was a going to the end, indeed, when, having yielded up comfort, reputation and liberty, He gave up even His last rag of covering and then resigned His breath. Standing, as it were, at the worlds end, at the graves mouth, and at Hells doorthe Cross of Jesus reveals love to the utmost end and is a grand display of the immutability and invincibility of the affection of the heart of Jesus! I need not detain you longer on the text as it related to His people when He was here in the flesh, for I shall need your earnest attention for but a short time while, by the power of the Holy Spirit, I would set forth this precious Truth of God as it relates to all His people, to all His saints.

We read that our Lord, Came unto His own, and His own received Him not. And here, in this case we read, Having loved His own. Now, the words are different in the original. In the first case it is a neuter noun He came to His own (things). But in this instance it is a masculine Having loved His own (persons). Now, a man may part with his own thingsHe may sell his own house, or cattle, or merchandise. He may give away his own money. But a man cannot part with his own when it relates to persons. He cannot part with his own child, his own wife, his own father or his own brother.

We hold indisputable property in our own relativesthis is real property with an emphasisour own freehold, our entail, our perpetual possession. The Lord Jesus has just such a property in His own peoplethey are His brethren, forever near of kin to Him. Now of these own persons we read that our Lord, Having loved His own that were in the world, loved them to the end. The text opens three windows for us, with three outlooks upon the past, the present, and the future.

1. And first, as to the past. Let us with holy contemplation review it. He has loved His own people from of old. A most blessed fact! He has loved them eternally. There never was a time when He did not love them! His love is positively dateless! Before the heavens and earth were made, and the stars were first touched with the torch of flame Jesus had received His people from His Father and written their names on His heart. This everlasting love has a specialty about it. Our Lord has a general love of benevolence towards all His creatures, for God is love. But He has a special place in His heart for His own peculiar ones.

There is a discriminating and distinguishing power about that love that is spoken of in the text, for it is not said, Having loved all men, but, Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end. Jesus, before all the world, set the crown of His peculiar love upon those whom He foreordained unto His glory. This love of His is infinite! Jesus does not love His own with a little of His love nor regard them with some small degree of affection, but He says, As the Father has loved Me, even so have I loved you, and the Fathers love to the Son is inconceivably great since they are One in essence, ineffably One.

The Father cannot but love the Son infinitely, neither does the Son ever love His people less than with all His heart. It is an affection which no angelic mind could measure! It is inconceivable, unknown! Jesus loved His people with a foresight of what they would be. Love is blind, they say, but not the Saviors love. He knew that His own would fall in Adam. He knew that as they lived personally each one would become a sinner. He understood that they would be hard to reclaim and difficult to retain. Even after they had been reclaimed He saw every sin that they would commit in the glass of the future, for from His prescient eye nothing can be hidden. And yet He loved His own over the head of all their sins, and their revolts and their shortcomings!

Hence we see that He bears towards them an affection which cannot be changed, for nothing can occur which He has not foreseen. There is nothing, therefore, which has not already been taken into calculation in the matter of His choice. No new circumstance can shed unexpected light upon the case. No startling and unforeseen event can become an argument for a change. Hence Jesus love is full of immutability. There are no ups and downs in the love of Christ towards His people! On their highest Tabors He loves them, but equally as well in their Gethsemanes. When they wander like lost sheep His great love goes after them. And when they come back with broken hearts His great love restores them. By day, by night, in sickness, in sorrow, in poverty, in famine, in prison, in the hour of death that silver stream of love ripples at their side, never stayed, never diminished! Forever is the sea of Divine Grace at its flood! This sun never sets! This fountain never pauses!

The love of Christ is more than a passion. You and I are moved by passion but the Son of God is not. As Man, He may be, but as God He has no passion. Hence the love of Christ towards His people is a settled principleself-created and self-sustainednot subject to changes like terrestrial things but firm and stable, built on a rock. Glory be to God, there was something in the very Nature of Christ which made Him love us, something in the very Character of that blessed Divine Person which constrained Him to manifest affection towards His people! It was nothing from outsidethat mighty love was born from within. Here again we come back to the same precious Truth of God, that His love cannot be destroyed because the source from which it comes is eternal and is found within Himself!

The love of Jesus Christ in the past has been attested by many deeds of love. That He loved us He proved by the fact that He stood as Surety for us when the Covenant was made, and entered into stipulations on our behalf that He would fulfill the broken Law and that He would offer satisfaction to the justice of God which had been provoked. In the fullness of time He took upon Himself our nature. What higher proof of love than that? In that Nature He lived a life of blameless service. In that Nature He died a death in which all the weight of Divine vengeance for sin was compressed into a few hours of bodily and spiritual anguish.

Now that He lives exalted in the highest Heaven, He is still His peoples Servant, interceding for them, representing them at the right hand of God, preparing a place for them, And by His mighty Spirit He is fetching them out from the mass of mankind and preparing them for the place which He has prepared for them in Glory. All these proofs show indeed, my dear Brothers and Sisters, how in the past Jesus Christ has loved His people! Grasp it, I pray you! Now, for a minute, grasp it! Realize it by putting out the hand of individual faith and saying, He loved me in those hoary ages. He loved me before time began, and days and years were first mapped out! He loved me before He had made a star or given light to the sun! He loved me, yes, me in particular, me with a specialty, me as much as any of those on whom His heart is set.

Do you believe in Him this morning? Say, poor Sinner, do you cast yourself upon Him and take Him to be your only trust and confidence? Then you may take the text with full assurance as being yourshaving loved His own, He loved you, even you! I always feel, when I speak upon this topic, as if I would rather sit down and be silent than speak because it is not so much a theme for speech as for meditation. Expressive silence must sing this hymn in your souls ears. Jesus did not merely think of you, and pity you, but loved you and betrothed you unto Himself forever! That an angel should love an ant would be a remarkable stoop, but that Jesus should love you is a miracle of miracles, a wonder which never could be excelled! Let each one adoringly bless the name of the Lord who does great wonders.

2. The second window looks out upon the present. The text says, Having loved His own which were in the world. It does not seem to strike one as an extraordinary thing that Jesus should love His own who are in Heaven. See them yonder, white robed and fair to look upon! They all have melodious voices! They are all without fault before the Eternal Throne! Well may Jesus love them, for there is much beauty in them! His Grace has made them lovable. But to love His own which are in the world is quite another and stranger thing. And yet it is the blessed fact to which the text calls attention.

May you now by faith feed upon itJesus Christ loved those who were in the world when He was here, and He now loves His own who are in the world today. You are in the world, and, as you all too surely feel, temptations have shown you that you are not yet in Heaven! You have sighed for a lodge in some vast wilderness that you might cease from the troubles of earth, for what with the evil language which you hear, the corrupt practices which come under your notice, the temptations that are thrust in your own way and the persecutions and the cruel mocking with which you are tried, you feel that this is a wretched world to live in!

Now mark, Jesus loves His own who are in the world. You working men that have to work with so many bad fellows. You tradesmen who have to go in among many who shock you. You good work girls who meet with so many temptersif you are His, He loves His own which are in the world. Behold, He says, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves. Now, if the Good Shepherd sends forth the sheep into the midst of wolves, you may rest assured that He takes not His eyes off any sheep. He will have a peculiar regard, a watchful affection for those who are exposed to peculiar perils through the sinfulness of the generation among whom they dwell. He loves His own which are in the world.

Oh! says one, I would not mind if it were only temptations, and trials, and persecutions, but oh, I find I am in the world by the fact that I sin myself! If I could but keep my own nature clean all would be well. But, alas, I fall! My angry temper betrays me. Proud thoughts are indulged, vanities lodge with me. I had to come groaning up to the House of God this morning and feel half ashamed to sit with the Lords people, for I am less than the least of them all. This is the result of your being in the world, for so long as you are in this world you will have to wrestle hard with the old nature and its inbred sins.

Well, but Jesus loves His own which are in the world. He sees your imperfection. He knows what you have to struggle with. He understands well enough the uprisings of your nature and He loves you notwithstanding all. Ah! says another, I have come here today burdened with a very heavy trouble. The partner of my life is sick at home and near to death. Alas! cries another, My dear child is dying and I found it hard to tear myself away from the bedside. Worse still, moans another, I have a living cross to carryone of my sons is breaking my heart. Ah! exclaims a fourth, I have a bill to meet tomorrow and I do not know how it will be done! I fear I shall be ruined.

All these things go to show that we are yet in the world of sorrow. As the sparks fly upward, so were we born to troublewhy do we count it a strange thing? But Jesus loves His own which are in this dolorous world this is the balm of our griefsand I call upon you to hold to it and not let the devil delude you into the idea that the Lord does not love you because affliction happens to you as it does to other men. Of course it must so happen so long as you are in the world! How can you expect exemption? Would you have a glass case made for you to keep you snug away from all the frosts and winds of this world? Would you have your heavenly Father indulge you with all the sweet things of this life and spoil you for the life to come?

Would you strike the root in this world and never be transplanted to the heavenly Eden? Do you wish to have your rest and portion in this life? Oh no! You should not wish for that! Well, then, take what God sends you. Receive evil as well as good from Jehovahs hand, as Job did. But never let it be the thought of your heart that Jesus does not love you because you are subjected to evils which are necessary to the place in which, for wise reasons, He suffers you for a little to remain! He prizes His gold as much while it is in the furnace as when it is drawn forth. Believe in His love now! Do as Rutherford didhe tells us that when banished by his enemies and shut up, as it were, in the worlds dark cellar, he began to feel about him for the wine bottles (for God keeps His choice wines in the vaults of sorrow), and he soon found the wine of heavenly consolationwines on the lees, well refinedand drank freely and was refreshed.

You do the same! When you are brought low, believe that there is always a comfort near. When you have much of this worlds prosperity you may suspect some danger near. After a profound calm comes the terrible tempest. Whenever you are overwhelmed with great trouble you may rest assured that choicest blessings are on the road to you. Jesus Christ will make your consolations to abound in proportion as your tribulations abound! If one scale is heavy, the other shall balance it. While you are in the world you shall be cheered with tokens of the Bridegrooms regard.

3. The third window of the text looks out to the future. Having loved His own He loved them unto the end. He will love His people to the utmost end of their unloveliness. Their sinfulness cannot travel so far but what His love will travel beyond it! Their unbelief, even, shall not be extended to so great a length but what His faithfulness shall still be wider and broader than their unfaithfulness.

He never will suffer one of His chosen to fall into such deadly sin or to go so far in it that He cannot yet outstrip all the strides which his iniquities may have taken. If our sins are mountains, His love shall be like Noahs flood and the tops of the mountains shall be coveredand not so much as a sin shall be found against us. He will love His own to the end, that is, to the end of all their needs.

Deep as their helpless miseries are shall be the extent of His Grace. If their need of pardon abounds, the blood shall be more able to pardon than their sins shall be able to defile. They may need more than this world can hold, and all that Heaven can give, but Jesus will go to the end of all their necessities and even beyond them, for He is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him. He will love them to the end of their livesso long as they live here, His love shall be with them. And as there shall be no end of their existence hereafter, He will continue, still, the same fondness to them.

And what if I say He will love them to the end of His own life, if such a thing were allowable? Until the eternal God shall die, His love shall never depart from any of His Beloved. Unless the heart of Jesus shall cease to beat and the eternal Savior shall expire in death, that heart shall never fail in affection towards His people! Nor shall His love ever depart from them. Oh, how charming it is to reflect that to the end Jesus loves, because you cannot raise any objection, or think of any difficulty but what the text meets. If you go ever so far, still it is evident that when you are there you are not beyond the end, and Jesus love will and must go up to the endand that is as far as either the sin or the sorrow, the needs or the difficulties of His people can possibly go!

The word translated, end, in the Greek, frequently signifies to perfectionHe loved them to perfection. Oh, the perfection of the love of Jesus Christ! All that His love can do He will do for His people. None shall be able to say that He has omitted anything which was good for them. No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly. Out of all their needs and necessities there shall not be one left unsupplied, but from the first dawn of Grace in them, even to the last, the perfection of Jesus love shall be manifested!

What shall we say to all this in closing the sermon this morning? We shall only say thisif Jesus Christ thus loves to the end, how ought we to persevere in our love to Him! Sometimes, dear Brethren, we become warmed up and we do a great deal very zealously, but soon, too soon, we grow cold again. It is one of my temptations, and I suppose it is yours, to begin to flag, to cease from ones earnestness, to say, Well, the thing can go on pretty well without my being quite so fast and zealous.

The true way of living for Christ is to live always at the highest possible rate of force. Zealous, not now and then, but always, in a good thing for Christ. Sometimes you are very generous, prayerful, and earnest in looking after souls. Why not always so? Suppose Jesus were sometimes loving to you, sometimes thoughtful of youand imagine that there were intervals of forgetfulness on His part, as there are in your casewhat a sorry matter it would be for us! Let us repent that we have been so spasmodic in our affection to Him and let us pray that His Spirit may dwell in us that He Himself may abide with us that we may be every day, as we are sometimes, always abounding in the work of the Lord, steadfast, unmovable. Beloved, I would have you always winning souls, always adorning the doctrine of God your Savior by holiness. I would have you always much in prayer, always in communion. Would God we were so! The constant faithfulness of our Lord should lead us to this!

The second practical remark will beif these things are so, that Christ loves His own to the endlet us not indulge the wicked thought that He will forsake us. It is impossible that Jesus should leave a soul that hangs upon Him! You may be brought very low, but still underneath you shall be the everlasting arms. You may feel as if you were crushed by the wheels of Providence. Your spirit may sink nearly into despair. But neither things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate you from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus your Lord.

Give not way to the fainting spell of unbelief! Believe in Christ and not in your own feelings! Believe in His promise and not in your own frames! What matters it whether it is day or night with you, whether it is winter or summer? Christ Jesus is the same and He has said, Because I live, you shall live also. Resort to your unfailing Friend! Lean on the arm whose sinews cannot crack! Cast your weight on the shoulders which cannot grow weary! Play the man and be of good courage for the honor of the Gospelfor if the Gospel does not cheer us in time of trouble, what is the good of it? If it will not buoy us up when the floods are out, where is the service of it?

But, my Brothers and Sisters, it will! We are not of those who have to deal with a vacillating Redeemer who casts away His people for their sins and rejects them for their backslidings. We do not have a Savior who loves His own today and hates them tomorrowa Christ in whom I have no confidence and in whose existence I do not believe! But we have to deal with One who is the same yesterday, today, and foreverOne who never did flinch from His purpose nor turn from His decree! And having to deal with such a One, let us not dishonor His name by wavering, and doubting, and fearing! Cast yourselves on the Lord, you mourners, and rejoice in Him. Lean yourselves upon Him, you burdened ones, and take up your Psalm of praise this morning and go on your way rejoicing!

The last practical remark iswhat a misery it must be to be without such a Savior! I scarcely know of any two words more sorrowful than these twowithout Christand yet those words are applicable, I fear, to many in this congregation! You have no heavenly Friend into whose ear to whisper your sorrows. You have no faithful Brother, or mighty Savior to help you in your time of need. Your sins are upon you! Your iniquities are written in the Book of God, engraved as with an iron pen, and written with the point of the diamond. The day of death will soon come and you will have no one to help you over Jordans swelling billows. You will stand before the tremendous Throne, where the voice shall be as thunder, and the eyes of the Judge like lightning, and you shall have no Advocate to plead your cause, no Redeemer to take your soul beneath His sheltering wings!

There is still hope, for Jesus is still the Friend of sinners. Come unto Him, you weary! Hasten to Him, you laboring and heavy laden! He shuts out noneHe welcomes all who come to Him with broken hearts and downcast eyes, seeking pardon through His precious blood. O that you would come to Him this morning! Before another day shall pass away may you have ended your career of rebellion, and commenced a course of obedience! Then will you sing with us of everlasting love! Then will you rejoice with us in immutable Grace! Then shall our God be your God, and our Heaven shall be your Heaven. Amen.

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THE LESSONS OF THE FOOT-WASHING   
NO. 1499

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, OCTOBER 12, 1879, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He was come from God, and went to God; He rose from supper, and laid aside His garments; and took a towel, and girded Himself. After that He poured**

**water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples feet, and to wipe them with the towel with   
which He was girded.   
John 13:3-5.**

IT seems to me that the true text of this enacted sermon of the footwashing is to be found in the first verse of the chapterHaving loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end. Our Lord washed the feet of His disciples to show that to the last moment of His communion with them He was full of the deepest and truest love to them and was willing to perform the most menial action for their good. Nor was this all, for we may regard that one condescending act as the pledge and type of His daily kindness towards all His own which are in the world. Those deeds of love, which the foot-washing sets forth, are continuous among us and are the sure tokens of His abiding love to us.

Our Lords affection for His people is not a transient passion. He loved them before the earth was. He continues to love them and He always will love them, even when these heavens and this earth shall have passed away. In token of the continuance of His love, He has left on record this washing of His disciples feet, not because He only did it once, but because it is a type of what He is always doing. Even in His Glory He is caring for His saints with that same condescending love which led Him to wash their feet. And He is acting towards them, spiritually, in the same way.

The love of Christ will assuredly endure all the strain that can ever be put upon it, for at the time when He acted as menial servant to His disciples, His love was enduring and enduring right gloriously, three great trialsany one of which might have broken it had it not been altogether Omnipotent. For, first, He was about to go away from them. Much of human love needs the presence of its object for its maintenance. It is, alas, seldom true that absence makes the heart grow fonder. Jesus was about to depart out of this world to the Father and, with the exception of one brief interval, He was to walk no more in the midst of His chosen, or sit at table with them.

Out of sight, however, they would not be out of mind. Though He was just about to take the last terrible journey of death, yet He forgot them not, but graciously made them see that He would remember them still. If you will remember the style of His going, His thoughtfulness of His friends becomes the more remarkable. He was about to leave them by a cruel and ignominious death and, according to the common conduct of men, it would not have been amazing if He had sought pity and comfort from

theminstead of which He forgot Himself and all the pain, grief and death which lay before Him and spent all His time and strength upon the comfort and establishment of His followers!

When He knew that the hour was come when He must depart out of the world with unutterable pangs, He still loved His own with an all-absorbing love. There was much in the prospect of His grievous departure which might, for a season, have diverted His thoughts from them. But they lay so close to the center of His soul that even under such circumstances He washed their feet!

Next, it is to be remembered that our Lord was well aware that one of them had already entertained the idea of betraying Him. There sat one at the table who had held a secret interview with the Pharisees and chief priestsand had taken money as a bribe for his Masters blood. You cannot so dissociate a leading disciple from the rest as not to feel that the whole band was thereby disgraced and the Lord might very well have said, I will discard My Apostles, for they have betrayed Me. And then you remember that those who did not sell Him or betray Him, nevertheless all forsook Him and fledforsook Him when they ought to have rallied round Him and have spoken up for Him at the judgment seat.

None of them appeared in answer to the question, Who shall declare His generation? Like timid hares, they fled at the first bark of the dogs. It would not have been amazing, had His been a human love, if He had said, They are unworthy of Metheir confidence dies out when they see My sorrowthey betray Methey forsake Me, therefore I will let them go and care for them no more. No, but knowing what they were, our Lord took a towel and girded Himself and washed their feet, yes, washed the traitors feet and gently handled that heel which had been lifted up against Him washing from it the dust gathered in its secret walk upon the traitors errand!

*The sight might kings themselves convert, God only could so far submit:   
Satan is in the traitors heart,   
The Lord Most High is at his feet.*

This act of tender, considerate affection, performed under such circumstances to men who acted towards Him in such ungenerous style, proves to us that His love will bear the strain of our ill behavior, our lack of fidelity and our thousand grievous failures. Having loved His own which are in the world, He loves them to the end.

There was a third strain, and a powerful one, too. Our Savior knew that the Father had committed all things into His hands. He knew that there was but a brief interval before He should die and then He would ascend to the Fathers right hand and sit there eternally as God Over All, blessed forevermore! Yet He did not disdain to do a slaves work for His beloved ones. Oftentimes circumstances alter affections. A man grows rich and great and forgets his friends. This we would not suspect of Jesus if His had not been a greater change than we mortals can possibly experience. But His was a surpassing accession of gloryfrom being plunged in ignominy and shame He was exalted to receive the homage of angels and the adoration of the whole universe! One would think that in the prospect of such honors, though He loved His own, He would not so love them as to become their Servitor and, all in disarray, stoop down before them, even to their feet, and do the service of a bondsman!

No wonder that Peter raised an objection suggested by reverential awe. Who could, without protest, receive such humble service from such hands? Yet our Lord did this with Heavens supernal Glory descending on Him! He disrobed Himself, though angels longed to cast the imperial purple about His shoulders! With all things in His hands, He yet took a towel and wiped the disciples feet! Beloved, if our Lords love bore these three strains, we may, like the Apostle, be persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord!

I invite you now, therefore, to see your Saviors enduring and continuing love as set forth to us in this symbolic washing of His disciples feet and in similar acts of which it is a symbol. I shall ask you to view it, first, as the type of His continuous love. And secondly, as the example of that love as it should be reflected by His people. May the Holy Spirit be our Interpreter and open to us this choice cabinet of love tokens!

I. First we will look upon this washing of the disciples feet as THE TYPE OF OUR LORDS CONTINUOUS LOVE TO US. We will view it in four lights. First, Christ Jesus still acts as the Host of His people. Has it never struck you how much the life of Christ with His people lay in intense familiarity with them? How in common things He displayed His brotherhood with them? He began His ministry at a feast at Cana of Galilee, working His first miracle at a wedding. Again and again we find Him eating with His disciples. The last thing He did was to sit at supper with them and He still says to His Church, Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man open to Me I will enter in and sup with Him and he with Me.

His own figure for the opening of the new dispensation is a supper Blessed is he that shall eat bread at the marriage supper of the Lamb. We do not always view our communion with Christ in this homely light and I fear we forget that the acquaintance of Christ with His people was one of great intimacy and familiar communion, for they did eat and drink with Him and He with them. At this time, also, Jesus is the Host of His Church, providing the Gospel Supper and entertaining us right royally. Instead of meat, He gives us His flesh to eat, rarest of dainties and He cries, My flesh is meat, indeed, and My blood is drink, indeed.

He prepares a table before us in the presence of our enemies. He satisfies our mouth with good things so that our youth is renewed like the eagles! And, mark you, the Lord is a Host who goes through with His Divine hospitalities and leaves nothing incomplete. In the East the master of the house would wash his guests feet if they were persons whom he sought to honor. You remember how Abraham bade the angels turn into his tent and also said to them, Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched and wash your feet. Even so our Master entertains us at His table, not as paupers, but as guests, yes, and not as guests of an ordinary kind, but as friends of the highest class, dear to His soul, whose feet He will wash! He can truly say of us, Since you were precious in My sight, you have been honorable and I have loved you. He treats us as distinguished persons who shall

not sit among mean men, but shall have their portion among princes.

This foot-washing, once done, was a fair representation of that honorable entertainment which the King extends to all believing souls when He bids them come to His banqueting table and drink of the wine which He has mingled. I like to think of the Lord as my Host and of myself as no mere waif and stray, but as a welcome guest to whom He is daily fulfilling all a hosts part, granting me all I want, yes, all that I wish for! He Himself gives us honors and comforts us more than could be expected, even, from our most familiar friend. Look, He even washes our feet! What better token need we of His abiding love? Since He continues to entertain His whole Church and treats us all as distinguished visitors, it is clear that He still loves us.

My second rendering of the passage is that He cares for our minor matters with a personal interest. Jesus washed their feet and this showed a very tender and familiar consideration of their little needs. That He should ease their weary hearts I can understand. That He should enlighten their clouded brains I can understand. But that He should wash their feet is amazing! A little soil on their feetwill He attend to that? Yes, that He will, and personally, too. He will, Himself, take the basin and the towel and wash their feet! Had they been diseased with leprosy it would seem natural that He should touch them and say, Be clean. Or had they been blind or crippled, it would have been probable that He would touch their eyes or heal their limbs.

But a mere defilement of their feet is so a small a matter! Would He attend to that? He might have left them to wash one anothers feet, might He not? Surely He had but to suggest it and they would have cheerfully waited on each other. Peter, at any rate, would have been first to obey and to his Lords command he would have replied, Wash them? That I will, with delight! But no. The Lord laid aside His own garments and took a towel and He performed the kindly deed for them! Brothers and Sisters, take your little things to Christ! Those trials of which your heart says, They are too small. Though they prick me like thorns in the flesh and give me pain, yet they are really too trifling for me to mention in prayer.

Not so! The Lord loves us to trust Him thoroughly. This is a token of His love, of His continued affection, that even to the little things He will lookeven to your smallest problems He will condescend and you may ask Him! Oh, it is bold asking, but you may do it! You may ask Him to wash your feet, for He will do even that! Do not, I pray you, cause your own love to be put under suspicion through a deficiency in your childlike confidence in your condescending Lord! I confess I have often required more faith to pray about some tiny matter of my own than about a thousand things which concern my Masters Kingdom. And yet when faith is broad and large, love knows that all matters which grieve the minds of His servants touch the heart of the Master and that all which works our good works also His delight. We must believe in Him so much that we can trust each days cares with Him, believing that He still washes His disciples feet by attending to their minor needs and grief

*He overrules all mortal things,*

***And manages our mean affairs.   
On humble souls the King of kings   
Bestows His counsels and His cares.***

We will now take a third reading of it. This washing of the disciples feet means that

He provides refreshment for His people. I do not suppose that many here present know what an intense pleasure it is, in extremely hot countries, to have the feet washed upon coming in after a weary walk. The servant pours forth fresh cool water from a pitcher upon the feet when they are aching with a long journey and hot with burning heat and dust. The result is delightfully refreshing! Our Lord washed His disciples feet, not only because cleansing was desirable, but also for their pleasure and solace. He takes great pleasure in giving joy to His followers. He desires that His joy should be in us that our joy may be full. He does not want us to be like paupers who have to be content with bare necessaries, but to be gentlemen-commoners upon His bounty who shall be served right royally, like princes of the blood whom even the King, Himself, does not disdain to wait upon.

When does the Lord give us these refreshments? He often does this after a journeyI mean after a severe trial. When, as pilgrims to Heaven, we have been wearied by the greatness of the way, the Master comes and manifests Himself to us and refreshes us. Sometimes, also, this good cheer comes before the trial, for these disciples were now about to enter upon a very rough roadthey were doomed to travel through the rest of their lives without the personal Presence of their Master and He seems to say, Before you set out I will wash your feet. A little refreshment of this kind will strengthen you at the start. And when you are further on your way, the very remembrance of it will come to you like a cool stream of water fresh from the pitcher. So the Master was pleased to refresh them after a journey and before a journey and the refreshment was intended, as I have already said, for their souls delight. It was a feast at which they sat and He wished them to enjoy everything that could make them happy at His table.

Brethren, I have told you that this foot-washing is a type of our Lords continuous love to us, a type which is followed by action like itself and so it is, in this respect, for He is often refreshing us. Have you not tasted of His cordials? We speak far less of our spiritual delights than we might do, but if we would open our mouths, we could tell of rapturous times, when, though weary and cast down, we have been graciously revived! Sweet promises have been applied to us by our Lords own handslike cold water poured upon hot and weary feetand by this means we have been bathed in rest. A sense of His love has come over us like a dream and yet we were never more awake in our lives! We have been entranced and yet most sober and calm.

Our Lords love is a dear delight and, when we realize it, the bells of Heaven seem to be ringing close against our ears and choirs of angels to have come down from Glory to make music in our chambers! At such times we often wonder why we were so gladdened, but when, the next day, an extraordinary trouble sets in, we discover the reason and perceive that we have been well nourished that we may go a forty days journey in the strength of this meat! Yes, we have had those refreshments in this house when the Word has been preached, or when some joyful hymn has borne us on its wings to Heaven! Or, best of all, at the Communion Table! Nor

here alone, for in our own quiet chambers and in the night watches the Lord has refreshed our hearts, for He gives songs in the night. These sweet renewals and lifting up are the tokens that, having loved His own, He loves them to the end.

This is the foot-washing all over again, for Christ is still busy at His works of love. Though He lays not aside His garment today, nor comes among us like a Servant, yet even from the highest Throne in Glory He has ways of executing the same purposes of kindness. Still He gives us inward delight and this joy becomes our strength, making us swift as a young roe to run upon His gracious errands! The weariness which makes the feet heavier is removed by joyful fellowship and so we are washed and refreshed. We who are His ministers need much of this, that we may be as gazelles let loose, giving goodly words.

Our fourth view of the text is more full and accurate, namely, that Christ continues to guard the purity of His Church, for though it was not all His meaning, yet by washing their feet He certainly intended their cleansing, for after He had done it He said, You are clean: he that is washed is clean every whit. Our Lord watches over the purification of all those who are His own and this is a great joy to us who love His Church and are concerned for her honor. To see professors defile themselves is heartbreaking work to loving pastors and our only comfort is that Jesus is quite as jealous of the holiness of His people as ever we can be.

Beloved, I live while I see your pure and holy conversation! But when I see impurity, worldliness and evil among you, it cuts me to the heart! And were it not that I know my Lord is watching over the purity of His people, I would gladly lay down and die. From the occasion which our Lord selected for the foot-washing, it is clear that He would have us seek the special purifying power of His Presence during religious ordinances. I really cannot tell at what point of the evenings proceedings our Lord washed His disciples feet and, if you read the chapter, you will be somewhat puzzled. It is before the Passover, yet it is said, supper being ended, which, I suppose, would be better rendered, supper being in progress, for after the washing our Lord took a sop, dipped it and gave it to Judas and, therefore, the supper was not over.

Or if one supper may have come to an end, another was just commencing. Was this feast the Passover? Was it the Lords Supper? Was it the first of the agape, or love feasts, in which the early Church delighted? Which was it? I do not know and I am not much concerned to know. The Lord Jesus Christ made the Passover melt into the Lords Supper so that you cannot tell where one ends and the other begins! No violent jerk occurred in leaving the lines of the Jewish dispensation for the Christian for our Lords disciples went up to the Temple to pray after the veil was torn in two and the legal ceremonies had lost their meaning.

There was a gradual sliding of the one economy into the other and, on the memorable night of the washing of the feet, I suspect that our Master ate and drank with His disciples at a common meal just as the early Christians did when they met together at their love feaststhen probably followed the actual Passover celebration, a night before its timeand this gradually dissolved into the Lords Supper of which the cup was the cup after supper. Anyway, it does not matter much, but it is clear that we need our feet washed before we come to His Table, Let a man examine Himself and so let Him eat of this bread.

We also need our feet washed while we are at His Table, for there is sin in our holiest things and even when we come most near to our Lord, we need that He wash us according to that text, If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. Even when we walk in the light and have clearest fellowship with God, the Lord Jesus continues to cleanse us from all sin! And I am sure we need washing after supper. When we come away from worship we have need to get alone and cry, Cleanse me from secret faults. Let my lack of devotion or my coldness in it be forgiven! Let my lack of zeal, my scantiness of faith and the wandering of my heart be all washed away by You, my Lord and Master, for I much need it.

Our Lord is so anxious for the purification of His people that He is frequently giving them a sweet sense that their transgressions in holy things are put away and thus He seems to say to them, I have accepted your sacrifice. I have received your prayers and tears and presented them unto My Father. I have washed you and you are clean. Go in peace. This is one of the acts of His continuous love, this daily washing of our feet! We must all have this frequent washing by our Lordit is absolutely necessary. There is a must in the caseas we must be born again, so we must be made holy. It would be to our Lords dishonor to be followed by disciples who do not walk in integrity and uprightness. As He is, Himself, perfectly holy, He desires to have around Him a holy people purged from all defilement. He is so anxious that He should have such a people that, sooner than they shall not be washed, He will act the part of a Servant and wash their feet Himself.

Be you clean that bear the vessels of the Lord. You that follow in His footsteps, walk with clean feet. Come not up with the miry clay still sticking to you, but wash, wash daily and follow your pure Master with pure and cleansed hearts, with careful and obedient feet, so that all may see that you are the disciples of the Undefiled! His ministers, especially, need this or the people will never cry, How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that brings good tidings. Brothers and Sisters, pray for us that we may experience this to the highest degree! These constant washings which are the testimony of Christs continued love we must all receive. Did He not say to Peter, If I wash you not, you have no part with Me? If Jesus does not make you holy, you are not His.

Brother, if you live in sin and love it, you cannot love God! Unless He truly purges your life and makes you to walk in a clean path, you are not His, for He purges His ownsuch as riot in iniquity prove that they are of their father, the devil, for they do his works. Whom Jesus loves He purifies. He loved His Church and gave Himself for it that He might sanctify and cleanse it. If, then, you are unholy, ungracious, dishonest, unrighteoushow can you say that you belong to His Church? He washes the feet of all who are His disciples and if your feet are filthy, you belong not to

the faithful band.

This washing must be

spiritualno external form will suffice. Christ washed the feet of Judas with water, but inasmuch as Judas had never been bathed in the laver of regeneration and had never been purged in the fountain of forgiving love, that washing which Christ gave to his feet did him no spiritual good! And you, my Friend, may use what external ablutions you will and perform whatever religious ceremonies you please, but unless your spirit has been renewed by the Holy Spirit and your heart purged in the sight of God, you still have no part nor lot with Christs disciples! The mercy is that this purification, which is so necessary and which must be of a spiritual kind, is very readily given!

I admire the beauty of the figure in its simple ease. The Scripture does not say that our Master was nailed to the Cross and poured forth a stream from His heart in order to wash His disciples feet. No, although the act by which He cleansed them was very condescending, yet it was not painful or laborious. He laid aside His garments, girded on the towel and took the pitcher and straightway proceeded to wash the disciples feet. It was easily done and whatever there was upon the feet was soon removedit needed no suffering, no dire grief on Jesus part!

For our first washing from the guilt and condemnation of sin it needed that Jesus should lay down His life and fill the cleansing fountain with atoning blood. But for the later removal of sin, the Lord uses an easy process of love. He does, by His Spirit, speedily cleanse us from iniquity, even as our feet are soon washed. How, readily, therefore, we ought to go to Christ about the purging of our consciences from dead works! I have heard it said that the sinner finds great difficulty in going to Christ at firstthat is sadly truebut I have also noticed that sometimes there is a difficulty in continuing to go to Him every day of our lives.

To go as a sinner and get washed from sin needs faith, but it also requires a steady confidence to resort to Jesus under a thousand conscious failures and backsliding year after year. I sit down in my chamber and I feel I am a forgiven manabout that I am quite sure and, therefore, I shall never be cast into Hell. But this day I spoke unadvisedly with my lips, or I grew angry, or I am conscious that I was proud, or I have been frivolous and worldly, or I have been selfishand at the remembrance of those sins I lose my peace and feel I cannot pray. Communion with God seems gone while these faults stare me in the face! The arch-enemy whispers, You cannot get back into your former happy state.

At such times let us say to him, O you enemy, I can and will return into fellowship, for my dear Lord and Master has only to take the basin and wash my feet and this He can do right speedily. O my Brothers and Sisters, when a sense of sin revives upon the conscience, do not be persuaded by unbelief that there is an impossibility of escaping it! Go straight to your Master and say, Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow, and He will cleanse you and once again you shall joy and rejoice in Him! Remember the words of our hymn concerning the fountain of Divine Grace

*This fountain from guilt not only makes pure, And gives, soon as felt, an Infallible cure. But if guilt removed returns and remains, Its power may be proved again and again.*

Mark, however, that this washing must be given us by our Lord Himself. He must first wash our feet before we can wash one anothers feet. I think I see the Well-Beloved, now, as He pours the pure water on their ankles! Mark how He takes their feet into His kind and tender hands and washes them clean. And then He wipes them with the towel! He continues to do this to us, even now, in a spiritual sense! It is His own dear love that takes away sin from the conscience so that it does not linger there to foul and mar it. Often I think He seems to kiss those feet and say, Dear child, you are now clean. Watch your footsteps and keep your garments that they be not defiled again. Yet even if they are, I will wash them again, for I still live to cleanse you and put away your transgressions. I mean, before long, to make you as perfect as Myself, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

Nor may I leave this point till I bid you mark the condescension of this personal washing, for Abraham did not, himself, wash the angels feet, but said, Let a little water be fetched and wash your feet. And Joseph did not personally wash his brothers feet, but the steward of his house brought them in and gave them water and they washed their feet! But Jesus does it all Himself. O my Soul, bow down before Him and adore His unparalleled love!

Thus I have shown you that this foot-washing is a symbol of our Redeemers continuous acts of love. Jesus is always our Host and, therefore, He washes our feet. He always cares for our little matters and in this sense washes our feet. He is always providing refreshments for His people in their pilgrimage to Heaven and thus He washes their feet. He is always guarding the purity of His Church and peopleand so, in the fullest senseHe washes their feet.

II. Secondly, we come to practical matters as to ourselves. As THE MODEL OF HIS OWN LOVE FOR HIS PEOPLE, our Lord washed their feet. The love of the saints is their Lords love in them, which has filled their vessels to the brim and is now running over. Christs love is the Sun and our love is the moonlight which we are able to give forth because the Sun has looked upon us. Love is first freely imparted and then plenteously diffused. Jesus says, The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water. And then again, Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

What we receive, we impart and the Grace which works in us at the first, before long works by us. Let us look at this foot-washing in reference to ourselves and our duty and office in the midst of our Brethren. We learn, first, that there will always be need of service in the Church and always need of service in the particular direction of promoting purity. The Apostles were 12 strong mensurely they did not require a servant! Yes, they didthey must have a servant! They could not do without a servant and, therefore, their Lord supplied the vacant place. And now that the Lord is gone, His Church still needs servants and servants to wash feet, or else all will go amiss.

On earth the Church will never be so clean that it will have no need of foot-washing. The Church will never be able to dispense with purifying service till the Lord shall come. You, my Brother and Sister Christian,

may never expect to join a Church where there will be nothing for you to dodo not even desire such a position of idleness! We shall never get among a community so pure that we shall see no faults in our Brethren and never shall we, ourselves, be so good that they will see no faults in us! Therefore let us render and receive a happy, mutual service in the Church by which the sanctification of one and all will be promoted. In those words, If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; you also ought to wash one anothers feet, our Lord speaks as though He would have us reckon upon acting as servants for the benefit of each other. Let us cheerfully accept the position!

We see, next, that we are not to advocate the abrogation of such service, or pretend that we have reached a point at which we can dispense with it. The stoic would say, Washing feet? What is the good of it? What need of washing a mans feet? If he needs it, let him wash them himself. The first law of Nature is self-lovelet every man see to it himself. What have I to do with my Brothers feet? Let him wash his own. What has he to do with my feet? Let him mind his own business. That is anti-Christianity! Christianity says, I am willing that others should help me to be holy and I am also willing to help others to the same end. I am so imperfect that I am willing that anybody should point out my faults and rebuke me for them. And I am so anxious that my Brother should be holy that I will lovingly help him to conquer sin.

Sometimes it is more humbling to have your own feet washed than to wash other peoples and, therefore, sometimes our pride says, You shall never wash my feet. Yet it must be so and pride must sit still like a child and be both washed and wiped. Again, I perceive that to many it is easy to stoop to the poor, but hard to yield to their equals in estate or in ability. I know those who will do a thousand things for a poor man, but they would not do the same service to those of their own rank. You say, As for that poor soul, I do not mind conceding many points to him, but this other man will crow over me if I yield to his weakness and he will expect me to do it again! And so I may be thought to be a person of no spirit who can easily be put upon and made a general hack.

That also is the speech of anti-Christianity. True Christianity impels us to render and to accept that service which is mutual among true saints. He who kindly reminds me of my faults helps me to be betterlet me not be angry with him, but value him for his faithfulness. On the other hand, I must never hint at a failing in a Brother unless I believe that he will be the better for it and even then I must do it gently, for I am not to scald my Brethrens feet, but to use cool, sparkling, living water in the washing of them. Refining by fire is Gods workrefreshing with water is ours. We are to rebuke in love, not in wrath! We are to wipe as well as wet, to comfort as well as correct.

In the world they criticizethat is the business of the public press and it is very much the business of private circles. Hear how gossips say, Do you see that spot? What a terrible walk that man must have had this morninglook at his feet! He has been very much in the mire, as you can see, for there are the traces upon him. That is the worlds way. Christs way is very different. He says nothing but takes the basin and begins to wash away the stain. Do not judge and condemn, but seek the restoration and the improvement of the erring. Say to your faulty Brother, I am very anxious if I may take away your spots. I would not wish to point them out if I did not feel that I should thereby help you to get rid of them.

I fear that many professors follow the worlds way and indulge in what we call gossip, which is usually slander and misrepresentation, or, in other words, lying! The best of men may have to endure this, but it is a great pity it should be so. Why will people find pleasure in throwing dirty water over their neighbors? Do you make yourself any better by blackening others? Do you expect to rise by pulling others down? Scorn such attempts! An ambition which suggests such evil means is only worthy of a fiend. O you who truly love your Lord, cease from cruel witticisms and spend your strength in humble and loving washings of your Brothers and Sisters feet and so shall we all become happier, because more like our Lord.

This foot-washing among disciples should be done very cheerfully. Nobody asked the Master to bring the basinno one would have thought of such a thing! It was His own heart of love that made Him do it, out of spontaneous affection for those whom He had chosen. Let us also be ready to perform any office for our Brethren, however lowly. If there is a position in the Church where the worker will have to toil hard and get no thanks for it, take it and be pleased with it! If you can perform a service which few will ever seek to do, themselves, or appreciate when performed by others, yet occupy it with holy delight! Covet humble work and when you get it, be content to continue in it. There is no great rush after the lowest placesyou will rob no one by seeking them!

The first place we must have an election for and poll the whole communitybut for the very lowest there is no great ambitiontherefore select such a place and while you will escape envy, you will also gain a quiet conscience. If we were more thoroughly Christs, we should cheerfully and voluntarily push ourselves into the places of self-sacrifice, counting it our chief honor to serve God and the Church in ways which are obscure and despised, because in so doing we shall be saved from the Pharisaic spirit which desires the praise of man. When we do anything for Christs people, not only should we do it cheerfully, but thoroughly. How well our Lord took up the Servants place! He disrobed Himself until He stood prepared for His task in much the same undress as an attendant at the Turkish baths who takes off all his upper garments.

Our Lord was ready to do His work. He put off all that would hinder Him, for He meant real washing and not a mere form. When you are going to serve your Brethren, do it heartily! Give your Lord zealous and earnest service! Strip to your shirt sleeves, if need be, to serve Christ and His people. Do not attempt to play the fine gentlemanis it not far nobler to be a real Christian? Observe how each point of our Lords procedure is marked by the Evangelist. He rose from supper and laid aside His garments; and took a towel and girded Himself. After that He poured water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded.   
He might have left them to wipe themselves, but, no, He must finish

His love work! He wiped them with the towel with which He was girded. Whenever you serve a Brother or Sister for Christs sake, do it thoroughly. Begin it heartily, go on with it steadfastly and do not leave off till the deed is done! If anything is to be done slovenly, let it be something which is done for you! But Jesus and His people must have the best which our ability can render. Give the saints of God the pick and choice of your productionsif you wash their feet, wash them well! The foot of the meanest servant of Christ is more honorable than the head of the greatest emperor that ever wore a diadem! It will be seen in eternity to be a greater honor to have performed the most menial service for a true child of God than to have been honored and decorated with stars and garters in the service of the mightiest monarch. Lay yourselves out for thorough service of your Lord in His people and try to be always doing this.

I feel quite sure of my ground in having said that this foot-washing was meant to be a type of what our Lord is always doing, because He puts it thusIf I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; you also ought to wash one anothers feet. Evidently the inference would be, If I did this but once, you ought to wash one anothers feet once. But since the moral is, You ought always to wash one anothers feet, the doctrine is that, in effect, our Lord is always washing the feet of His people. Let us carry out the lesson and be always in a servants attitude among our fellow disciples. Let us always be on bended knee, with the basin and the towel near at hand! Let us always be willing to relieve those who are in need, to restore those who stumble, to reclaim those who wander and to edify and perfect all the body of Christ as far as our ability will permit. Be it ours to promote the holiness of our entire fellow Christians at all times!

You say it is the pastors business to look after the Church. I know it is, but the true pastors wisdom is to set the members of the Church looking after one another! Bear you one anothers burdens and so fulfill the Law of Christ. In my own case, the pastorate of one person over 5,000 members is ridiculous unless it is exercised by impressing all the members with the necessity, the duty, the privilege of mutual oversighteach one seeking to do good to the other according as he has opportunity.

Let this mind be in you, which is also in Christ Jesus who washed His disciples feet. Love one another, I implore you and in honor prefer one another. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let brotherly love continue and always so live that when your Master looks down upon you He may joy and rejoice in you, as I trust He does this day. May this, our beloved Church, be for many a year a pattern of unity and peace within and of strength and activity without, so that a witness may be borne for pure and undefiled religion and a model set up in which shall be seen the handiwork of the Spirit who creates love in the hearts of the saints!

Little children, love one another. Amen.   
[This sermon was originally titled, The Teaching of the Foot-Washing.] Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307.  
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KNOWING AND DOING   
NO. 3348

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, APRIL 3, 1913.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS DAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 20, 1868.

**If you know these things, happy are you if you do them. John 13:17.**

The original scope of these words was just thisIf, as you say, you have understood the meaning of thisthe washing of your feet by your Masterif you have comprehended My intention in so doing, then it will be to your lasting honor and happiness if you do the same. I have symbolically represented to you, by washing your feet, certain virtues. You shall be a happy people if these virtues are found in you and abound. And have we not abundant proof that our Lord spoke the truth, for where are churches as happy as where they are knit together in brotherly love, where they have laid aside contentions about priority and distinction and where each one becomes a servant of alleveryone willing to take the lowest place and no one contending who shall be the greatest! May we prove, as I trust in our measure we have already done, how true these words are, and never may Diotrephes be in our midst to strive for the preeminence, nor a root of bitterness spring up to trouble us! May we, everyone, try to be like our Lord and happy, indeed, shall we be in such a case.

But the sentence before us is equally applicable to every other Gospel precept. If we understand anything which the Holy Spirit has revealed to us, happy shall we be if we follow its practical intentionif, being first taught and instructedwe afterward practically exemplify in our life and conduct the things which we have learned! That is the one thought I propose to lay upon our hearts and minds this evening! And that one thought may be enough.

You will notice in the text that there are two ifsIf you know these things, happy are you if you do them. It appears, then, first, that genuine and acceptable service to Christ should be based upon intelligent knowledgeIf you know these things. And secondly, that all intelligent understanding of the things of God should lead us to the practice of them Happy are you if you do them. The first if shall be taken firstIf you know these things

I. ALL SERVICE OF CHRIST IS BASED UPON INTELLIGENT KNOWLEDGE.   
Our first observation is that this is an if even in this country. If you know these things. Alas, even in such a city as this, where the Gospel is to be heard in all our streets and Bibles are to be found in all our homes, it is so sad that tens of thousands do not know these things! They are so careless about what God has revealed that they will not even cross the threshold to listen to the Word of God! This day what a mass of Sabbathbreaking has grieved the Spirit of God! All around us there are those who are toiling hard six days in the week for themselves and cannot give to their God and, I may add, to their truer and nobler selves, this one day in which to think of Him. He has written to them the great things of His Law and they have trifled with it! He speaks to them and invites them to hear that their souls may live, but they would rather rest in their beds, or be found in any kind of pleasure sooner than seeking pleasure in the ways of God! Pity this poor city, you who know its sins! Pray for it, you who know its high privileges and solemn responsibilities! Work for it, you who have power with the heavenly Father, until at last the blessing shall come and men shall no longer need to say to their fellows, Know the Lord.   
Alas, this is an if, however, which does not merely concern those who are outside our walls. There are many who know not these things, though they hear about themand the reason is because while they come to the place of worship, and the sound of the preaching glides across their ears,

they never give deep, earnest attention to it. They say that preaching is dullvery possibly it isbut it is very amazing that it should not be still duller when people have no concern to get into its inner meaning, but find it quite enough to come and to go like a door on its hinges! Full often from the humblest teacher something might be learned if we were but anxious to be taught. Or if we learned little by what he said, his very emotions might remind us and one thought, however commonplace, might engender anotherand it would not be altogether without profit to sit together in the assembly of the saints.   
Oh, how negligently do some hear! They are thinking of their homes, of their horses, of their cattle, of their farm and their merchandise. God gets no such attention from men as legatees give the lawyer when he reads the will. If men would listen to the preaching of the Gospel but half as well as they listen to sweet music, there might be hope of its being a blessing to them! But many understand not the things of God because of their negligent hearing of it.   
Alas, too, there are some who attend at least with an outward attention which we cannot blame, but they know not the things of God because they have not yet found out that the letter, that is, the external word, is a killing thing, and that it is the inner and spiritual sense which is, alone, to be sought after. To listen to a Doctrine, for instance, is right enough, and to catch the theory of it and be able to repeat the definition may be in some respects valuable. But it is imperative to get into the soul and spirit of that teaching of God which alone is spirit and truth and, consequently, food to the spiritual man! Dead orthodoxy, mere doctrinal correctnessthese will never land men in Heaven because they do not even put them into the Kingdom of Heaven now! Men who merely have these are like botanists who know not the flowers, but only know the names of the divisions and the orders. They are like physicians who speak of drugs they have never seen or used, who would attempt to deal with mens bodies before they had even studied anatomy or seen a bone!   
We need to come to the tasting and handling of Gods Word. And all the hearing in the world will end in nothing unless the soul gets still closer and in the very soul and secret of the Truths of God. Hence there is an if, an if about the best of hearers, about the most intelligentIf you know these thingsyou may have listened to them, have drunk them in from the earliest days of your life, but unless the Holy Spirit has revealed them to you, flesh and blood cannot do so and you cannot, therefore, know them!   
It is greatly to be regretted that there are some persons who do not know the Truth of God because they have no care to know at all. They have a contempt for anything that God reveals. They are wise men and, therefore, they spend their whole lifetime in studying a piece of rock, or in collecting specimens of beetles, or in any wonderfully wise track of science! But to listen to the eternal Jehovah is quite beneath them! To hear what He has been pleased to say concerning Himself in His own Word seems to them to be trifling. Have I not often met with men who would think it to be worth years of study to make the idlest possible conjectures about the formation of a limestone rock, who yet would laugh in ones face if one began to speak about the soul and the things of the world to come? And these are wise menat least according to their own estimate of themselves! Whether or not they are fools shall remain for the future to reveal to themmay they find it out before the discovery shall be too late!   
Others never will become intelligent in the things of God because they are prejudiced. They have made up their minds that they do knowand he who thinks he knows will never learn. The conceptions which they received early in lifetheir training, the fancies which they have forged for themselves as being what should be the truththese occupy their minds and they cannot see the things of God because the mind has been blinded with other matters. Would to God that we could be clear of prejudice and clear of unholy contempt for Gods Truthand could come simply to Him and ask to be taught as a child by the great Father and lay bare our bosoms that the Holy Spirit might cast out error from us and might write the mind and will of God there clearly! Then, indeed, with such a humble submission and a Divinely earnest desire, there need be no longer an if as to whether we learn these things. There is an if, however.   
Let us now observe that we ought never to rest content while there is an if. If you know these things. My God, is it a question whether I know You or not, whether I know Christ or not, whether I know the Revelation which You have given to us or not? Then begin to teach me now! Oh, Sirs, it will not do to trifle with an ignorance which shall be our lasting ruin! We ought not to give sleep to our eyes until we have asked to be taught of God! To be ignorant about the things of ordinary daily life is not wisdom, but to be ignorant about eternal life is stark madness!   
An uneducated man stands but little chance in the battle of this life. A man uneducated for eternityalas, how exposed is he to innumerable adversaries, how sure to fall, how certain to perish! Go, I pray you, Brothers and Sisters, go to the Wise One for wisdom! Go to this Book for the Light of God! Go to the Holy Spirit, Himself, for Divine instruction and let it not be any longer with you a matter of question as to whether you are taught of God or not! Oh, I would speak very earnestly here. I do not ask that you should be learned. I do not ask for myself that I may be profound. But I do pray that we may comprehend with all saints what are the heights and depths and know the love of Christ which passes knowledge, or at least may know Him and be found in Him, clothed in His righteousness and accepted in His merits. It ought not to be an if.  
But, supposing that there is no if with any of us, then what ground is there for gratitude! If the Savior need not say, If you know these things, but if we can say, Lord You know that we love You, that we rest in You, that we serve You, that we have been taught of Your Spirit, then there is no room for self-congratulation, no room for pride! What have you which you have not received? Thank God, dear Friend, that you were not born amidst the heathenism of Africa! Thank God that you were not left to the Sabbath-breaking of London! Thank God that when you did hear the Word, it broke through the outer door and came into the inner chamber of your soul! Thank God that that passage of Scripture was not sent to you, Come and speak to this people and make their ears heavy that they shall not hear, for their hearts have grown gross! Blessed be the distinguishing Grace that enabled us, who once were as incapable of this as the dead in their graves, to see and hear spiritually!   
What should come of it? Why, if you know these things and have learned them by the Spirit of God, make it the method of showing your gratitude to try and be His instruments in teaching others! If you know these things, be not silent. If you know these things, wrap not up these blessed secrets in your hearts as though they were committed to you only for your own personal enjoyment, but in the name of Him who gave such a priceless gift, go and tell wherever your tongue can be heard, the good news of the salvation of Jesus Christ! And perhaps God may make you a blessing to some of His hidden ones who as yet have not come to Christ.   
Thus much about the first if. It looks to me like the first archand having passed through it, I can see another beyond meand I must pass to the second if I would get the happiness.  
II. THE INTELLIGENT KNOWLEDGE OF THE THINGS OF GOD SHOULD LEAD US TO THE PRACTICE OF THEM.  
If you know these things, happy are you if you do them.   
This second if applies to all the things which we have been taught of God. Let me give you, however, a specimen. Saving Truthsif you know them, happy are you if you do them! This is a saving Truth of Godthat whoever trusts in Jesus Christ is saved. You know that. If there is anything you ought to know, you who come to this house, you ought to know that, for it is the staple of all our sermonizing every Lords-Day that a simple confidence in Jesus Christ, the Savior, saves the soul! Happy are you, then, if you have exercised this simple confidence, for then you are saved! If you have trusted with the whole weight of your sin upon Jesus, you have the happiness of being saved, accepted, secure. Saving Truths ought to, every one of them, be the first objects of practice. That same Spirit who teaches us the Truths of God enables us to put them into action in our daily life. Dear Hearer, have you been a hearer of the good message, but have been a hearer, only? If so, you have missed the joy of the whole business! I pray you go a step farther and believe and live!  
After saving Truths come purifying Truths. Such is the Doctrine of the Holy Spirits indwelling. The Holy Spirit dwells in Believers and where He dwells, there should be purity, peace, holiness and purging out of sin.   
You believe this, but happy are you if you seek so to act. If you pray that you may not grieve the Spirit of God, nor cause Him to depart from you, your daily anxiety shall bring its results and you shall be happy.   
Then, there are certain ennobling Truths in Gods Word and happy are we if we do them. Such is the Truth of Divine Adoption. Every Believer is a child of God. Happy are we if we live like one, if we exercise the privileges of heirs, if we come to our Father with a child-like confidence, if we plead with Him as a dear son asking a generous Father to supply his needs. Remember that every Doctrine of the Gospel has a practice appended to it and that to get the happiness out of the Doctrine you must put its preceptory part, or its practical inference, into action. You may be as orthodox as you please, but your orthodoxy shall be only like so many grapes untrodden in the winepress! But if you cast them into your daily life, then shall the luscious juice run forth and you shall be satisfied with favor and be full of the goodness of the Lord! Bread on the table will not satisfy you, nor will mere Doctrine. The bread must be taken and eaten and assimilatedand then shall it comfort you. And so with the Truth of Godit must be a part of yourself and be worked out into your daily lifeor else the happiness of it cannot be yours.

If there were time tonight, I would make an inventory of all the Truths of Scripture and say after each one, If you know these things, happy are you if you do them. If you know it to be a privilege to be united with Gods people, come and join the Church! If you know that Jesus bids you be baptized and come to His Table to remember Him, I pray you be not disobedient, even to what you may think to be His least commandment! Whenever you get the glimpse of a Truth from Gods Word, or in your conscience by His Spirit, never be a traitor to the heavenly vision! Depend upon it, it is a terrible thing to trifle with knowledge! Some men would not see when they might have seenand they have always been blind. Many a man who might have led the van in the Church of God, and have helped on a glorious reformation, has stepped back from the forefront because, perhaps, of some spurious charity with which he indulged the fleshand he has gone back into the rearto the vile dust from whence he sprang! But he that is faithful to God, faithful to the convictions of his conscienceand carries all out into practiceshall be among those to whom the Master shall say, Well done, at the last. I say to every Truth in Scripture there is a practical conclusion and I beseech you to see to it that you hear Christ say, If you know these things, happy are you if you do them.   
Why is it that the practice of a Truth of God is required to the enjoyment of the happiness which it brings? Answerthis is always Gods rule. The ground is fat and full of bread, but the farmer, by his tillage, must bring out the corn. Down deep in the heart of the earth are the stores of gold and silverthere gleam the precious ores in quantities that might make even Croesus, himself, to blush for poverty! But the metal starts not up from the soil by itself. It must be dug forit must be cast into the furnace and separated from the ore. There shall be wealth in many nations, and trade shall bring comforts to all ranks, but the sea must be traversed, the sails must be spread, the voyage must be made! Labor everywhere shall bring enjoyment, but without labor there shall be none. God is not the God of idleness! He speaks not to the earth to bid it bring food to the door of the idler. He commands neither the ravens nor any other of His creatures to bring bread and meat for the sluggards. There shall always be practice, and then the result of work shall be the reward. So must it be in the things of Godyou must put them into practice to get the blessing they hold! The laws of Nature are wonderful, and a knowledge of them desirable, but a knowledge of all the laws of Nature would never have reaped a field, built a house, found jewels in the mine, or even have made a steam engine without a furnace, a hammer and strenuous toil!   
All the knowledge with which a man can cram his brain cannot secure him in his daily needs until he transfers it from his brain to his right hand and sets to work with it! If you would get Gods blessings, then, in Nature or in Grace, carry out the Divine Laws into immediate and energetic practice!   
In the next place, for God to give the comforts of His promises to men who will not obey His precepts would be to discourage all Christian effort. Every man would fold his arms and sit down. If I am to have salvation without believing, says one, why should I believe? If I am to have Grace given me without using such Grace as that which is already entrusted to me, then let me eat and drink, for Grace will come to me! Let me be as carnal as I like. But God will not so act as to give graceless hearts such an excuse!   
To give His blessing to those who do not practice His precepts would be, in fact, to give a premium for sin. The more knowledge, if that knowledge is not put into practice, the more sin, in consequence! Shall God reward a man who, sitting in the Light of God, will not walk by the Light? And shall He give enjoyments to those who know His will and who do not that will? No, Sirs, if blessings came to merely knowledge, I suppose the devil would be the most blessed of beings! Certainly if the comforts of the Gospel came to those who understand the Gospel best, but who do not practice it, there would be some of the vilest of mankind who would be orthodox enoughwho would, on such a rule, go to Heaven! But they shall find themselves shut out when that judgment shall be given which proceeds upon this rule, By their fruits you shall know them. You all see, without any reasoning from me, that it would seem strange, indeed, if God allowed the precepts of the Gospel to be trampled underfoot and then gave the same blessings to the rebellious as to the graciously obedient! It must not, shall not be! See we not, then, that our happiness from the things of God must come, not merely through knowledge, though that is the first stage of Divine Favorbut we must not rest satisfied until we pass into the second stagethe doing of what we have learned! We close with the question which the text naturally inspires   
III. WHAT IS THE HAPPINESS WHICH THIS PRACTICAL OBEDIENCE BRINGS?   
Briefly, it is always a blessed thing to be obedient to God. The very soul of joy to the creature who wants to be truly happy is conformity to the will of the Creator. When Gods will and ours keep pace together, it will be Heaven on earth to us! It is only when our will jars with the Divine mind that our souls happiness departs, but when we are helped to lay aside self and say from our inmost soul, Not my will, but Yours be done, and so come to be ruled and governed entirely by the Divine Mind, then shall we be in Paradise here below!   
Added to this, to increase our happiness if we do these things, we shall have the blessings promised to the doing thereof. We are no legalists. We do not believe in salvation by works, nor even in rewards given to men because of any merit on their part, but we do know that if Jesus says, He that believes shall be saved, then he that believes will get that salvation and this will be the blessing which he enjoys, and so with every other new Covenant blessing!   
Brothers and Sisters, there is a happiness here in practical Christianity and there is a happiness hereafter. In mere nominal Christianity there is no happiness. Look at some of your professors. They have got religion enough to make them miserable! Their attendance at church or chapel what is it but a bit of slavery? They would not go to church if they could help it, but they think it looks respectable. If they had their way and the force of custom were withdrawn, they would not be found among the worshippers! Look, I say, at many of them. The very sight of their Bible and Prayer Book seems to make their faces long and dismal at once. Prayeris that a pleasure to them? To sing Gods praiseis that a delight? No, far, far, far from it! And why is this? Because they have never, by Divine Grace, been led solemnly to trust in Jesus and earnestly to give themselves up to those Truths which only in their practical force and influence can make us happybut which in their mere theory are the letter which kills, and only in practice are they the spirit and life! Oh, that some of you church members would put in practice what you believe! Oh, Sirs, it is well enough to say that a Christian should be consistent, but if you are not honest in your business, how does your belief help you? It is well enough to say that a Christian should be godly, but if you are godless in your familiesif family prayer is neglected and private prayer given upwhat is the use of your beliefs, what the use of your perfect creeds? You may talk until doomsday about what you believe or what you do not believe, but it is that part of your belief which gets interwoven into the warp and woof of your daily life which affects your business, which really moves you, impels you, or restrains you according to whether you would do right or wrongit is this, it is this, it is this, and it is just this, only, that is worth having! Your dead religionit is a corpsebury it! Your living godliness, your vital godliness, the godliness that vitalizes you and makes you live unto God and His Truththis it is to be sought afterand may God in His mercy grant it to each one of us! If you know these things, happy are you if you do them.   
And so we come to a conclusion by noticing that if the text were read in another form, it would read very solemnly, If you know these things, unhappy, wretched, ruined are you if you do them not. I scarcely feel that I have either strength or will to enter upon the few sentences I meant to have uttered tonight. There are not many of you here who are ignorant of the Gospel. The most of this great assembly have read it and heard it, and if any should ask you, What is the way of eternal life, you could give them a very ready answer. And, thank God, there are not a few of you who have put into practice this Gospel! You have looked to Jesusyou are resting in Him. You can say, while confessing many imperfections, that you desire to walk in the ways of obedience to Him who has redeemed you with His blood.   
But, painful reflection! There are manyvery manyand you know who they arewho know these things, but do them not! Ten years ago they were greatly affected by a sermon and they vowed repentance. The season passed away and their conscience became crippledno good results came. Some time ago, at an earnest Prayer Meeting, they were again pricked in conscience, but this time they were not so wounded as before. And now, tonight, they are just what they have always been willing hearers, attentive hearers, kind friends to the Gospel in some respects, contributing towards any godly enterprise, but still they have not surrendered to God by believing in Christand so are still strangers to Him as the souls Savior. And I have to ask them tonight whether it shall always be so, and, if not always, then how long? How long halt you between two opinions? And if it is not to be long, why not end it tonight? Oh, blessed Spirit, they do know! It is not this they need, but they need to feel! They do not love! They do not believe! Oh, give them these, that they may not go down into Hell with the accumulated responsibilities of abundant Light. If I had not come and spoken to you, said Christ, you had been without sin, but now you have no cloak for your sin. Oh, the godly mothers of some of you will rise up against you to condemn you, for you knew these things, but you did them not! Some of you, your conscience will speak with a voice of thunderit will roar like a lion on you when God condemns you because you knew the Gospel and refused it you understood the way of salvation, but you would not walk therein! There is no place more terrible to be lost than from the shadow of a pulpit! The more plain the Gospel, the more sure your ruin if you reject it! The more earnest the ministry that comes to you with its notes of warning and invitation, the more horrible your overthrow if your ears refuse the words of Jehovahs love! Tonight, I pray youand I think I speak in Gods namecast in your lot with Christ and with Gods people! You are guilty, but He is gracious and delights to pardon! You feel unworthy, and you are, but Christ receives the most undeserving! Rely upon Him now. You have nothing else that will suffice. Oh, cast yourselves upon Him! Happy shall you be if you do this. Other doings without this were mere legalism and vain, but this is the great work, the master work, the God work, that you believe on Jesus Christ whom God has sent! Trust, then, in Him, and your peace shall be like a river and your righteousness like the waves of the sea. Trifle no longer! Listen no longer merely with the outward ear, but now decide that if there is an inner sense, you will find itif there is a secret Truth, you will hunt it out until you secure it.

If there is a living Christ to pardon you and make you snowy clean, resolve you will find Him! If there is a road to Heaven, determine to find and walk in it. And now farewell sin, farewell self-righteousness, farewell the shallow pleasures of this world! Jesus, take my heart just as it isI give it up to Youand help me to do now what I have never done beforeto put in practice what I hear, and carry out what I have been taught. So may God help you and we will meet in Heaven and we will say together there that this nights text was true, If you know these things, happy are you if you do them. God help you to do them, now, for Christs sake. Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **HEBREWS 11.**

First, a definition of faith.   
Verses 1-3. Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. There was no pre-existent matter. The world was made by Gods word, so that prior to the things which are seen, there existed that which is not seen. We, dear Friends, when we are trusting in the unseen God, are going back to first principleswe are getting to that which is the essence and the source of all. The next verse illustrates the worship of faith.   
4. By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he, being dead, yet speaks. There is no worshipping God aright except by faith. The most gorgeous ceremonies are as nothing in His sight! It is the faith of the heart which He accepts. Next we read of the reward of faith.   
5, 6. By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. See this reward thenit pleases Godand that is reward enough for anyone of us. Next see faiths safety.   
7. By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith. Faith can outlive a deluge which drowns the whole world! She has an Ark even when Gods wrath sweeps all the rest away! Next we learn the obedience of faith.   
8-10. By faith, Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed: and he went out, not knowing where he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: for he looked for a city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Here you have the expectation of faith. Faith does not live on things seenshe lives on something yet to come. That which is to come she regards as eternal, not like a mere tent in which she dwells here, but a city that has foundations, fixed and firm. Next we see the strength of faith, that strength seen in the deadness of nature.   
11-13. Through faith, also, Sara herself received strength to conceive seed and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised. Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable. These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar of, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. That is a rich word, they, embraced them. They were far off and yet faith brought them so near that they seemed to receive them to their hearts and feel the comfort of them! Next is the confession of faith.   
14-19. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from which they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared for them a city. By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only-begotten son, of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall your seed be called. Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from whence also he received him in a figure. Here you have the triumph of faith, one of the greatest victories that was ever achieved by faith, when a man was willing, at Gods command, to offer up his son, his only son, his son according to promise, his son in whom all the Covenant was to be fulfilled! In the 20th verse you get the discernment of faith, faith foreseeing   
20, 21. By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff. You remember his discernment, how he crossed his hands willingly that he might lay the right hand upon the younger son. Faith is always giving blessings to others and she knows which way to give them, for God makes her wondrous quick of heart and quick of eye.   
22, 23. By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel: and gave commandment concerning his bones. By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months by his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the kings commandment. Here is the courage of faith   
24, 25. By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaohs daughter: Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Here is the choice of faith  
26. Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. Here is the judgment of faith, by which she judges wisely, choosing rather to be reproached for Christ than to reign with the world.   
27, 28. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing Him who is invisible. Through faith he kept the Passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest He that destroyed the first-born should touch them. Here, again, you have the obedience of faith, taking Gods precepts and carrying them out.   
29. By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned. There you have the difference between faith and presumptionfaith goes through the sea. Presumption is drowned in the sea.   
30. By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days. Here are the weapons of faith, the warfare of faith, with nothing but her rams horn trumpet she encompasses the giant walls of the city and down they fall!   
31. By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not when she had received the spies with peace. Here you have faith uniting itself with the people of Godshe perished not with them that believed not, for she had come out from among them and allied herself with the people of God by receiving the spies.   
32-35. And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae: of David, also, and Samuel, and of the Prophets: Who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, grew valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not excepting deliverance: that they might obtain a better resurrection. Oh the victories of faith! When faith takes to working, how mightily she works.   
36, 37. And others had trial of cruel mocking and scourging, yes, moreover of bonds and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented. You have seen the works of faith and the sufferings of faithnow you see Gods estimate of faith. He counts the believing man to be far beyond the rest of mankind!   
38, 39. (Of whom the world was not worthy). They wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. All these all having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise. It lay in the future to them far more than it does to us, for Christ has now come and we look back to that glorious appearing of our Lord and Savior, but they had altogether to look forward.   
40. God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect. For it never was Gods intention that any part of His Church should be able to do without the rest of it, so that those who lived before the time of Christ cannot do without usneither can we do without them.

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ON HIS BREAST   
NO. 2052

**INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS DAY, NOVEMBER 18, 1888, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Now there was leaning on Jesus bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom He spoke. He then lying on Jesus breast said unto Him, Lord, who is it? Jesus answered, He it is to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon.   
John 13: 23-26.**

PICTURE the Lord and His Apostles at the holy Supper. A world of interest centers here. Two figures, strangely different, met in this scene met, shortly afterwards to part and never to meet again. To look upon them, they seemed equally disciples of Jesus and from the position which one of them occupied, as leaning on the Lords bosom and the other as the treasurer of the Masters little store, they seemed to be equally trusted and honored followers of the great Lord. You might not have known, by mere sight, which was the better man of the twoJohn or Judas.

Most probably you would have preferred the gentle manners of John. But I should supposefor our Lord never chose a man to an office unless he had some qualificationyou would also have admired the calm prudence of Judas and his quiet business tact. No doubt you would have thought that he made an excellent treasurer and you would have been glad that your Master, with so little to spare, had lighted upon so vigilant a guard and so prudent a manager. They sat at the same table, engaged in the same exercises and looked much the same kind of men. None of us would have guessed that one of them was John the Divine and the other was Judas the devil.

One of them was the seer of the Apocalypse, the other was the son of perdition. No doubt there are strange mixtures of character in this very house tonight. There will come to this Table the disciple whom Jesus loves. Him we will welcome, saying, Come in, you blessed of the Lord. Alas, there may come here a son of perdition. Him we cannot chase away, for we cannot read his heart. For a time both may act and even feel alike. They may even wear well for years. Apparently they may be equally sincere. And yet the day will come when to the right, in his love and his integrity, the faithful disciple will wend his way up to his Masters bosom forever.

And to the left, the hypocrite will go to his dreadful end and to that Hell which must receive such traitors as he. There is something very solemn about this meeting of such strangely different characters in one common act and in the society of the same Divine Lord. John is here. Is Judas here? Let the question be started and passed round, Lord, is it I? He is the least likely to be the traitor who is nearest to his Lords heart. He who

occupies such a place as John did is not the betrayer. Oh that we might be fired with a loving ambition to be the disciple whom Jesus loved, leaning on Jesus bosom!

For then, though we ask the question, Lord, is it I? it will not linger long upon our hearts. For His love, shed abroad within them, shall answer every question of self-examination and we shall cry, Lord, You know all things, You know that I love You. Let that stand as an introduction. Glance at yourself and your Brethren at the table and sayHow far shall we be like our Lord and the twelve? Will Peter and James and John and Judas all live over again in the assembly of tonight for the breaking of bread? And now our remarks will be very simple.

I. And the first is thisSOME DISCIPLES ARE SPECIALLY LOVED OF THEIR LORD. We believe in the doctrine of election but the principle of election goes to be carried farther than some suppose. There is an election in the midst of the election and another within that. The wider circle contains the inner and a still more select circle forms the innermost ring of all. The Lord had a people around Him who were His disciples. Within them He had twelve. Within the twelve He had three. Within the three He had one disciple whom He loved. And I suppose that what took place around His blessed Person on earth takes place on a larger scale around His adorable Person which is the center of His Church both militant and triumphant.

Probably our Lords attachment to John was partly a human one. And so far as it were human, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now after the flesh we know Him no more. Any merely human affection which our Lord Jesus bore for John may have passed away. There may, also, have been such affection in Jesus toward John as there would be in any eminent Christian towards another Christly Believerin anyone whom the Lord made to be a leader of His Church, towards such-andsuch a member of that Church in whom He could see most of the lovely characteristics of Himself. I cannot but think that it was so.

But it strikes me that our Lord Jesus loved John in some measure more than the rest, in the entirety of His character, as Jesus Christ, the Son of God as well as the Son of Man. We know that He loved all His disciples. For when my Brother read the chapter just now, how like music did those words sound, Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end! He loved not some of His own. But all of them. He loved all His own then and He loves all His own now. There is infinite love in the heart of Jesus towards all His people. And if there are any degrees in that love, yet the lowest degree is inconceivably great.

The very least member of the Divine family may say, He loved me and gave Himself for me. He loves us beyond all human expression. Beyond all human conception. The great heart of the eternal Father, the great heart of the eternal Son, the great heart of the ever-blessed Spirit, the great heart of the Trinity in unity, beats with lovewith love to all the elect, to all the redeemed, to all the called, to all the sanctified people of God. We are quite sure of this. Yet that love has this difference about it, that it is more enjoyed by some on earth than by others.

It is clear, as a matter of fact, that the Divine Love is manifested to some more clearly than to others. My beloved Brethren, you must know this to be the case. For there are those among us who walk with God, who enjoy the light of Jehovahs countenance, at all times. Who, if depressed, have the art of rolling their burden upon the Lord and soon are delivered from it. You know them, they are the Brethren who feel like singing all the while, for Jesus is their Friend, and they rejoice in Him. There was one in the Old Testament who was called a man greatly beloved, and there are Daniels on earth even now. Christ has among women still His Marys, whom He loves. He loved Martha, too. But still there was a special place for Mary.

Jesus has still His Johns, whom He peculiarly loves. He loves Peter and Nicodemus and Nathanael and all of them. But still, there are some who know His love more than others, live in it more than others, drink of it more than others, reflect it more than others and become more conformed to it and saturated with it and perfumed with it, than others are. There are first as well as last. All may be of Israel but all the tribes are not Judah and in Judah all the men are not Davids. Who shall deny that there are degrees in Divine Grace? Have we not among us babes and young men and fathers? Have we not first the blade, then the ear and then the full corn in the ear? It is so.

And though I will not argue for degrees in Heaven and, indeed, deprecate the spirit in which the doctrine of degrees in Gory is often set forth, yet we are sure, for we see it with our eyes, that there are degrees of Divine Grace and especially degrees in the enjoyment of the love of Jesus. Among those who do really love their Lord and are really loved by Him, one star differs from another in the glory of that love.

Why was John made that disciple whom Jesus loved? Certainly it was not because he was naturally higher in rank than the others, for he was a fisherman, like the most of them. And James was certainly equal in birth, for he was his brother. Our blessed Lord did not love John because of any excess of talentalbeit that Johns Apocalypse and his Gospel are, in some respects, the highest parts of revealed Scripture, being both the simplest and the most mysterious portions of Holy Writ. Yet we should not say that John betrayed evidence of so great a mind in itself, naturally, or by education, as Paul had.

He had as much talent as His Lord gave him but there was nothing about him so special that he should for that cause have been loved. And to dismiss the thought with a word, Jesus never loves men on account of talent and we should be unwise if we ourselves did so. These things are external to the man. Our Lord loved John, especially, for a better reason than that. Why did our blessed Lord love John better than others? I can only reply that He exercises a sovereignty of choice and it is not for us to ask the why and wherefore of the movements of the sacred heart. Surely, nothing should be left so free as the love of the Son of God. Let Him love whom He wills. He has an unquestionable right to do so.

But if we venture reverently to look into the familiar love of Jesus, we shall not fail to see that there was about John, through Divine Grace, a most loving spirit. Men love those that are like they and Jesus, as Man, loved John because the processes of Grace had developed in John the image of Jesus. John, like his Lord, had much love. He may have lacked some qualities in which Peter and James and others excelled but he towered above them all in love. He was full of tenderness, and therefore, his Master at once selected him to be His choicest companion and His dearest friend. You know the way, then, to the heart of Christlet your own heart be full of love and you will know His love. He loves you, you know, altogether apart from anything that is in you, of His own rich and Sovereign Grace.

But for the special manifestation of that love, for your personal enjoyment of it, to fit you for such enjoyment, you must have much love to Him. You greatly need, not a great head, but a great heart. You must have, not more knowledge, but more affection. Not a higher rank in society, but a higher rank in the power to love Jesus and to love your fellow men. Less of self, and more of Jesus and then you shall enjoy more of His love. This being the case, that John had this loving spirit and our Lord Jesus Christ loved him more than others, it led on to the fact that John was the recipient of confidences from Christ which others had not.

I will show you that farther on. But certainly it seems to me that John was made by Jesus His executor and He left him in His will all His earthly possessions. You will say to me, And pray what possessions had the Master? Well, He had one possession of which He was very fond and He could not die until He had disposed by His last will and testament of that one earthly possession. It was His mother. He loved her and must care for her. And there passed a little word, a kind of sign, between Him and John at the last moment. Do not think that John would have understood what Jesus meant when He saidWoman, behold your son, and, Son, behold your mother! if there had not been a quiet talk about that matter some time before.

But Jesus, I doubt not, had told John that the only earthly care He had, as Man, was that while He was away slumbering in the grave He would have his mother cared for. And so He left her in Johns charge. If you love Jesus Christ very much He will leave something in your charge, depend upon that. And the more you love Him, the more will He trust you with some loving commission which He would not trust with anybody else. I have known Him leave a dear child of His, some dear old saint, for a favored Believer to look after, whom he never would have had to look after if Jesus had not saidI love this dear old saint and I shall commit himI shall commit herto the custody of such a one, because he loves Me and he will take care of this poor one for My sake.

Some of you have nobody to care for. Little know you of Christs trustfulness towards youHe has not trusted you with anything. Do you not grieve to think that you lack this token of His special love? As sure as ever there is any intimate love between Jesus and any soul, He trusts that soul with something to be done, to be endured, to be guarded, to be mourned over, or in some way to become a sacred trust. Thus love has occupation, proof, and expression, and this she ever longs for. I know my Master loves me and I rejoice in His love. And sometimes, when I think of this great Church and the College and the Orphanage and the many cares the whole service brings into my heart, I have said, Have I begotten all this multitude, that I should carry all of them in my bosom and bear their griefs and be troubled with their troubles? and the answer has always seemed to come to me, You love Me and I trust you to look after these souls, to help them and care for them, for My sake.

It is so with you that have classes to look after, or families to care for attend to them, for Jesus sake. If it is only one little one, hear Jesus say, Take this child and nurse it for Me and I will give you your wages. You have a charge, each one. And if you have none, I should be afraid you may be Judas, for I cannot think you are John. Had there been the love between you and the Lord which existed between John and Jesus, Jesus would have whispered into your ear about somebody of whom He would say, Care for him. Care for him for MY sake. And you would have answered, Lord, that I willthe more You give to me to do for You, the more happy will I be, because I love You and because this trust proves that You do love me.

There is the first headwe perceive Jesus loves some of His disciples more than others.   
II. Now, secondly, we note that THE BELOVED ONES COUNT THIS TO BE THEIR GREATEST HONOR. This is evidently in the text. For John, who wrote these words, called himself, one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved. And I think three times besides he speaks of himself as that disciple whom Jesus loved. He took his name from his Lords love, which he evidently counted to be his greatest honor. This was Johns most notable title. As a servant of the Queen, having distinguished himself in the service of Her Majesty, becomes the lord of such-and-such a town and he takes the name of the place as a name of honor, so John drops his own birth-given name, as it were, and takes this title insteadthat disciple whom Jesus loves.   
He wears it as a Knight of the Garter, or of the Golden Fleece, wears the mark of his Sovereigns esteem. He took it for his honor. And yet, Beloved, there was not a grain of boasting in it, nor even an approach to glorying in the flesh. A sense of love makes us happy but not haughty. How can I proudly boast that Jesus loves me? If you are loved of Him, you will feel that you so little merit itindeed, that you so altogether demerit itthat you will be amazed to think that He loves you and it will never enter into your head that His love is your due. You will take the title of love but you will give the honor back to Jesus and often you will say   
*And when I shall die,   
Receive me, Ill cry,   
For Jesus has loved me,   
I cannot tell why.*   
You will not be able to tell why the Lord loves you so. This will be the wonder of eternity. But there will be no pride in the experience of being dear to the Lord, nor anything to excite self-laudation. You will feel that it would be a wicked thing to deny His matchless love but yet you will not carnally triumph over others because of it. There would be pride in the affectation of a modesty which would doubt the love of Jesus but there is no pride in the reception of that love, since you yourself are so evidently, so conspicuously undeserving, that no one will dream that Jesus could have loved you because there was anything good in you.  
Now, had John been proud, he would have altered the title thus. He would have said, That disciple who loved Jesus. This would have been true, though not modest. There was, as far as his heart was capable of it, a reciprocity of love between John and Jesus. If Jesus loved him, he loved Jesus. But John never called himself, That disciple who loved Jesus. No, for he felt as if his own love were altogether unworthy of mention in the presence of the love of Jesus.   
Then notice also, as if to show us that there was no pride in taking the title, that he does not say, John was the disciple whom Jesus loved. We gather from other facts that it was John. All the traditions and beliefs of the early Church went to testify that it was John. We have not, any of us, any doubt about the fact that it was John. It has, as it were, leaked out. But John nowhere says that he was the man. All that he has said is, That disciple whom Jesus loved. And thus he makes the love more conspicuous than the person who received it. We know that it must have been John for many reasons. But still he does not say so. He hides John behind the love of Jesus, which proves that John gloried in the love of Christ but did not boast of it egotistically.   
Bengel tells us that Johns name means the love of Jehovah. If you look at Crudens translation, in the list of the meanings of names in the Concordance, he puts it the Grace of God, the grace of Jehovah. Bengel reads it the love of the Lordso John just altered the name a little and paraphrased it when he wrote, whom Jesus loved. It would go into shorter compass if he put it in the Hebrew and would need but little alteration. Sometimes when men succeed to estates, it is a condition that they shall change their namesin this case the name was very little altered from the loved one of God into the loved one of Jesus Christ. And there is no alteration (is there?) in the real meaning of it. When he said, That disciple whom Jesus loved, it was John written large. That is all.   
It was John a little altered under the New Testament dispensation, the old name sweetened and perfumed by bringing it near to the sweeter name of Jesus Christ his Lord. So precious has its nearness to Jesus made it, that perhaps next to the name of Jesus no name is sweeter than that of John. As Ivan, or Evan, it has a most evangelical, Gospel, sound. It is common in many forms throughout Christendom and many of the noblest disciples have worn it, from John Chrysostom to John Calvin and from John Bunyan to John Wesley and John Newton. In any case the honor of being loved by Jesus is greater than the name John. And happy are they who can claim it!   
There are some, then, whom Jesus loves more than others and these men always count that love to be their highest honor.  
III. A step farther. A third remarkthat THIS SPECIAL LOVE BRINGS SUCH MEN SPECIAL PRIVILEGES. It brought to John the first privilege of being very near to Jesus, his Lord. At that supper he was nearest to the place which Jesus occupied. You know they lay along at the supper somewhat in this fashionleaning upon the left arm, so as to have the right with which to help themselves to each dish. Now John lay here and Jesus Christ lay just thereso that, when John turned a little backward there was the bosom of Jesus for him to put his head upon. And I suppose that when John asked the question, Lord, who is it? he turned his head over and said into his very ear, Lord, who is it?   
Nobody heard what he said. It was just whispered into the ear of his Lord when his head was in that sacred bosom. And the answer was not heard by anybody except John. But his position of being nearest was brought about by his being best loved. He was nearest in fellowship because dearest in love. Now, Beloved, if you are best loved by Christ, you live nearest to Him. I am sure of it. If you love Him best and He loves you best, you will be more in prayer than others. You will spend more time alone with Jesus than other Christians do. You will abound in petition and praise. You will read His Word with greater diligence. You will drink it in with greater delight.   
You will live for Him, too, with greater consecration. Your whole time will be spent in His company. When you are at your work in the house, or the field, or the shop, you will still be with Him. If you are better loved than others, your daily song will be  
*The day is dark, the night is long,   
Unblest with thoughts of You,   
And dull to me the sweetest song,   
Unless its theme be You.*   
He feeds among the lilies, and keeps near the pure in heart. Our WellBeloveds delights are with those who delight in Him. You will be close to Jesus if you are dear to Him. The two things go together. If you are living far away in the cold regions of broken fellowship, then I am sure you have but very little conscious enjoyment of the love of Jesus Christ your Lord. The dearest must be the nearest. That is the first privilege.

The second was the privilege of using and receiving tokens of endearment. He leaned his head on Jesus bosom, looking up into His face. And Jesus looked down on him. There was mutual endearment, for Jesus loved Him and he loved Jesus. And that night, when the blessed Master was in trouble, He wanted His friend with Him and felt a need for John, though he could not help Him much. Jesus felt a need of Johns society and sympathy and it made Christs bosom all the easier to have Johns beloved head on it. As for John, it must have been a Heaven below to be thus in the bosom of his Lord. He mentions it three times, you seetwice in this passage and once in the last chapter of his Gospel, where there was no necessity for mentioning it.   
He had such a remembrance of his head having once been laid on his Lords breast, that he must put it in when he is speaking about Peter and himself. He says, The disciple which also leaned on His breast at supper and said, Lord, which is he that betrays you? He must needs repeat the charming fact, for it was such a delight to him. O Beloved, we cannot now touch the bosom of Jesus after the flesh, for He is gone up on high. But there are still most sweet endearments of spirit between the Lord Jesus and His loving disciples. I must not tell abroad the secrets of love, for these things are for those that know them and not for all comers. Choice passages between true hearts are not to be published in the street, lest they become the theme of ridicule.   
Pearls are not to be cast before swine. But believe me, at this moment we have, or at least we can have, such intimate enjoyment of the love of Jesus, that even if He were here and we could lean our heads upon His bosom, the endearment could not be more certain, more sweet, or more ravishing to our delighted souls. In very truth we have fellowship with Jesus and that fellowship is no dream or fancy. We speak no fiction, neither do we repeat what others have experienced but we speak of things which we have personally enjoyed. And we know that there is an intimate communion which is one of the private privileges of those whom Jesus loves much, for it has been our privilege. I hope very many of you know this choice blessing of living in the immediate enjoyment of your Saviors love. May you never lose it!   
Then is there a third benefit, not only of nearness and endearment but of confidence towards the Lord. For it was a bold thing, surely, for John to lean his head on Christs bosom. Our Lord did not say, No, John. No. I am your Master and your Lord. Do you do this to Me as if I were your equal? No. The meaning of that blessed text, Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out, runs in other directions besides that which we generally think of. If you come to Jesus in the most intense manner, He will not repulse you. If your head shall come into His bosom, He will not cast your head out. If you can get your very heart into His heart and come closer to Him than even John dared to doif you carry that coming beyond all previous comingsyet Jesus neither will, nor can, resent the nearest approaches of anyone of His believing people.   
We lose a great deal of Christs loving fellowship because we are so formal and distant towards Him. We seem to think that He came among men to show them their distance from God and not to be as a Brother to them, to reveal God to them. Jesus seeks to reach our hearts, He stoops to our littleness. Let us pluck up courage to draw near to Him. Well does our hymn put it  
*Let us be simple with Him, then,   
Not backward, stiff, or cold;   
As though our Bethlehem could be   
What Sinai was of old.*   
Lean on him. Lean on the bosom of the Christ of God who loves us and has given Himself for us. Make a confidant as well as a confidence of your Lord. Put all the weight of your care, all the weight of your whole self, and all that concerns you upon Him and then recline with delight upon His bosom.   
There was a gracious confidence given to John, which he rightly used towards his Lord. Surely there was a great liberty given to him. Some would have said he took a liberty in thus leaning where no head of king or emperor might aspire to rise. He was the most honored of all human beings. But surely he took great liberties. No, he did not, for the Lord Himself gave him access with boldness. Great love has privileges which make her boldest advances no intrusion. Love has the key of all the rooms of the Fathers house. Love has the range of Paradise. Love may read the very heart of God. Love may come where she wills and go unchallenged.   
John said to our Savior, Lord, who is it? Jesus looked down at him and said, as if He did not want the others to know at all, He it is to whom I shall give a sop. He had just to watch a little while. I do not know but it is not improbable that Judas was next at the tableJohn here, then Jesus and then Judas. Very likely Judas was pretty close to the Lord. For if a man has your purse you want him near you, so as to tell him what you wish to have done with the money. So, when Jesus just turned over and gave a sop to Judas, John knew the meaning of the act. Judas had had his conscience disturbed, I should think, by the utterance of the Savior, when He said, He that eats bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me, and by the question of each of the others, Lord, is it I?   
Judas himself asked that question for a time. But he grew calm again and became reassured and thought he should not be found out. Then the Lord dipped a piece of meat, according to the Oriental custom, in the sauce of the dish and passed it to him. Even then Judas possibly thought, This is an act of great friendship. He evidently has the utmost confidence in me and has not found me out. Little did he know that the sop was the token of the discovered traitor. Then Judas said, Lord, is it I? thinking he should get a pleasant answer, but Jesus answered that it was even he and added, What you do, do quickly. There that matter ended. But John was thus the recipient of friendly confidence on the part of Christhe told to Jesus his heart and Jesus told him His heart. He had liberty to go to Christ.   
Ah, Brethren! Do you ever feel in prayer as if you were tied up and could not pray? The best of saints will be bound about some things. People come and ask you to pray for this and pray for that. But you cannot so pray unless you have liberty from the Throne. If God gives the prayer of faith, you can pray itbut you cannot pray that prayer at your own will. He that can most often pray the prayer of faith, he that can see farthest into Christs mysteries, he that can read the riddles of this Divine Samson, is the man whose heart loves Jesus best and whose head lies most in the bosom of his Lord. Be sure of thisif you love much, you shall know the secret of the Lordfor it is with them that fear Him He will show His Covenant.   
Now a step farther and a very little more and we have done. This creates special knowledge. I merely give it as a head to help your memories, for I have already dwelt upon it as a matter of fact. The special privileges of love lead on to a special knowledge of Christ. I do not think that any other Evangelist notices Christs emotion at the supper in the matter of His spirit as John has done. He writes, When Jesus had thus said, He was troubled in spirit, and so on. John was so close to the Lord, with his head on His breast, that he could tell, by the heaving of His bosom, that he was troubled. The mind of God is not so revealed to any man now that he can set up to foretell the future like a Prophet. But, mark you, the choice ones among the saints have intimations of the mind of God about many things.   
Those who live at court can often foresee the kings movements when others cannot. It is my firm conviction that favored Believers have tokens, warnings and hints from above. Did not the Lord say, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do? Even the choicest spirits may not understand the Lords meaning all at once. But if any man can read anything of the future, it is he that puts his head where all eyes grow clear and all hearts become pure, even upon the breast of Jesus. Oh, to know Christ! The day will come when the saints of God who are great classics, mathematicians, or astronomersand there have been godly men skilled in all the sciencesthe day, I say, shall come when these will count all they know of science to be of little worth compared with the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus their Lord.   
Brethren, we value knowledge, culture, science. But when we put them at their highest market price, what are they as compared with the knowledge of Jesus? This is my one ambitionthat I may know Him and may comprehend with all saints what are the heights and depths and lengths and breadths and know the love of Christ which passes knowledge. If you love your Lord, you shall know of His doctrine. If you live near Him, you shall understand His feelings. If His secret is with you, you shall know what Prophets and kings desired to know and what angels desire to look into. The Lord bless you and bring each one of you who are His people into this happy condition.   
I have done, when I notice two things. The first is thisthat the favored position which John occupied did not screen him from the necessity of asking the question, Lord, is it I? There really was no suspicion of him, nor any reason for such suspicion. But his heart was in a right state and, therefore, he felt it necessary to say, Lord, is it I? as well as any of the rest. And I make this remark because the very persons who do not say, Lord, is it I? are those who ought to say it. If you are enjoying more of Gods love tonight than ever you did in your life, yet do not profess to have climbed above the need of self-examination, when the question comes, Are you really one of His? do not chase it away, as if it were an impertinence?   
Entertain the enquiry till you can satisfy it with a sufficient answer. Some professors can afford to sneer at holy anxiety. May I never be of their number! I have heard them ridicule the question

*Do I love the Lord or no?   
Am I His, or am I not?*   
Now, I do not hesitate to say that every man who loves the Lord has had to ask that question. And has had to ask it all the more because the truth and fervency of his love have made him jealous of himself. He has such an overwhelming sense of what his love ought to be and he has such a consciousness of shortcoming, that he is quite sure to say, Do I love the Lord? It is not your bold talker that is your true lover after all. There is a confidence which is fatal   
*He who never doubted of his state,   
He mayperhaps he may too late.*   
If you say, I am rich and increased in goods and have need of nothing, while you are naked and poor and miserable, it will be a sad deception and the awakening out of it will be sadder still. But if you say, Oh that I loved my Redeemer more! Oh that I served Him better! But I do love Him. My heart is His and He does love me, then you have answered the question of, Lord, is it I? and you may go your way contented.   
The other remark, with which I finish, is thisthat Johns nearness to Christ did not authorize him to make answer to his fellow disciples, nor to judge any of them. Time was when John might have sat in judgment over them. Did he not desire to sit upon a throne judging the twelve tribes of Israel with his brother James? But now that he has his head in his Lords bosom, he is not anxious to judge, but far otherwise. His Brethren keep asking, Lord, is it I? Peter makes signs to him. Fishermen have ways of their own of talking to one another. Peter seems to say, without the use of words, Pray ask the Master. John does not presume to make a guess as to the traitors name but he softly says, Lord, who is it? He asked that question of his Lord. But he did not himself pitch upon Judas.   
No, he might, perhaps, have laid his suspicions upon someone else who would have been innocent. It was wise to refer the matter to the Lord. Some say that they live very near to Jesus. It is an evil sign when men speak of their own attainments. These are the people who, in the next breath, begin to condemn others. But this is not after the manner of the beloved John. Some professors affirm that they are going to have a particularly fine place in Glory, all by themselves. I do not quite understand their theory but I am sure I do not grudge any of my Masters servants any special honor they may desire. As far as I understand them, there is to be a separate place in the kingdom for them, and we poor, ordinary Christians are to be savedbut we must take a lower room. So let it be. We will rejoice in the promotion of our Brethren.   
As for myself, if it should ever come to pass that I should have the privilege of living in some first avenue in Heaven among the aristocracy of the skies, I think I should prefer another quarter. I have kept company on earth with such a poor lot of Brethren and I have learned to love them so well that I would rather abide with them in their inferior Heaven than rise with the cream of the cream into the upper places. I like to be with Gods people of the poorer class and of the more struggling and afflicted sort. I like to be with Gods people who wrestle hard with sins and doubts and fears. If I get spoken to by my very superior Brethren, I find that I have very little pleasant fellowship with them, for I know nothing about their wonderful experience of freedom from conflict and complete deliverance from every evil tendency.   
I have never won an inch of the way to Heaven without fighting for it. I have never lived a day but I have had to sorrow over my imperfections. I sometimes get near to God but at that time I weep most about my faults and failings. Although I have thus spoken after the manner of men, I do not believe in these superior beings, nor in their superior Heavenbut even if I did, I would sooner follow with the flock than run ahead with the greyhounds.   
These Brethren judge us and condemn us. They say that we do not understand the mystery of the kingdom, or something or other. We know Jesus Christ, howeverboth theirs and ours. We will not deny their piety and grace but bless God that they have so much of them. We hope, however, to get to Heaven the same as they and into Glory the same as they. And we will be glad if so the Lord will enable us. Do you find the spirit of self-exaltation and of condemning others coming over you at times? Conquer it at once by the Holy Spirits power. Let us cease to judge where we are forbidden to do so. Let us contend earnestly for the Truth of Godbut as to the hearts of menlet us leave that to Jesus.   
I close by sayingyou remember what Jesus said to Peter? Peter was always a little too fast and he therefore ventured to peer into things which did not concern him and so he said to Jesus, as he looked at John, Lord and what shall this man do? He did not think badly of Brother JohnI should have been ashamed of Peter if he had done so. But still he said, What shall this man do? Our blessed Lord replied to him, What is that to you? Follow you Me. So, when you feel inclined, because you are growing in Divine Grace and becoming somebody, to say, Lord and what shall this poor member do? And what shall this imperfect Brother be? What shall that poor, blundering new convert do?remember the words of JesusWhat is that to you? Follow you Me.   
Mind your Master and mind yourself and let your Brethren stand or fall to their own Lord, as you must. Now, come and lay your head in your Lords bosom and never mind Peter. May God bless you, for Christs sake!

LETTER FROM C.H. SPURGEON Westwood, November 13, 1888.

BELOVED FRIENDSAfter a great fight of afflictions, I have had sufficient rest from pain to enjoy the revision of this sermon, concerning which I will only say that it was sweet in the studying, sweet in the preaching and sweet in the preparation for the presssweet, I mean, to my own heart. May it be as refreshing to every reader!

May I beg the personal favor of the prayers of my Brethren? I am very weak. If the Lord will, I would like to journey to my place of restbut pray rather that God may be glorified in my sickness and it will suffice me.

Your suffering brother,   
*C. H. SPURGEON.*   
Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307  
Sermon #612 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

JESUS WASHING HIS DISCIPLES FEET   
NO. 612

**DELIVERED ON SUNDAY MORNING, JANUARY 29, 1865, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Then He came to Simon Peter: and Peter said unto Him, Lord, do You wash my feet?   
John 13:6.**

OUR Savior had so steadfastly set His face towards the awful sufferings of His passion that when they actually approached He was not in the slightest degree disturbed or disconcerted. If you were perfectly aware that tomorrow morning, after a night of terrible agony, you would be led forth to a cruel and ignominious death you would probably feel like men distracted with terrible apprehensions. At any rate, if through Divine Grace you were able to be calm and peaceful, your mind would scarcely be in a fit state to minister consolation to others, or to conceive new methods of instruction for your friends.

But behold your Lord and Master! It is eventide of the same night in which He was betrayed. He foreknows that the bloody sweat within an hour or two will crimson all His flesh. He is well aware that he who is eating bread with Him will that night betray Him. He foresees that He must feel the Roman scourge and be the victim of Jewish slander. He knows right well that He must bear all the wrath of God on the behalf of His people. And yet He sits at supper. He feasts as if no unusual cloud were lowering. And when the supper is over His inventive mind is fully at work with admirable plans of instruction for His disciples and among the rest He takes off His upper garment.

He wraps Himself about the loins with a towel. He goes to them as they are reclining at full length around the table and coming behind them He begins to wash the feet of first one, and then another! What blessed calmness of mind! What hallowed serenity of spirit! O that our hearts were equally fixed on God in our days of trial and grief! Without question we may go further and take most solemn notice that there was in the near approach of death a joy in Jesus heart into which no stranger could enter.

Now was about to be accomplished that which He had longed for. Did He not say, I have a Baptism to be baptized with and how am I straitened till it is accomplished. With desire have I desired to eat this Passover with you before I die? Did this account for His giving out a hymn of praise on that doleful night? After supper they sang a hymn. Did that account for His adding these remarkable wordsNow is the Son of Man glorified and God is glorified in Him? Did His joy in the prospect of what He was about to accomplish for His people swell to the very highest just about the time when the fountains of the depths of His griefs were about to be broken up and His spirit to be flooded in agony as He cried, My soul is exceedingly

sorrowful, even unto death?

O to know His joythe joy of loving even unto death! Let us come at once to the teaching of the Savior and let it be surrounded with an unusual interest because of the fact that it is His dying teaching. Let us see Him as He girds Himself with the towel, remembering that He was soon to be girt with the bands of death! Let us see Him, I say, with a more profound interest because He is just upon the verge of these terrible depths where all the waves and billows of Jehovahs justice dashed over Him.

His sermon beginning, Let not your heart be troubled, is His swan song. These are the last drops of His life that He is now spendingat the supper table you have the wine which He keeps until now. As we see Him washing His disciples feet we shall discover choice love worthy of the last solemn hour of departure. We shall take the text in four ways. First here is matter for enquiry, Lord, do You wash my feet? Secondly, here is matter for admirationLord, do You wash my feet? Thirdly, here is matter for gratitude. Fourthly, here is matter for imitation.

I. HERE IS MATTER FOR ENQUIRY. We know that the Savior washed the feet of Peter, but does He wash our feet, also? We do not expect, of course, the literal transaction to take place. But is there anything in the conduct of Christ now analogous to His washing Peters feet when on earth? He has washed all Believers, once and for all, in His most precious blood.

But of this we do not speak this morning. Cleansing, as before the bar of justice, is completely accomplished forever for all the chosen by the great blood-shedding upon Calvary. That is a matter of the pasta thing for which to bless God for all eternity. We are clean, through Jesus blood we are clean. But here is another kind of washingnot of the entire man, but of the feet only. Not with blood, but with waternot in the fountain filled from the Saviors veinsbut in a basin filled with water. Does our Lord Jesus do anything of this kind now? Doe He do anything so humbling to Himself and yet so needful for us?

We answer, yes, He does. And, first, does not the Savior perform an action parallel with this when He watches over the temporal affairs of His people? You know, Beloved, that not a hair of your head falls to the ground without His care. In all your afflictions He is afflicted, and as the Angel of Gods Presence, He saves you and carries you. Your most trifling trouble may be taken in prayer to Christ and spread before Him with as much certainty of deliverance as when Hezekiah spread Sennacheribs letter before the Lordfor Jesus waits to be gracious to His own. In every transaction we should adore the providential care of our great Shepherd and Friend for the government is upon His shoulders.

Now, when Jesus thus superintends your mean affairs, looks to your family troubles and bears your household cares, saying unto you, Cast all your care on Me, for I care for you, is He not, in effect, doing for you what He did for Peter? Is He not washing your feetfor He is caring for your lowest part and minding the poor dust-stained body. O King of Glory, the stars would not make a crown worthy of You! The tempest is but a poor chariot for Your Glory and the winds are but slow coursers to be harnessed to Your cart. And yet You stoop from all this greatness to observe man, who is less than a worm! To observe meless than the least of all Your saintsand to care for me as a mother cares for her child!

It is even so! He does do itHe does, in this sense, wash His peoples feet! When Jesus Christ puts away from us day by day our daily infirmities and sins, does He not wash our feet? Last night, when you bowed the knee, you could not help confessing that there had been much in the weeks transactions which was not worthy of your standing and profession. And even tonight, when the engagements of this day are over, you will have to mourn that you foolishly committed the very sins which you repented of weeks ago.

You will have to admit that you have fallen again into the very sloughs of folly and sin from which special Grace delivered you long ago. And yet Jesus Christ will have great patience with you! He will hear your confession of sin! He will say, I will, be you clean. He will again apply the blood of sprinklingHe will speak peace to your conscience and remove every spot. Oh, it is a great act of eternal love when Christ, once and for all absolves the sinner, takes him from under the dominion of the Law and puts him into the family of God! But what long-suffering and patience there is when the Savior, with much long-suffering, bears the daily follies of the recipient of so much mercy! Day by day and hour by hour He puts away the constant sin of the erring but yet beloved child!

To dry up a flood of sin is something marvelousbut to endure the constant dropping of daily sinsto bear with that constant weary trying of patience, this is Divine, indeed! To blot out the whole of sin like a thick cloud is a great and matchless power, as well as Gracebut to remove the mist of every morning and the damp of every nightoh, this is condescension! I wish I could describe itit is condescension well imaged in the washing of Peters feet. Consider again. Our poor prayers which are very much the feet of our soulsince with them we climb to Heaven, with them we run after Godour poor prayers always need washing!

It is oftentimes easier, Brothers and Sisters, to do a thing over at once than it is to mend and patch up a work which has been badly done by others. Then what patience it must require in Christs case to take my poor, imperfect and polluted prayers and make them fit to be presented before His Fathers face! There are His own prayers for meI thank Him for themfor they prevail. But I cannot help also blessing Him that He should take my prayers and put them into the censer and offer them before His Fathers facefor I am certain that before they can have been fit to offer they must have experienced a deal of washing.

John tells us that He offers the prayers of saintsthis is humbling Himself, indeed! Oh, how much of redundancy must have been taken away from our petitions when we have asked for what we ought not to have desired! How much of omission must have been made up when we have forgotten to ask for the things which we most needed! How much of unbelief He must take out of our prayers! How much coldness, deadness of heart! How much formality, wandering of thought! O how much holy life and unction, holy faith and holy joy, must the dear Redeemer infuse into

our supplications before they are fit to come up before the ears of the Lord God of Hosts! Yes, in patiently bearing with my prayers He does daily wash my feet.

Think again. Jesus makes our works acceptable. These may be compared to the souls feet. It is by the feet that a man expresses his activity the walk of a Christianby this we mean the good works which the Christian performs for his Master. But look at our works! If Christ would simply throw all our good works into a heap and let them rot, that would be most deserving of them. If He would take our almsgiving, our preaching, our teaching of others, our prayers and thoughts and works all together and just cast them into Tophets firehow dare we complain? But instead of that He is not unrighteous to forget our work of faith and labor of love, but counts that here His Father is glorified in that we bear much fruit.

We remember to have heard of someone who made sugar out of old rags. But then it was found that the sugar cost a great deal more than the sugar was worth. The manufacture cost was more than the goods were worth when produced. And judging from our point of view, this is something like our works. Jesus Christ makes sweetness out of the poor rags of our good workssurely I may say they cost Him more in the manufacturing than ever the raw material could have been worth, or the finished works themselves are worth, except in His esteem. Could He not, if He pleased, convert men without our preaching? But He will not do it! He would rather that they should be brought in by our imperfect preaching and therefore He washes our preachingHe washes our feet!

Could He not save sinners without you, my Sisterwithout you, my Brother? And yet He sets you longing after souls and opens your mouth to speak a good word to them. And He accepts what you do! But oh, what condescension is there! What tenderness, what Divine stooping from His loftiness, that He should cleanse our works! It is more than He ever did for angels! When an angel had defiled his service, He banished him from Heaven. But with all the imperfection of our service, we expect that in Christ we shall be welcomed into Heaven with the words, Well done, good and faithful servant.

If you want other instances of the familiar condescension of Christ, let me remind you of how patiently He is content to suffer in His peoples sufferings. Not a pang shoots through that head of yours but Jesus knows and feels it! Not a grief makes that bosom heave in which Christ is not a partaker. I will make all their bed in their sickness. Oh, what a blessed text is that! As one old expositor says, Not merely make their pillow, but their bolster and their bed and make all their bed, where their feet lie, where their head lies. All, all of it. I will come and I will have such sympathy with them in their entire grief, that from the beginning to the end of it I will make them happy in the midst of grief through My Divine consolations. I will make all their bed in their sickness.

Have you not had choice manifestations from Christ in your worst seasonsso exactly fitted to the peculiarity of your casethat you did not know which to admire most, the love which visited you, or the condescending care which so brought itself down to your case? He sat down at your bedside and put His loving care so entirely into your position that it felt as you felt and speak to you just the words which your case required. The Lord Jesus loves His people so, that every day He is washing their feet! Their poorest action He accepts. Their deepest sorrow He feels. Their smallest wish He hears and their greatest sin He forgives. He is still their servant as well as their friendstill He takes the basinstill He wears the towel.

It is not only majestic deeds that He performsas wearing the miter on His brow and the precious jewels glittering on His breastplate! He stands up to plead humbly, patientlylike a servant He goes about among His peoplewashing His disciples feet. I would to God I could speak worthily on such a theme as this! But it is true, as your experience must tell you, that, He remembers our low estate, for His mercy endures forever. Before I pass from this point, it is a matter of enquiry for some hereLord, do You wash my feet? Some of you are not washed by Christ, for you live without thinking of Him. I never did any harm, says one, that I know of. I will ask you another questionwhat did you ever do for Christ? Can you answer that? You must reply I have done nothing for Him whatever.

Ah, then, if you have never been enabled to do anything for Him, I fear it is because you have lived thoughtlessly, without a care for Him. But, if He had ever washed your feet, you could not forget Him. And little as it might be, yet you would have done something and you would now be desiring to do more. Ah, my Hearers, some of you are so far from ever having your feet washed daily that you have never been washed at all! There is a fountain filled with blood, but filled in vain, as far as you are concerned. There is a Savior, but you are unsaved. There is balm in Gilead, but you are not healed. There is a Physician there, but you are still sick! There is life in Christ, but you are dead!

The bronze serpent is lifted up but you are dying of the fiery serpents bite. One look at Jesus will savebut that look you have not givenyou are without God, without Christ, without hope and strangers from the commonwealth of Israel. May God the Holy Spirit visit you with His quickening power and convince you of your sin this morning! May He make you feel uneasy till you find Christ! May He give you a hunger and a thirst after Him that will never be satisfied till you clasp Him in your arms and say, Christ is mine!

I would to God that I had not to make this remark, but I must make it in faithfulness to your souls. You are obliged to answer, No, no, no. The Lord Jesus has never washed my feet. But then send up the prayer, Lord, do it! Lord, do it now for Your loves sake.

II. Our text is, in the second place, MATTER FOR ADMIRATION and that, too, in several respects. It is matter for admiration when we consider the freeness of the deed. Lord, do You wash my feet? It is perfectly wonderful that He should, for we have scarcely desired the mercy. If you look the chapter through, you do not find that Peter asked Christ to do it. Peter was lying downhe had just been eating at the supperhe had no thought of Christs washing his feet!   
There was not one of the twelve that ever dreamed of such a thing!

And when the Lord began to wash the feet of one, the others did not say, Lord, come and do the same to me. No, it was unsolicited, unexpected! He comes, without any prayers or supplications on their part and He begins to wash their feet. Peter is surprised. It is great goodness on Christs part to do what we ask Him to doto hear our prayers when we really feel our need. But does He perform for us such menial, such generous acts, as to wash our feet without being asked?

Oh, Beloved, if Christ did no more for us than we ask Him to do, we should perish forever! For nine out of ten of the things which He gives us, we never asked for! And what if I were to say that three out of four of them we scarcely know that we want? We do not know our own needs! We have a general view of our necessities, wholesale, as it werebut our daily needs, our daily wantswho among us can know them? Christs sufferings are said, according to the Greek Liturgy, to have had unknown depthsYour unknown sufferings. Were not those unknown sufferings endured for our unknown sins and to make a supply for our unknown wantsthat we might have that multitude of mercies which we may style unknown mercies?

We should not only bless God for the mercies which we have known, but for those which we have not knownfor probably those make up the larger proportion. You that are Christians, some of you who have been believers in Christ ten or twenty yearshave there not been many nights on which you have gone to bed without any particular sense of guilt and without any special intercession for peculiar cleansing? You have forgotten to ask for the cleansing, but He has never forgotten to give it! He has spontaneously washed your feet! You have risen in the morningyou were not aware that any special danger would come to you and you did not pray for special protectionbut yet He knew it. And unasked and unsought for He has followed you, held the shield over you and kept you from danger.

He has washed your feet without your having desired it, or having known that He had done it! Let His name be praised for this. These unsought favors of unspeakable love, these perpetual mercies of unslumbering carefulnesslet them wake us now to gratitude and now may we exclaim with wonder, Lord, is it so? Do You always continue thus to wash my feet?

The next subject of wonder is the Glory of the Person. Lord! King! Master! God! Everlasting! Eternal! Almighty! King of Kings and Lord of Lords! Do youdo YOU wash my feet? You call the stars by their names and they shine by Your light! Mazzaroth comes forth in his season at Your bidding! You guide Arcturus with his sons! The heavens are Yours! The earth also is Yours! You sit upon the circle of the heavens and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppersYou hold the waters in the hollow of Your hand, You mete out Heaven with Your spanLord, do You wash my feet?

When You were on earth You tread the watersthe depths knew You and were like marble beneath Your feet. You frightened grim Death himself, for Lazarus came forth at Your bidding from the shades of the grave! Fevers knew Youleprosy, paralysis, epilepsyall diseases understood their Masters voice and fled at Your bidding. The winds were hushed at Your willeven the devils were subject to You! Though You were veiled in manhood Your creatures perceived Your greatness! Angels ministered unto You and the heavens were opened unto You. And do You wash my feet?

O my Brothers and Sisters, meditate on this! It is far more a theme for thought than for speech. He whom the angels worship takes a towel and girds Himself! Hark to the song, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth! Heaven and earth are full of the majesty of Your Glory. All the earth does worship You, You eternal Son of the Father. Lord, do You wash my feet? Oh, think of this, spiritual men and women! Think till your hearts melt with love! No one else could cleanse us. The infinite God must take away the infinite blackness and filth of His peoples sins! What a stoop is here!

Let us lift up our eyes and wonder! Let us lift up our voices and praise His name that He should ever wash our feet! Change again the word. Observe the lowliness of the office. Lord, do You wash my feet? Here comes a traveler who has journeyed far. He is very weary. There is much dust upon his sandals and his feet are stained with travel. As soon as he treads the threshold of the hospitable housea black slave, a servant, a hired servanttakes off his sandals, brings a basin, a pitcher full of water and begins to pour the water upon his feet, having first unloosed the latchets of his shoes and taken them off.

The host does not stoop to this office! It is not the part of a master to wash feet! It is servile, menial, humiliating work. Yet this, which was the lowest of all offices in the East, is that which the Savior undertakes! Not in fiction and metaphor, but in reality, for every one of us! Lord, do You wash my feet? To wash my head, Lord, is very gracious. To purge my mind from evil thoughts is very loving. To wash my hands, to take my heart and make that clean is very condescendingbut do You absolutely do a slaves work and wash my feet? Lord, will You take the meanest part of me and wash that? I know You have said You will sanctify my spirit and my soulthere is much therebut will You sanctify my body, too? My feet, the lowest part of the man, the meanest part? Are You not content to leave spot or wrinkle upon me anywhere and therefore do You humble Yourself to the meanest, basest, lowest action of allto wash my feet?

Truly, Beloved, this is subject of wonder! And yet the wonder is excelled if you remember that He shared a slaves death, as well as a slaves life. A slaves lifewhen He washed our feet! A slaves deathwhen they sold Him for thirty pieces of silver and afterwards pierced His hands and His feet. I put this deed of love in contrast. Conceive Him now in the highest heavens, with the keys of Heaven and earth and Hell swinging at His side. He is holding the silver scepter by which He governs all creationcan you imagine Him as every knee bows and every tongue confesses that He is Lord to the glory of God the Father? And yet He, that same One, comes down from the grandeur of Heaven and the splendor of infinite honor and He washes, absolutely washes, in a slaves garb and after a menial manner, the feet of His disciples!

Oh, that we felt a tender admiration worthy of this miracle of love! Once again, there is a note of wonder if you lay the stress upon the word my Lord, do you wash my feet? Perhaps to some of you this will be the greatest marvel of allthe unworthiness of the object of this washing. Do you wash my feet? You have favored me with more mercies than the most of men! You have overwhelmed me with Your bounties. And yet my heart is hard towards YouI am often unbelieving, forgetful, slothful, careless. You might well cast me away forever! Because of my ingratitude You might well say, Depart, I will have no more to do with youI have had enough of patience. I cannot endure your ill manners! Yet do You, Lord, absolutely condescend to wash my feet?

Here You have displayed Yourself more gloriously than everYour Grace has out-Graced itself. Thus would the preacher speak and he thinks he hears you follow him. Lord, you say, I once cursed You to Your face. There was a time when Your holy day was my best day of businesswhen Your House was a place which I abhorred! Your Book was unread. My knee was never bent to YouI boasted of my own righteousness! I was a sinner black and filthyand do You wash my feet?!

I hear a Sister, with peculiar tenderness, say, O Jesus, I would gladly wash Your feet with my tears and wipe them with the hair of my head, for I have been a sinner. And do You wash my feet?! I think I hear another say, Lord, I once denied You. I made a profession of Your faith, but in an evil hour I fell. I went into sin. I said, I know not the Man! And do You wash my feet?! I hear another say, Lord, You know my private sins, my secret vices. I dare not tell into the ear of my fellow creature the faults into which I have fallen! I am only fit to be firewood in Hell-fire. There is nothing in me but what is not damnable! I am altogether as an unclean thing! And do You wash

my feet?!

Oh, you that are the people of God, cannot you all find some special reason for wonder at this? There are some of you who are so poor that even some of your own Christian brethren are wicked enough to be half ashamed to own you! Yet Jesus Christ washes your feet! Your clothes would not sell for sixpence and yet He washes your feet! You scarcely have enough shoe leather to keep your feet from the cold and yet He washes them! You have been laughed at and despised and ridiculed and yet you have Christ to wash your feet!

The moment your name is mentioned there are some ready at once to slander you and abuse youyet so tenderly does Jesus love you that He washes your foulest part. However, I must leave you to thinkfor I cannot talkI must leave you to think on such a precious passage as this. Certainly the angels of Heaven will never leave off wondering how it can be that their King, their Prince, their Leader, could so humble Himself as to become a Servant of servantsto take the very meanest of His people and declare that He will wash their feetyes, and do it, too.

One more subject for wonder. It is perfectly marvelous to remember that Christ does so completely wash our feet. Do You wash my feet, Lord? Then there cannot be any filth on them. Do You wash my feet? Then they must be clean. It cannot be that You could wash and yet filth remain. When things are washed by careless servants, they need washing again but when they are washed by the loving hands of Jesuswashed by Him who made Heaven and earth, surely they cannot be badly done! Come, then, you that feel you have been sinning the last weekyou that are Gods people, you that are resting on Christ but have a sense of guilt upon your consciences and cannot get rid of it and are sighing and cryingask this question, Lord, do You wash my feet? Then I will come to You. I will come with my feet all filthy if there is such a bath as this to be washed in.

If my sins are returned to me and appear to remain upon my conscience, if You wait, still, to wash me from present guilt and present depravity, then here I amas at the first I came, I come againnothing but Your merit do I rely upon! Nothing but Your love is my confidence! I give myself up to Youtake me as I am and wash me clean. I say it is a subject for admiration, how thoroughly clean Christ does wash His people, so that they can really cry, There is no spot nor wrinkle, nor any such thing, even upon my feet! I shall be presented holy, unblamable and unreproveable in the sight of God, through Jesus Christ my Lord.

III. Now we will turn from admiration to what may be more practical to GRATITUDE. I hope we already feel that Heaven-born flame glowing in our souls. Here is matter for gratitude, then. I heard the other day of a meeting for prayer at which my dear Brother Offordwho so marvelously made confession of sin at our great Prayer Meeting in the first week of Januarywas moved to make another confession. And he did so in such a manner that the whole assembly was moved and there were audible sobs and cries from Gods people while they confessed their transgressions.

No sooner had he done so, than some Brother, wise above what is written, rose in the assembly and said he thanked God he could not join in the confessionhis sins were all forgiven him and therefore he had no sins to confess! He stood before God so accepted in Christ that he had no sins whatever to make confession of. His prayer went far to spoil the meeting and to grieve the people of God!

I do occasionally meet with erring Brethren, who say, I never make any confession of sin. I have prayed for months, said one to me, and I have never made any confession of sin. I believe all my sins are forgiven and I have none to confess. Now, at the very first mention of this, do you not feel shocked? The holy sensibilities of a child of God suffer violence from the very thought of such absence of repentance! I should have been surprised if I did not hold myself prepared to hear any monstrosity from persons tinctured with the gall of Plymouth Brethrens. Concerning that sect, much as I love and respect many of its members, I dare not say less than thisthat God alone knows what they will teach tomorrow!

They seem to be given up to the inventions of their own vainglorious minds to concoct and devise delusions without number. They have one mark of the Babylon which they profess to abhorfor mystery is written on their very brow. I pray God to keep our young people from their company, for their professions and pretences are such as might, if it were possible, deceive the very elect! Gracious men I grant them to be, but as

to doctrine as mad as March hares and as perverse us bullocks unaccustomed to the yoke! When I first heard this doctrine of not confessing sins, I was startled. I felt as if I could have no more communion with a man who could talk in that way. Go on your knees and not confess sin? My dear Friends, I hope to die with this upon my lips, I have gone astray like a lost sheep. Seek Your servant, for I do not forget Your Commandments.

I hold that I shall be out of Christ altogether when I reject repentance and confession. I know that my sins are forgiven me! There is no man in the world who preaches more than I do the doctrine that Christ has forever made a full atonement for the sins of all His people! But as to not making a confession of sin, God forbid these lips should ever utter anything so unGospel-like, so un-Christlike! Let us put this matter before you plainly. It is quite certain that those whom Christ has washed in His precious blood need not make a confession of sin as before God the Judge because they are no longer under God as Judge. They are not ruled and governed upon the principle of Law at all. Christ has forever taken away all their sins in a legal sense so that no one can bring anything to their charge and they need not confess where there is no one to accuse.

The blood of Jesus has set His people entirely away from the position of prisoners under the Law. They do not stand where they can be condemned. They are no longer culprits or criminals. They are taken from under the dominion of the Judge. But what are Gods people? Why they are children and as long as God is their Father and they are children, and imperfect children, nature teaches them that it is the duty of children to make a confession to their Father. If my boy should do anything amiss God forbid it ever should bebut suppose it were some petty theft, I might say, My Child, as far as that theft is concerned, no policeman shall take you. You shall not be taken before the bar or put in prison for that. You are quite forgiven as far as that is concerned.

I do not wish him to go before the magistrate and make a confession but then he has offended me, his father. And I, as his father, expect him to confess the wrong that he has done to me and if he does not, I chasten him, not by way of penal inflictionthat is not my part as a father, I have nothing to do with penalties to my childrenbut by way of chastisement that he may be led to see his fault, and may do it no more. No father who has his wits about him ever chastens his child in the light of punishment for the offense itself. No, he says, that is not my businessthe offense must be punished by God, or if it is an offense against the law of the land, by the law of the land. When a father scourges, he does it for chastisementfor the good of the person chastisednot as a vindication of law and order.

Now the Lord never chastens His people because of any sin in them in order to punish them for their sinHe has punished Christ instead of themthey are quite clear there. But now having become children, and offending as children, ought they not every day to go before their heavenly Father and confess the sin and acknowledge the iniquity? The Divine Grace of God in the heart would teach us all that it should be so. We daily offend as children. We offend, as we could not offend if we were not children. I doubt my FatherI am guilty of a want of love to Him, or obedience to Him. I offend as I could not offend if I were not His child.

Supposing that this offense against my Father is not at once washed away by the cleansing power of the Lord Jesuswhat will be the consequence of it? Why I shall get under the thralldom of bad habit. I shall feel such defilement in my nature that I shall do it again and again and againwhat I had once donetill I get into the habit of doing it. If I am not washed from these offenses against my Father, I shall feel at a distance from Him. I shall begin to doubt His love to me. I shall tremble at Him. Most likely I shall be afraid to pray to HimI shall get to be like the prodigal, who, while he was a child, was yet far off from his father. If I am not washed, I shall very soon have need to feel the rod and I shall have it.

But oh, Beloved, if the Lord Jesus Christ, day by day shall come to me and wash my feet from these defilements of offenses against my Father, why then I shall, to a great extent, escape the rod! I shall feel a holy love to my Father! I shall walk in the light of His countenance! I shall have joy and peace through believing and I shall go through my Christian career, not only as saved, but as one enjoying present peace in God through Jesus Christ my Lord! I think you can see the difference between Christ putting away sin by blood and by water. I think you can see the distinction between confessing sin as a culprit and confessing sin as a child. And I think you can see how much gratitude you owe to Christ, that after having once set you free from the Law, He, day by day, as your Elder Brother, goes in before your Fathers face and still keeps you right before the Father.

And when there has been any defilement, or any wrong, He washes your feet from it that you may still stand with peace in your conscience, with joy in your heart, with love in your bosom and with the Fathers love shed abroad in you! Here is matter for gratitudethat having once washed head and hands and feet with bloodHe still does daily wash my feet with water. For my part, I mean to keep on praying, Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And it shall always be my joy that, if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, and, the blood of Jesus Christ, Gods dear Son, cleanses us from all sin.

IV. The last point is MATTER FOR IMITATION. Does Jesus wash our feet? Then we ought to wash one anothers feet. Some of our Brethren, the Scotch Baptists, were accustomed to wash the saints feet literally. I dare say it would not do some of the saints much harm. But still it never was intended for us to carry out literally the example of the Savior. There is a spiritual meaning here and what He means is thisif there is any deed of kindness or love that we can do for the very meanest and most obscure of Gods people, we ought to be willing to do itto be servants to Gods servantsto feel like Abigail did, when she said to David, Let your handmaid be a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my Lord.

Abigail became Davids wifethat is the true position of every Christianbut yet she felt she was not worthy even to wash his servants feet.

That must be our spirit. Do you know any poor bedridden soul? Go and talk with that poor woman, or that poor man. Seek to take comfort to that poor mans miserable lodgings. Do you know a Brother who is rather angry in temper and he wants a kind word said to him and someone says, I will not speak to any such person as he is? Do itdo it, my dear Brothers and Sistersgo and wash his feet! Do you know one who has gone astray? Someone says, I would not like to be seen in association with him. My dear Friend, you are spiritualgo and restore such an one in the spirit of meekness.

Wash his feet! There is another riding the high horsehe is very, very proud. One says, I am not going to humble myself to him. My dear Brother, go to him and wash his feet! Whenever there is a child of God who has any defilement upon him and you are able to point it out and rid him of itsubmit to any degradation, put yourself in any positionsooner than that child of God should be the subject of sin! Especially let those who are highest among us seek to do the lowest offices. Whoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant. Remember that Christs way of rising is to go down. He descended, that He might ascend. And so must we.

Let us count that forevermore it is our highest honor and our greatest glory to lay aside all honor and all glory and to win honor and glory out of shame and humiliation for Christ Jesus sake. I believe this is done in this Church. I hope we are as free as possible from the feeling of casteGod deliver us from the last relic and remnant of it! You are Brothers and Sisters in Christ! Love one another!

Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exaltedbut the rich in that he is made low. You are Brothers and Sisters and one is your Master, even Christ. Try to carry out, every one of you to your utmost, the teaching of your Lordthat you should wash one anothers feet. You have an opportunity of doing it in the collectionfor I believe that these servants of Godthese aged ministers, these ministers who are in great povertyneed today that you should, by your contributions, wash their feet.

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THE UNKNOWN WAYS OF LOVE   
NO. 1293

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, MAY 14, 1876, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do you know not now; but you shall know hereafter.   
John 13:7.**

THESE words of our Lord were spoken in answer to Peters exclamation of surprise, Lord, do You wash my feet? It was a very natural expression of astonishment and one which deserved no censure, but, at the same time it was not a very wise remark, for, although it was a marvelously condescending act for the Lord Jesus to wash His disciples feet, He had already performed a greater condescension by coming upon the earth, at all, in the form of a man. For the Son of the Highest to dwell among mortals in a human body, capable of being girt about with a towel and able to take a basin and pour water into it, is a far greater marvel than that He should, being a Man, leave the supper table and act as a menial servant by washing His disciples feet.

Had Peter understood what his Master had prophesied and explained to him, namely, the Lords approaching sufferings and death, he would have seen that for his Master to take a towel and basin was little compared with His having our iniquities laid upon Himself and being made a Sacrifice for sin! It surprises you much to see the Lord of Glory wear a towel does it not amaze you, still more, to see Him clad in the purple robe of mockery? Are you not still more astonished to see His clothes stripped from Him and to hear Him cry upon the Cross, I can see all My bones: they look and stare upon Me?

It is amazing that He should take the basin in the upper room, but surely it was more extraordinary that He should take the cup in the garden and drink in its full bitterness till He sweat, as it were, great drops of blood falling to the ground! To wash the disciples feet with water was certainly a surprising action, but to pour out His hearts blood to wash us all was by far the greater, for this involved His death, His making His grave with the wicked and His being numbered with the transgressors! The expression of Peter is thus seen to be very natural, but not very profound.

Dear Brothers and Sisters, do you not think it very likely that our pretty pious speeches which strike us as very proper, seem, to our friends, to be very commendable, will, one of these days, appear to be mere baby prattling and do even now appear so to the Lord Jesus? Those choice sayings and holy sentences which we have read with admiration and greatly valuedeven those are not like the Words of Jesus for solid intrinsic weight and worth but may, in other lights, appear far less beautiful than they do now. I have, myself, proved in different humors and frames of mind that the very things which struck me as being so very deep and gracious have at other times appeared to be one-sided, shallow, or questionable. We know in part and prophesy in partour highest attainments,

here, are those of little children, and even for the close studentthe deeply experienced Christian, the venerable man of years and the graciously anointed instructor of the Churches, there is no room for boasting.

Note, next, that our Savior answered Peters speech in the words of the text which are as admirable for their tone as for their matter. Which should we admire the more in this reply, its meekness or its majesty? To Peters ignorant simplicity how gentle He is! What I do you know not now; but you shall know hereafter. And yet how royally He confronts Peters objection and how distinctly His majestic Personality puts down the too conspicuous individuality of Peter! What I do you know not now.

How perfect the blending of the majesty and the meekness! Who shall tell which of the colors is better laid on? This is always the way of our Lord Jesus! You shall find, through life, Beloved, that whenever Jesus Christ comes to rebuke you, He will do so powerfully but gently. He will speak as a Friend and as a King. You will feel both His love and His authority and acknowledge the power of both His goodness and His greatness. His smile shall not make you presume, nor shall His royal glance cause you to tremble. You will find His left hand supporting you while in His right you see His imperial scepter. Blessed Savior, are You more meek or more majestic? We cannot tell, but certainly to our hearts You are both kind and kingly, sweet and sovereign, gracious and glorious!

I. Let us now come to the words themselves. We have looked at the occasion of them and at the manner of them. We will now weigh their matter. The words, themselves, have suggested to me many thoughts and among them, first, that IN OUR LORDS DOINGS THERE IS MUCH WHICH WE CANNOT UNDERSTAND. Our text is not merely true about the washing of the feet, but it is true concerning all that our Lord does What I do you know not now. We may know the external part of what He does, or think we do, but there is more in His actions than any of us can conceive. The external is not allthere are wrapped up, within, other mercies which we perceive and yet greater mercies as yet unknown to us.

You traverse the soil of Canaan, drink of its rivers and are refreshed by its corn and wine and oil, but the goodly land has hidden richesits stones are iron and out of its hills you may dig brass. The brooks of which you drink derive their coolest waters from springs which have tapped the deep which lies under. If you know, in some measure, what Jesus does, the whole mystery is not altogether laid bare to your eyes. There are folds of His manifold Grace which, as yet, are unopened. The work of Jesus is beyond youit is lower than your fall, higher than your desireit surpasses you and is altogether too high for you! You simply cannot attain to its measurement. Who can, by searching, find it out unto perfection? Our lack of knowledge of the Divine doings is a wide subject and I shall not attempt to explore its boundaries, but shall restrain myself by the text.

Brothers and Sisters, there are many things that God does which we cannot understand, now, and probably never shall. For instance, why did He permit evil, at first, and still tolerates it? To this enquiry the Divine answer would be What I do you know not. Leave that alone! It is our highest wisdom to be ignorant where God has not enlightened us. It is great folly to pretend to know when we do notthere lives not a man, nor ever will live a manwho has even an approximation to an understanding of the dread mystery of the existence of moral evil! The bottom of this abyss no mind can reach! He is foolhardy who ventures on the plunge. Let this dread secret alone! You cannot endure the white heat which burns around it!

Many a man has lost the eyes of his reason while trying to peer into this fiery furnace. What have you to do with that which God conceals from you? It is Gods business, not yours! The thing was done before you were born and He who permitted it can answer for Himself if He cares to do so. And, with regard to predestinationthat God ordains all things and has before His eyes the chart of everything that has been, is, or shall beis most true! But who knows the depths of foreknowledge and destiny? To sit down and pluck the eternal purposes to pieces, to question their justice and impugn their wisdom is both folly and audacity!

Here the darkness thickens and out of it comes forth the proclamationWhat I do you know not. The things which are revealed belong to us and to our childrenbut as to the unrevealed, if it is to the Glory of God to conceal a thing, let it be concealed! Jesus has torn the veil of the Holy Place and into the secret of Divine love you may now freely enter. But other veils, which He tears not, you may not touch. Some Truths of God are closed up from our understanding, even as the Ark of the Covenant was shut against prying eyes. Let us not violate their sanctity lest we meet the doom of the men of Bethshemesh, but let us zealously guard them as priceless treasures that we may obtain the blessing which rested upon the house of Obededom.

The same remark applies to the great designs of God in Providence. He is pleased, in prophecy, to tell us what He has meant by His Providence and, perhaps, it will be one of the enjoyments of the future state to see the hand of God in the whole current of history. But while incidents are occurring, we must not expect to understand their drift and bearing. The wonderful tapestry of human history, all woven in the loom of Gods infinite wisdom, will astonish both men and angels when it is complete! But while it is yet unfinished, it will not be possible for us to imagine the completed pattern. From between those wheels of Providence, which are full of eyes, I hear a voice which said, What I do you know not now.

So we will confine ourselves to the loving acts of the Lord Jesus Christ, since what the Lord was doing with Peter was not very mysterious, nor a deed of transcendent power, nor of stern justice. He was humbly girding Himself with a towel and pouring water into a basin to wash his followers feet. It was a very simple matter and evidently a very gracious, kind and condescending act. And yet, even concerning that, Jesus said, What I do you know not now. My Brothers and Sisters, even the acts of our Lord Jesus Christ in His loving condescension we do not fully understand. Ah, think a minutehow can we? Does not our Lords love always surpass our knowledge, since He, Himself, is the greatest of all mysteries? Let me read these words to youJesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He was come from God, and went to God;

He arose from supper, and laid aside His garments; and took a towel, and girded Himself.

Do you understand the higher and the lower points of this transaction? You must comprehend them both before you can see what He has done. Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands. Can you see the Glory of this? Jesus, our Lord, was conscious that His Father had made Him Head over all things to His Church and that He had laid the government upon His shoulders and given Him the key of David that He might open and no man shut, and shut and no man open. He knew, assuredly, that at His belt swung the keys of Heaven, death and Helland that having fulfilled the commission of the Eternal God, He was about to return to His Throne.

Have you grasped the idea? Do you perceive the Glory of which Jesus was conscious? If you have done so, then descend by one long sweepHe, this Lord of All, having all things in His hands, takes off His garments, foregoes the common dress of an ordinary man, and places Himself in the undress of a servant! He wears a towel that He may wait upon His own disciples! Can you follow Him from such a height to such a depth? A superior in the East never washes an inferiors feetChrist acts as if He were inferior to His friends! He acts as if He were inferior to those poor fishermenthose foolish scholars who learned so slowly and with whom He had spent so much time and yet they did not know Himthose 12 men who soon forgot what they knew and needed Him to explain, again and again, line upon line and precept upon precept! Having loved them to the end, He stoops to the extreme of stooping and bows at their feet to cleanse their defilement! Who, I say, can compute the depth of this descent?

You cannot know what Christ has done for you because you cannot conceive how high He is by Nature! Neither can you guess how low He stooped in His humiliation and death. With an eagles wing you could not soar so high as to behold Him as God over all, blessed forever, sitting at the right hand of the Father, the adored of cherubim and seraphim! Nor could you dive, even if you dared to take a plunge into the abyss, until you reached the depth of, My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me! And yet, you must somehow know the intervalI was about to say, the infinitybetween these two points of height and depth before you can know what Jesus has done for you!

Moreover, think awhile. Was anything that Jesus did understood while He was doing it? He is born a Babe in Bethlehem, but who knew what He did in the manger? A few shepherds and two or three favored saints discerned the Savior in the Babe, but to the mass of mankind He was unknown. God came on earth and angels sung His advent, but O Earth, your Lord might have said to you, What I do you know not now! He lived here the life of a carpenters sonthat life was the most august event in all human historybut men knew not what it was or what it meant! The world knew Him not.

He came forward to preach the Gospeldid they know who it was that spoke as never man spoke? Did they comprehend what He spoke? Ah, no. He was hid from their eyes! At last He laid aside the life He had so strangely takenwho knew the reason of His death upon the Cross? Did even His disciples know, though He had told them? When the earth shook and graves were opened by His last cry, did even His own followers understand what a Sacrifice had been offered? No, and until the Spirit was poured upon them from on high they did not comprehend that it behooved Christ to suffer. He could say to each of His own disciples, of all that He had done, What I do you know not now.

This is true, too, of every separate gift which our Lords love has given to His people. You have been justified in Jesus Christ, but do you fully know the wondrous righteousness with which Justification by Faith has endowed you? You are accepted in the Beloved, but did any one of you ever realize what it is to have full acceptance with the Father? I know you have realized the fact and rejoiced in it, but have you known, yes, can you know the full sweetness of its meaning? You are one with Christ and members of His body! Do you comprehend that? You are joint heirs with Christ! Do you know the full significance of that?

He is betrothed to you in an everlasting marriage! Do you know what that means? Ah no, these wonders of His love, we hear of them and we believe them, but, What I do, He said, you know not now. Our Lord is doing great things by way of preparing us for a higher state of existence! We shall soon be rid of this vile body and be released from this narrow worldwe are going to a sphere more suited for our Heaven-born life where we shall be the comrades of angels and commune with the spirits of the just made perfectand serve the Lord day and night in His temple. But what Glory shall be, we do not know, for the ear has not heard it, nor the eye beheld it, nor the heart conceived it. As for the preparations which are going on within us to make us ready for this sublime condition, we know that they are being carried on, but we cannot, as yet, see their course, their separate tendencies and their ultimate issues.

The instrument does not comprehend the tuner. The tuner fetches harsh sounds from those disordered strings, but all those jarring notes are necessary to the harmonious condition which he is aiming to produce. If the discords were not discovered, the music of the future would be marred. My Brothers and Sisters, concerning all that Christ has done it is true, What I do you know not now. Oh, if His work were little, we could measure it! If His love were scanty, we could know it! If His wisdom were finite we could judge it! But, where everything is past finding out, who can pretend to know?

Remember, that in our salvation Christ, Himself, is the sum and substance. In it every attribute of His Divinity is brought into exercise to the fullest. He makes it His Glory, counting our salvation to be His coronet and crown jewels and, therefore, it is not at all marvelous that we should not know what He does.

II. Our second thought is a sweet one. OUR LACK OF UNDERSTANDING DOES NOT PREVENT THE EFFICACY OF OUR LORDS WORK. What I do you know not now. Peter does not know what Christ is doing when He washes his feet, but the Master washes them just as clean whether Peter understands it or not. Jesus did not say, There, Peter, you do not understand what I am doing by washing your feet, and so I shall not wash them until you do. No, no. He moves on with the basin and towel and

washes them clean, though Peter does not know why.

Is not this a great mercy, Brothers and Sisters, that the blessings which Christ bestows upon us are not dependent for their efficacy upon our capacity to understand them? Just look out a little in the world and see how true this is. A mother has her little child on her lap and she is washing its face. The child does not like the water and it cries. Ah, Babe, if you could understand it, you would smile! The child cries and struggles in the mothers arms, but it is washed all the samethe mother waits not for the child to know what she is doing, but completes her work of love. So is the Lord often exercising Divine acts upon us and we do not appreciate them, neither are we pleased. Perhaps we even strive against His work of love, but for all that, He perseveres and turns not away His hand because of our crying.

Does the tree understand pruning? Does the land comprehend plowing? Yet pruning and plowing produce their good results. The physician stands at the bedside of the patient and gives him medicine, medicine which is unpalatable and which, in its operation, causes the patient to feel worse than he was before. The sufferer cannot understand this and, therefore, he draws unhappy conclusions. But the power of the medicine does not depend upon the patients understanding its qualities and, therefore, it will do him good, though it puzzles him by its strange manner of working. If a fool eats his dinner, it will satisfy his hunger as much as if he were a philosopher and understood the processes of digestion. This is a great mercy, for the most of men can never become philosophers!

It is not necessary for a man to be learned in the nature of combustion in order to be warmed by a fire. A man may be ignorant of the laws of light and yet be able to see. He may know nothing of acoustics and yet be quick of hearing. A passenger who does not know a valve from a wheel, enters a carriage at the station and he will be drawn to his journeys end by the engine as well as if he were learned in mechanics. It is the same in the spiritual as in the natural world. The efficacy of spiritual forces does not depend upon our capacity to understand them.

I have mentioned this very simple fact because it really is necessary for us to remember it. We are so knowing, or think we arewe think it so essential that we should form a judgment of what the Lord is doing. Ah, dear Brothers and Sisters, there are more essential things than this! It is better to trust, to submit, to obey, to love, than to know. Let the Lord alone! He is doing rightly enough, be sure of that. Is He to be questioned and questioned again by us? Are we to judge His judgment? Dare we demand answers to our impertinent enquiries and say, why this and why that, and why the other? Were He a God if He would submit to such examination? If we call ourselves His disciples, how can we justify a spirit which would arraign our Lord? Be still and know that He is God!

What more would you know? Remember that the things which you understand are for your good, but they can only bring you a small amount of benefit because they must be, in themselves, small, or you would not be able to measure them. When a great, deep good is coming to you, you will not be able to comprehend it, for your comprehension is narrow. Yet it will be none the less but all the more a blessing because you know it not! Joseph is gone and here is his bloody coat! Without doubt he is torn in pieces! All these things are against me! Ah, how my heart is broken with the loss of my darling child. I cannot understand it. It cannot be right.

So talks poor Jacob, but it was right, all the same for that! Joseph was on the sure road to Pharaohs throne and to providing for his brethren in the land of Egypt. So it is with you, my Brothers and Sisters, under your present trial and affliction. You cannot understand it now, but that does not make a pennyworth of difference! It is working out for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory! Be content to let faith rule and knowledge waitand what you know not now you shall know hereafter.

III. A third thought is that OUR NOT BEING ABLE TO KNOW WHAT THE LORD DOES SHOULD NEVER SHAKE OUR CONFIDENCE IN HIM. I hope, dear Brothers and Sisters, our faith in Christ does not rest upon our capacity to understand what He does! If so, I fear it is not faith at all, but a mere exercise of self-conceited carnal reason. Some things which the Lord has done bear upon their very forefront the impression of His infinite love, but I hope you know enough of Him, now, to be able to believe that where there are no traces of love apparent to you, His love is as surely there. I rejoice in that part of my text which runs thus, What I do. This washing of the feet was not being done by Bartholomew, or Nathanaelit was the personal act of the Lord, Himself.

Now, when the Master and Lord is doing it, who needs to raise a question or to suggest enquiry? It must be right if He does itto question His conduct would be an insult to His majestic love. Do you know Christ? Then you know the Character of His deeds. Do you know your Lord? Then you are sure that He will never act unkindly, unbecomingly, or unwisely. He can never send a needless sorrow, or wantonly cause a tear to flow. Can He? Here, then, is the questionnot, Why is it done?but, Who is doing it? And if the Lord is doing it, we can have no doubt about the excellence of His design. We believe that He is right when we cannot see that He is so. If we do not trust Him far beyond what we know, it will show that our confidence in Him is very limited.

When a person only obeys another because he chooses to obey and sees it a proper thing to do, he has not the spirit of implicit obedience at all. And when a person only confides in another as far as he can see that he is safe, he is a stranger to implicit confidence. Confidence has its sphere beyond the boundaries of knowledge. Where judgment ceases, faith begins. What I do you know not now. Ah, You most beloved of our souls, You spoke the Truth in that, but we can reply to You that we know and are sure that what You do is supremely good.

IV. Fourthly, OUR LACK OF UNDERSTANDING AS TO WHAT OUR LORD DOES GENERALLY SHOWS ITSELF MOST IN DEFERENCE TO HIS PERSONAL DEALINGS WITH OURSELVES. What I do you know not now refers to His washing Peters feet. Brothers and Sisters, if there is anything which we are not likely to understand thoroughly well, it is that which has to do with ourselves. We are too close home to see clearly. In this case the looker-on sees more than the player. We generally form a better opinion of the character, position and needs of another than we do

concerning ourselves.

It is said of Moses face that everyone saw it shine but one manand that was Mosesfor he could not see his own countenance. So, also, if a mans face is black, it is black to everybody but himselfhe does not see his own spots. We cannot form accurate estimates of ourselves and so we must not expect, when Christ is personally dealing with us, that we should be able to understand what He does to us. Besides, if the Lord is dealing with us in an afflicting way, we are generally in an unfavorable state of mind for forming any judgment at all, being, as a rule, too disturbed in mind by the affliction, itself.

When a hospital patient is under the knife, he is a poor judge of the necessity of the operation or the skill of the surgeon. Later, when the wound has healed, he will judge better than he can do when the knife is just cutting through nerve, and sinew and bone. Judge nothing before the time! You are not in a condition to judge and therefore do not attempt it. When you are smarting under the rod, your opinions, estimates and forecasts are about as much to be depended upon as the whistling of the wind or the dashing of the waves. Cease from judging, calculating and forebodingbelieve that He who ordains our lot orders all things in kindness and wisdom!

I do not wonder that Peter was puzzled and could not understand his Lords procedure, for it is always a hard thing for an active and energetic mind to see the wisdom of being compelled to do nothing. Here is a man who can drag a net to the shore full of big fishes and, instead of using his strength, he is made to sit still and do nothing! Peter, the hardy, vigorous worker, must sit down like a gentleman, or a cripple, and do nothing. He does not understand. He has been very useful and he thinks he could be useful now. He could, at any rate, wait at the table, or carry the basin, or wash his fellows feet if it must be done. But he is bound to sit still and do nothing and he does not understand it.

Brothers and Sisters, the hardest work a man has to do, who wants to serve the Lord Jesus, is to stand aside in forced inactivity and take no share in what is going on! It is hard to be put on the shelf among the cracked crockery and to be of no more use than a broken vessel while yet you feel you could be useful if you had but strength to leave your chamber. The proud idea that you have been wonderfully useful tempts you to repine at being laid among the lumber! And you feel it to be a very mysterious business altogether.

Then, what is worse, not only can Peter not do anything, he is a receiver from others and must be waited on by them, and chiefly by his Master, whom he, at other times, loved to serve! To have his feet washed must have appeared, to a hardy fisherman like Peter, a strange luxury. He would say, Cannot I do it myself? I am not used to be waited on. To sit there and, while doing nothing, to be also engrossing the care of another, must have been a unusual position to him. It is very unpleasant for an active man to be unable to work and to be dependent upon others for every little detail and necessity of life. To borrow other peoples strength and tax other peoples care is not desirable.

To stand in need of anxious prayers and to awake pitying thoughts, seems strange to those who have been accustomed to do rather than to suffer. Why, you seem to say, I have prayed for them. I have worked for them! Are they, now, to pray and work for me? I have fed the sheep. Are the sheep going to feed me? I have washed the saints feet. Are they going to wash mine? Am I to be dependent upon others and not be able to lend a hand or lift a finger? Ah, well, we must not ask questions, but we are very apt to do so. We do not know, and we become inquisitive, but the Savior says, What I do you know not now.

All the while there is very prominent in our minds a sense of insignificance and unworthiness which makes our receipt of favors the more perplexing. What? asks Peter, I, unworthy Peter, shall I be washed by the Lord Jesus Christ? So it seems to us unworthy sinners, Why should Gods people be thinking about me and careful about me? Why has the Lord, Himself, deigned to make my bed in my sickness? Why has His blessed Spirit condescended to be my Comforter, applying precious promises to me? Why all this to me? We do not comprehend it. We are lost in wonder and it is no marvel that we are. Yet, dear Brothers and Sisters, if our eyes are opened, the Lords afflicting dealings are not so wonderfully mysterious, after all, for we need purging and cleansing even as Peter needed his feet washed.

We greatly need the sacred purging of Jesus love for the removal of daily defilement. Sometimes trials in business, sad bereavements, acts of ingratitude, pains of sickness, or depressions of spirit are just the basin and the water and the towel in which our Lord is washing our feet. We are clean through the blood of Jesus, but the daily cleansing we still need. It is a wonder that some of us are ever out of the furnace, for our dross is so abundant. I shall not be surprised if I find myself often under the flail, for the straw and the chaff are plentiful in me. Some metals are so apt to rust that it is no wonder that they are often burnished. Some soils need a deal of plowingthey are very apt to cake and grow hardand therefore must be broken up.

So it is with us. There is a need for what the Lord is doing. In Peters case there was a need of fellowship, for our Lord said, If I wash you not you have no part with Me. You cannot have fellowship with Christ unless He does this or that for you. No, especially unless He tries you, for how shall you know the suffering Savior unless you suffer, yourself? Communion with the afflicted Redeemer is promoted by our personal afflictions. There was a need, yet again, for Peter and the rest to learn the lesson of washing their Brothers feet by seeing the Lord wash theirs. No man can rightly wash anothers feet till his own feet have been washed by his Savior.

It is, in the kingdom of Christ, a law that there must be experience before there can be expertness. You must be comforted or you can not comfort. You must find mercy, yourself, or you can not lead others in the search. You must be washed or you cannot wash. Thus there were good reasons for our Lords act, but they were not seen by Peter, nor do the motives for our Lords dispensations towards us always appear upon the surface. When Jesus, Himself, is dealing with us, especially if it is in a way of trial, we do not understand it and He has need to say, What I do you

know not now.   
V. Our last thought for the present isUPON THIS POINT AND UPON  
MANY OTHERS WE SHALL, ONE DAY, BE INFORMED. What I do you   
know not now, but you shall know hereafter. That, hereafter, may be   
very soon. Peter knew within a few minutes what Jesus meant, for He said   
to him, Know you what I have done unto you? If I, your Lord and Master,  
have washed your feet, you ought, also, to wash one anothers feet. Thus   
the light was not long in breaking. Why are you in such a hurry, when  
you are in trouble, to begin spelling out an evil reason for Gods dealings,  
when, if you will but wait, you shall know the right reason in a short   
time?   
A child is in an ill temper because there has been a rule made by the   
father and not explained. And so it sits down and sulks and thinks of   
some unkind, ungenerous motive on the fathers part. In a minute or two,   
after it understands it all and has to eat its own words, it confesses, How   
bad of me to impute such unkindness to my dear loving father, who is always seeking my good. If you will get reasoning in haste about your  
Lords dispensations, you will have to take all your reasoning back and   
you will have to afflict your soul for being so hasty. Therefore wait awhile,   
for, you shall know hereafter, and that, hereafter, may be very near. Peter understood his Masters washing his feet better, after his sad fall  
and threefold denial. I should not wonder that when the Lord turned and   
looked upon Peterand he went out and wept bitterlythe penitent disciple said to himself, Now I begin to see why my Lord washed my feet.   
When he perceived how badly he needed washing, he would prize the token which his Lord had given him. He saw his own frailties and imperfections as he had not seen them before, for he had said, Though all men  
should be offended, yet will I never be offended, but after his sad denial   
he knew himself to be as apt to err as the rest of the Brothers. At a certain point of your experience you will possibly discover the explanation of your present adversity. After the Lord had met with Peter at  
the sea and had said to him, Feed My sheep, and, Feed My lambs, another method of explanation was open to him. When Peter began to be a   
pastor and to deal with the souls of others, he would clearly see why his   
Master washed his feet, for he would find that he had much to do of the  
same kind of service. Often does our work for Jesus unfold the work of Jesus and we know our Lord by being called to follow in His footsteps. Yonder in Heaven, best of all, Peter understands why the Master washed his   
feet and surely, sometimes, Peter must inwardly smile to think of what he   
once thought and said.   
Peter sings amid the heavenly throng, Unto Him that loved us and   
washed us from our sins in His own blood. And then he thinks to himself, In my folly, in the days of my flesh, I said unto Him, You shall never  
wash my feet. I loved Him when I said it, but what monstrous folly lay in  
my speech! Ah, he understands it, now, and we shall understand as he  
does, soon! All things will be clear when we once pass into the region of  
Light. I anticipate the blessed confidences of Heaven! How blessed will be   
those familiar Revelations of mysteries so long obscure! What sweet communications there will be between God and His people in the world to  
come! I look forward to the time when we shall see the knots untied and   
the riddles all explainedthen shall we see the good of apparent eviland   
the life which lay in the bosom of death.   
Could we hear the stories of pilgrims who have reached Home, they  
would run like thisI was traveling a pleasant road, blessing God for so   
delightful a pilgrimage, but suddenly a huge rock fell across my path and   
I had, with regret, to turn back and traverse a more rugged road. I never  
understood why until I came home to Heaven and now He tells me, Child,   
there was a precipice but a little way in front and you would have been  
dashed to pieces and, therefore, I blocked up your way.   
Another who has reached the desired haven will tell us, The vessel in   
which I sailed was wrecked. She struck upon a rock and on a broken  
fragment of her timbers I swam to shore. I could never comprehend the   
reason for this calamity till now. now I learn that the ship was being  
steered by evil hands to a shore where I would have been made a slave   
and kept in lifelong captivity, and there was no way of deliverance but by  
dashing the boat to shivers and landing her passengers where they would   
be free.   
Brothers and Sisters, you will bless God in Heaven more for your sorrows than your joys! When you once ascend the celestial hills you will see   
that the best blessings came to you in the roughest garments. Your pearls   
were found in oyster shells and your jewels were brought out of Egypt.   
Sickness, trial, adversity, bereavement and pain have been more truly angels of God to you than your wealth, your health, your strength, your   
comfortinfinitely more so than your laughter and your ease! O Brothers  
and Sisters, we shall know hereafter! Well, as we shall know hereafter, we   
may leave the knowing till thenand give all our attention, now, to obeying and trusting!   
I have done when I have added a warning to those out of Christ. There   
are some in this congregation who do not know my Lord. I have been  
much exercised in my mind about you while I have been confined to my   
chamber and unable to address you. And my prayer has been that the   
Holy Spirit would bless to your conversion the messages of my Brothers   
who have kindly occupied this pulpit. If you still remain unconverted, I   
would like to say to you that you do not know what God has been doing   
with you and you do not know what He is doing with you nowbut you   
will know hereafter. You have Sabbath days, but you do not know their  
valueyou will value them differently, by-and-by, when you lie dying  
and especially when you are called before the Judgment Seat of God! You have your Bible and you neglect ityou do not know that God has  
sent a love letter to you in that formyou will know it when you stand before His awful bar! Some of you have been pleaded with very often and   
earnestly entreated to lay hold on eternal lifeand the Lord has backed   
up our entreaties by sending sickness to you and personal trouble. Well,   
you have not known much about it and you have not wished to know  
but you will have to know hereafter! If you die without Christ, you will   
wake up in eternity and cry, Ah me, that ever the Lord should call me   
and I refuse! That He should stretch out His hand and I should disregard. In Hell it will be an awful discovery, I was the subject of Gospel   
invitations, I was the object of earnest entreaties, but I continued in my   
sin and here I am, eternally lost!   
What I earnestly desire should happen would be that you should, this  
morning, find out what the Lord has done for you and should understand   
it and should open your eyes and say, Here am I, a man who has lived   
long in sin and I have been spared on purpose that God might save me   
before I die. Or perhaps it will take this formHere I am, a young man,  
and I came in here this morning with no precise motive, little knowing   
what God was about to do with me. But I know it now. He has brought me  
here that I may, this morning, believe in Jesus and give my heart to Him! O hearers of the Gospel, if you once come to know what God has really  
done with you and for you, you will hardly forgive yourselves for your conduct towards Him! You will say, Did He really love me so and redeem me   
with such a price? And have I been so unkind and thoughtless towards   
Him? You will upbraid yourselves and chasten yourselves and grieve to  
think you should have treated so good a Friend so terribly! O may the Divine Spirit, this morning, open your eyes to know what the Lord Jesus   
does for you and His Grace shall be magnified in you! Amen and amen!

**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 13:1-17.** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK327, 689, 778.

MR. SPURGEON requests his friends to unite with him in thanking the ever-merciful Father for permitting him, again, to leave the bed of sickness and preach the Word to the great congregation. He also entreats his kind readers to pray for him whenever the sermons are useful to themselves, for the preacher growingly needs to be upheld by Grace in answer to the supplications of the Lords people. Pray that affliction may be sanctified, physical strength given to preach the Gospel and, above all, the unction of the Holy Spirit to make the Word effectual in the heart of saints and sinners.

[If you will click on the link, Volumes 22-24 (1876-78), at http://www.spurgeongems.org and open the sermons in Volume 22, before this sermon, you will notice many sermons with no dates on themthese indicate that Brother Spurgeon was sick. The sermons with no dates were preached by Brother Spurgeon, most assuredlywe just do not know when. Remember, he preached up to 10 sermons a week, and only 63 volumes (approximately 3,560 sermons) were published, many after his death in 1892.Ed.]

Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307. Sermon #926 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE SINE QUA NON   
NO. 926

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, APRIL 17, 1870, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Jesus answered him, If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me. John 13:8.**

IN matchless condescension our Lord had girt Himself as a servant, and was washing the feet of the disciples. Peter, struck with such a spectacle, would not allow his Lord to act as a menial, and flatly refused to have his feet washed by his Master. But he changed his mind at once when he was told that a refusal to receive this act of kindness from his Lord would be a virtual rejection of all part in Him, If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me. I do not think our Lord here was thinking so much of the literal washing, as of that which the outward ablution was meant to represent. This is clear when we remember that our Lord replied to Peter concerning this washing, What I do you know not now. But you shall know hereafter.

Now as to the literal washing, Peter knew all about it, and there was nothing to be explained except its inner meaning, and spiritual teaching. This it was that Peter did not then know, and was afterwards to learn. Our Lord, therefore, evidently referred not so much to the actual footwashing, as to the spiritual washing, which is absolutely essential to all His people. Remember, too, that the mere cleansing of the feet did not involve union to Christ, for the feet of Judas were washed, and our Lord did not at all mean that Judas should imagine that he had any part with the Lord whom he was resolved to betray.

The traitor was numbered among the disciples, and therefore he partook of the outward ordinance, but it did not convey to him any spiritual interest in Christ Jesus. Therefore we conclude that the foot-washing was only secondarily important. Yet we deny not that our Lord did mean so much about this mere outward washing, that had Peter obstinately refused to yield to it, he would have proved himself to have had no true loyalty of heart, and consequently no part in Christ.

Any act of direct and intentional rebellion against Christs authority, obstinately and knowingly continued in, would be a sure token that the person guilty of it was no true partaker with Christ. How shall I be His servant if I willfully reject any one of His commands? How can I consider myself to be truly a Christian while my will is rebellious, and refuses to submit to the express orders of my Lord? Let us consider this as professors, and practice instant obedience. Never let us obstinately refuse obedience to a command because it seems to us to be nonessential or trivial. We are not to be judges but servants. No motive can excuse disobedience.

Let us ask for Divine Grace that as soon as ever we see a sin to be sin we may shun it, and as soon as we perceive a duty to be a duty we may at once practice it, and never be guilty of any willful rebellion, since that might prove us to be without Christ. However, I still believe that Christs

main teaching in my text referred not to the washing with water, but to the cleansing of our spiritual nature by His precious blood and by His Eternal Spirit. In this sense read again the words, If I do not wash you, you have no, part with Me.

I. First suffer me to occupy your thoughts a few minutes with THE GREAT OBJECT OF OUR DESIRE. Our great object is to have a part in Jesus Christ. I am addressing myself, for the most part, to those who regularly hear the Word, and who have a respect for the name of Jesus, and a longing to be saved with His salvation. I hope there is not one among us who would consider it a barren honor to have a part with Christ, nor one who would think it to be a small calamity to be deprived of his part with Jesus the Son of God.

Brethren, you and I desire to have part in the merit of His righteousness. We have no righteousness of our own, but we desire that He should be the Lord our Righteousness, that in His righteousness arrayed we should not be found naked in the day of the great wedding feast, but with the wedding garment on may sit down to the marriage supper. We desire to have a part in His death. Jesus died that He might make atonement for guilt, and we desire a part in His atoning sacrifice. We are guilty. Our heart yearns to be washed in the blood, to be cleansed by that expiation, and to stand before the Lord accepted in the Beloved.

We hope that the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world will give us a part in His sin-removing power. We believe in His Resurrection, and our prayer is that we may have part in itbecause He rose we also may rise, and may forever, both in body and in soul, enjoy eternal blessedness. Our faith has seen the Crucified One ascending to the skies, and we desire a part in His ascension, to share in the blessings which He received for rebellions men when He led captivity captive. Yes, and before long to tread that same starry way, and enter into the rest where He is, and behold the Glory which God has given to Him.

We aspire to share in His intercession. Before the Fathers Throne He presents His ever-accepted supplication, and we trust that He pleads for us that blessings numberless may descend upon us unworthy ones. We were wretched, indeed, if we had not a persuasion that we share a part in the pleadings of our great High Priest. We trust our name is engraved on one of the precious stones of His breastplate, and is so borne before God. Moreover, we know that Christ sits at the right hand of God as King, all things being delivered into His hands, and we desire to have a part with Him in His kingdom, to be partakers of the peace which His scepter bringsyes, and to be ourselves made kings to reign with Him.

Moreover, we expect His second advent. In the same manner as He went up to Heaven, in that same manner will He descend, with the trump of the archangel and the voice of God, in His own proper Person actually and really, not in myth and phantom, but in very deed. As He is gone from us, so shall He come again, and then will He take to Himself all power, and reign from the river even unto the ends of the earth. We hope to participate in the glory of His appearing and kingdom.

Whatever the Millennium may be, whatever the splendor of the latter day, our aspiration is that we may have a part with Christ in all these things. We would not shun His Cross, for we desire His crown. We would not desert Him in His humiliation, for we hope to attend Him in His triumph. We would cheerfully go forth without the camp and bear the reproach for His sake, for we hope to stand among the camp of the faithful ones when the crowns of immortality shall be distributed. Our souls deepest desire is that we may have a part with Christ.

My dear Brethren, I hope most of us here present know what it is to have a part in Christ, for we were elect in Him from before the foundation of the world. We have been make partakers of His Spirit, and have been brought into union with Him. We have submitted ourselves to His government. We are looking to Him for our salvation. We have a part with Him as members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bonesa part with Him as branches in the vine, as stones in the temple. We are serving under His banner in the same holy war, and laborers in the same sacred service. We have a part with Him as His friends and as His chosen whom He has admitted into the most familiar communion with Himself.

We are much deceived if this is not the case. But if it, indeed, is so, we feel that the blessed fact is altogether due to Divine Grace, and it could never have been so if we had not first been washed. If we have not as yet participated in the blessings which come to us through Christ, we know, this morning, for the text tells us, that we must be washed before we can have a part with Him. Brethren, we desire to be sons as He is a Son. We wish to be heirs as He is an Heir. We pant to be accepted as He is accepted. We aspire to be, before long, glorified as He is glorified. This is a blessing worthy of the utmost intensity of desire, and it is a blessing which we must obtain or we shall sink miserably down to everlasting destructionsince to be without Christ is to be without hope.

II. After these few words upon what it is to have a part with Jesus, I come to notice, in the second place, THE ESSENTIAL QUALIFICATION FOR OBTAINING AND ENJOYING A PART WITH CHRIST. It is essential that He should wash us. Observe then, that the qualification is not one of merit on our part, it is one of mercy on His part. If He had said, Except you obtain a superior degree of holiness, you have no part in Me, we might have become dispirited, desponding, and even despairing.

But the very chief of sinners may find comfort in such a word as this. Here is nothing of merit but all of mercy. Whatever is your sin, O Sinner, Christ can wash you! The only qualification for having a part in all Covenant blessings is that you as a sinner are washed by Jesus. There is no specification of something to be given on our part. It is something to be received. It is not demanded that we act as servants to Christ and wash His feet, but that He in tender condescension should be servant to us and wash our feet. If there were a matter of giving mentioned, O you poor and needy, you who are spiritually bankrupt, there might be reason for you to mourn! But since the essential, the great sine qua non is one of mercy alone, you may be comforted. You have but to come in all your filth and all your unworthiness and be washed, and this one thing shall give you part and lot in Christ.

But what is meant by this washing, which is the essential qualification for a man to have part with Christ? I understand it to mean one thing, namely, purification through the Lord Jesuswhich one thing, however, will be best understood if we describe it as four things.

First, no man has any part in Christ who does not receive the first allessential washing in the precious blood, by which all sin is once and forever put away. The moment a sinner believes in Jesus Christ, his iniquities are seen as laid on Christ the Substitute, and the Believer himself is free from sin. Though he may have been up to now black as an Ethiopian, yet is he washed in the fountain filled from the Redeemers veins, and he stands before God without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. There is such a blessed fact as the instantaneous reception of a perfect pardon through faith in Jesus Christ, and this happens the moment a sinner truly looks to the great atoning Sacrifice.

If you rely on the Substitute, and the matchless expiation which He made for human guilt, your sins, which are many, are all forgiven you. If He does not wash you, you have no part in Himbut if His blood atones for you, He is yours. If you do not receive His perfect, unrivalled, Godlike blood-washing, you are no Christian. Whatever is your profession, whatever your supposed experience, whatever your reformation, whatever you may have attempted or accomplishedif you have never come as a guilty one, and seen your sin laid upon the bleeding Son of God, you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquityyou have neither part nor lot in this matter. Without faith in the Atonement you can have no part in Christ.

There follows a second cleansing, which is, in some respects, but a branch of the first, namely, daily pardon for sin through faith in Jesus. As day by day we fall into sin, we are taught to pray each day, Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And there is provision made in Christ Jesus for this daily pardon, since besides being the Paschal Lamb, our Lord is the morning and evening Lamb for daily guilt. This is what Christ meant, especially when He washed the disciples feet, for He told them that He did not wash their head and their hands, because they had been washed. And, therefore, as being clean, they needed not to wash anything but their feet.

We who have once been pardoned have no need to be pardoned again in the sense in which we were at first. But we do have need in another sense, and in another respect, to seek a daily forgiveness of recurring sin. To use a simile which may, perhaps, explain what I meanthe priest of God, when first consecrated, was washed from head to foot, and so baptized into the service of the sanctuary. But later, each time he went to offer sacrifice, he washed his feet and his hands in the brazen laver. No need to give the complete immersion on each occasionthat had been given at firstand he was ceremonially purged from pollution, and made a priest unto God.

But accidental defilement, incidental to everyday life, had to be cleansed away, not to make the man a priest, but to keep him in proper condition for the right discharge of his priestly office. Even so, every Believer is made a priest unto God, and does not need to be made a priest again, but to be daily cleansed from everything that might prevent him from the best discharge of his sacred duties. Permit me the use of another similehere is a Blackamoor, black from head to foot. But he is washed in a miraculous bath, and so made white, white as snow. The man will never want another washing to remove his natural blackness, that is gone forever.

But, my Brethren, he may still need frequent washings, for as a white man he will constantly need the removal of stains incident to his being in this world. A sinner does not need, again, the first washing to be repeated, for that has put him into a new position towards Godbut he needs a washing as a justified man to maintain his conscience in peace, and his heart pure for service. The leper, once purged under the Law, was clean and might go into the congregation of the Lords House. Yet as a clean man and as admitted into the congregation, he had the ordinary need to wash which was incidental to every Israelite.

Or to put it yet in another formI, a criminal, am forgiven. All my crimes against the great Judge of all the earth are blotted out. I need no second acquittal. The acquittal which was given me when I first believed in Christ included all my sins, past, present, and to come. As before the bar of God I am clean, and need no further washingbut now being made a child, I stand not at His bar, but at His table, and alasI commit sins as a child! Sins which will not condemn me, for I am not under the Law but under Grace, but sins which require me as a child to go to my Father, and say to Him each day, My Father in Heaven, forgive me my daily trespasses, as I forgive them that trespass against me. This it is which you must receive every day, and if you do not receive it, you have no part in Christ.

If you think you do not sin at all, and have not, therefore, any need of washing, you have no part in Christ. If you fancy that you do not require this daily washing of the feet, take it for granted that you are too proud to understand yourself and that you have not been humbled as you ought to be. All those who are in Christ feel that they need each day that He should come and wash their feet. Though they are clean every whit, yet still they need their feet to be washed by Him.

A third thing included in this feet-washing, I believe, is the continual sanctification which faith in Jesus Christ carries on within us by the power of the Holy Spirit. If a man professes to be a Christian and is not in his walk and conversation holier than other men, that mans profession is vain. There are some who seem to think that we are to come to Christ as sinners, and then after having believed in Him are to live as we did before.

My Brethren, it is not so. Christ saves His people from their sins. When you hear the complaints of Gods servants concerning their temptations and their indwelling sins, you are not to conclude that sin has dominion over them, or that they have not overcome sin, or that they are not the men they once were. No, my Brethren, I believe the holier a man becomes, the more he mourns over the unholiness which remains in him. But he is in very truth a far better manhe is a spiritual and holy man. If Jesus washes you not, so that you become godly and upright, you may depend upon it, you have no part in Him.

If He does not wash that tongue, and cleanse away those angry, or idle, or filthy words. If He does not wash those hands, and render them impossible to perform a dishonest or unchaste act. If He does not wash your feet and render it impossible they should be able to carry you to the haunts of vice and criminal amusementyou have no part in Him. It is all worthless for unconverted persons to be baptized and come to His Table, for if He has not sanctified you in some measure He has not justified you.

If you are not a changed man, neither are you a saved man. And if you do not aspire after holiness, neither need you hope that you shall have a part in the Heaven of the blessed. If I wash you not, you have no part with Me. It includes then, you see, the first pardon, the successive pardons of each day, and the sanctifying work by which He cleanses us with the washing of water by the Word.

Once more, I think, in this foot-washing, our Savior meant to get forth the daily communion which the true Christian has with Christ. It was a very singular thing for a disciple to be sitting there and for the Master to be washing his feet. It was an astounding fact, a wonder, a miracle, a Divine Grace which Peter could hardly think possible. But every Christians life must be a series of similar wonders. Each day he will have to obtain from his Lord some things for which it really seems as if he ought not to have dared to ask. They appear too good and too great for him to receive.

I know, and you know what it is to go to the Lord Jesus Christ about little things, about household cares, about daily trials, about the troubles of our spirit, the distractions of our mind. It is a mark of a child to be able to do so. It is, in fact, a continuance of the foot-washing which our Lord gave to Peter. Washing feet is not a great or essential act. A man may live, though his feet after a journey may not be cooled by the refreshing stream from the pitcher. It is a small act, a grateful and refreshing act, and just such things Jesus Christ must continue to do for you and for me, if we are His people. We shall, in times of need, find Jesus in our chamber still clothed with the towel and bearing the basinready still to wait on us and administer loving refreshments.

And we shall often wonder, What? Did He really help me in such a thing as that, and did I dare to take such a case as that to Him? Unbelief will say, I dare not do that again. Lord, You shall never wash my feet. I cannot, I dare not make a servant of You for such common things as these. I will leave the great matters of salvation with You, but I will not come to You each day for ordinary things. But, Beloved, unless we do sounless we live this life of reception of great Grace for little occasions. Unless we live receiving wonders of loving kindness which we feel we have no right to receivemarvels of mercy surpassing all expectation. Unless, I say, our life is made up of tender mercies of which we are utterly unworthyJesus is not washing our feetand we have no part with Him.

Put these four things together, and I think you have caught the thought of our Master. It is very blessed to think that the very first portion of the least Believer is to be washed, and this is the most essential thing of all. Though we may not as yet wear those brighter Graces which are the ornaments of the Christian life, and cannot as yet rejoice that we are fullgrown men in Christyet if we are only little babes whose chief portion is to be washed, we have sure evidence of a part with Jesus.

We may be too little to do much service. We may be too weak to achieve great victories. But if our Lord has but taken us to Himself, and washed us, we have a part with Him. The most essential thing, you see, is that which the feeblest and the newest born of all the heavenly family possesses. Washing is for every trembling sinner who trusts in Christand it is as good proof of a part in Christ as the highest degree of Grace.

III. But I must pass on now to notice, in the third place, WHY THIS WASHING IS SO ESSENTIAL. And I answer, first, unless Christ washes us we have no part in Him because the claims of our Lord require it. Suppose a man shall say, I have no need of washing. Brethren, it is clear that he has no part in Christ, because Christ came on purpose to cleanse His people from their

sins. He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. The whole have no need of a physicianonly they that are sick.

If a man does not take Jesus to be his Savior, he may say what he likes about Him, but he does not even know the meaning of His name. May not a very sincere person admire Christs Character, and talk well of Him? Yes, and we shall be glad that he is able to go so far in the right way. But let not such a man deceive himself with the hope that he will be a partaker of any of the blessings which Christ brings unless he acknowledges that for which Christ is the Christ or the anointed Onenamely, to bring the Gospel of salvation to the unworthy.

One of old said, Aut Caesar aut nullushe would be either Caesar or nobody. And so Jesus Christ will be either acknowledged the anointed Savior, or He will be nothing to you. If you will not take Him to be an Expiation for your sins, and the true Refiner of your life, you refuse Him altogether. Mere admiration of the physician gives no part in his healing power. The loudest praises of light give not vision to blind men. Jesus is either the Savior or nothing. For this He lived. For this He died. Alas, for those who will not receive Him in this Character! In the long run you shall always find that, despite their soft speeches, they have not received the true Christ of God.

He who rejects Jesus as an atoning Sacrifice is sure to doubt His Godhead, and so to reject His grander nature. The deniers of the Atonement, who are supposed to be admirers of the example of Christ, generally turn out to be the greatest enemies to vital Christianity. There are no more real enemies of Christ than those who deny the doctrine of the Cross. If they do not accept Christ to wash them, they soon prove that they have no part in Him. Unless men need cleansing from sin, and unless His blood, alone, can cleanse them, Our Lord came on a frivolous errandHe descended to this world to perform an unnecessary workand He was foolish enough to shed His blood with the most absurd of motives.

If men need to be washed, then He came in Divine wisdom and philanthropy, and He lived and He died with an object worthy of His Divine mindand His life was no mistake. But if men do not need cleansing, Christs death was a mistake, and His whole life, I dare to say it, was a piece of base imposturefor He was evermore professing Himself to be the

Savior of sinners, and the Pardoner of sin. He spoke of giving rest to the weary, and of saving the lostif He could not save, or if men did not require savingthe life of Christ was a mistake, and His mission an imposition. Jesus Christ is nothing, His very name is ridiculousif there are none to save, and if He is not a Savior anointed.

You have no part in Christ, then, however much you applaud Him, unless you are washed by Him. You have rejected that for which He lived, and for which He diedyou have despised that which He considers to be His noble lifework, and for the joy of which He gave Himself up to death, if you refuse to be washed by Him. Someone, perhaps, may say, I believe I need washing, but I am confident I can purify myself. I have bad habits, and undesirable infirmities, but I can master the habits and can conquer the infirmity. I believe a man ought to be holy and become like God, and by diligent perseverance I conceive that I can do it.

Do it, then, Sir. I challenge you to do it, but you certainly have no part in Christ. Whatever you may think of Christ, you can have no part in Him, for He comes on purpose to save His people from their sins. His very name is Jesus the Saviorfor that same reason was He bornand if you can do it yourself, you are a rival to Himyou are an Antichrist. You will owe Him nothing, and you shall have no part in Him. Ah, see then, and mark it wellunless we are washed, we ignore the claims of Christwe cast a slur upon the great labor of His life, and we rob Him of His main Glory.

Furthermore, the Lord Jesus Christ is Himself so infinitely pure, so altogether holy, both as God and Man, that when we come to Him we must first be cleansed by Him before He can enter into fellowship with us. There is a fellowship with us as sinners which He graciously adopts, for He receives sinners and eats with them. But into fellowship with His deep thoughts, His blessed purposes, and His Divine Nature, He brings no man till first He has washed Him in His blood. If you refuse Him, then, as the Refiner who shall purify the sons of Levi, and take away their dross and sin, and then present them to Himself as much fine gold, you have refused all part in Christ.

Again, the blessings which are in Christ are so spiritual that till we are cleansed we cannot enjoy them. Who can see God but those who are first made pure in heart? Who can have peace with God but those who are justified by faith? The blessings of the Covenant are not like oil and wine, which the ungodly man can rejoice inneither are they like silver and gold, which the carnal heart can laugh over. But they are blessings, pure and refined, which the natural man knows notwhich only the man renewed by the Spirit of God can ever prizefor to others they are far above and out of sight. You must be born again. You must be washed. You must be renewed in the spirit of your minds or else Heaven, itself, would not be a Heaven to youand the things of the kingdom of God you could not knowits joys you could not enter into. Your lack of washing disqualifies you.

Moreover, mans nature is such that if he did but know it, it is impossible for him to have part with Christ without washing. Peter did not see on his feet what Christ could see there. I mean not on the flesh of his feet, but on what they represent, namely, his daily life. Christ could see in Peter blots and blurs, and spots and defilement which made Him indeed say, Alas, My poor Follower, you can have no part with Me unless I wash you. Poor Peter, if you did know yourself, you would see how impossible it is for Me to give you a portion with Me till first I have cleansed you. So, Brethren, if we had a sight of ourselves, a true sight in Gods own light instead of starting back from Christ the Purifier, we would cry to Him incessantly, Wash me, O Lord, purge me with hyssop, and I shall be cleanwash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

For all these reasons, then, the washing by our Master becomes a necessity. You cannot have a part in Christ unless you are washed by Him.   
IV. Just for a moment or two I shall ask you to think of some THINGS WHICH HAVE BEEN PUT FORWARD AS SUBSTITUTES for being washed by Jesus Christ.   
Peter had such a love for his Master, and such an admiration for Him that he very humbly said, Do You wash my feet? Now would not Peters humble reverential estimation of Christ stand him in good place? Might he not be accepted even though his feet were not washed? Ah, no! If I wash you not, you have no part in Me. If any of you feel your unworthiness, and mourn it, and are kept back from Christ by the thought that you are not fit to be savedwill this humility, this supposed humilitysave you? My Hearer, the answer is NO. Unless you have faith in Christ, and He washes you, you have no part in Him.   
No repentance, no remorse, no chastening of your spirit, no humbling of your soulif they exist apart from a living faith in Himcan give you any part in Him. O that you would give up this ruinous humility and trust in Jesus to cleanse you! For unless you do, though you humble yourself from morning to morning, and water the earth with your tears, and make your bed to swim with themyet shall you have no part in Christ. Peter had performed distinguished service for his Master. He had gone with the other Apostles and preached the Gospel, and cast out devils. And he was one of those who returned and said, Lord, even the devils are subject to uswould not this do? Would not these achievements prove that Peter had part in Christ?   
He preached so boldly, he faced the crowd so noblywould not that suffice? No, my dear Hearers. Though any of us should possess tongues of men and of angels, and give our bodies to be burnedyet if Christ washes us not, we have no part in Him. We must not hope that the noble service can stand in the place of the washing by the expiatory Atonement of Christ.   
But Peter had enjoyed very remarkable views of Christs Glory. He was one of the three who went up the Mount of Transfiguration, and there saw the Lord in splendor. And at other times with the other two favorites of the Master, he had been admitted to sights denied to common eyeswould not all this prove his part in Jesus? I sometimes hear men and women boasting out of measure of the coming Glory. And I know they give their chief attention to the prophecies of that Glory. I would not deny them all that they are likely to get from such studies.   
But I would remind them that it is not as glorified as the fact that Jesus puts away sin. He atoned for it as Christ Crucified, and as such He is our hope. Though a man bathe day after day in the very light of the Millennium, and though he understand all mysteriesyet if Jesus washes him not, if he has not justification through the blood, and holiness through the work of the Spiritit profits him nothing. Visions of Glory, however transporting they may be, give you no part in Him.   
But Peter had walked on water once when his Master bade him come to Him! Though he did, at last, begin to sink, yet for awhile he trod the waves, and found the water marble beneath his feet. Did not that prove him to possess a part in Christ? No, my Brethren, not if Christ washed him not. If you had faith to remove mountains, yet if you had not this blood-washing, this daily washing, you would have no part in Christ. But this man Peter had received deep instruction! Did not his Master say, Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood have not revealed it unto you? Yes, but I add that though you possessed all knowledge, and could interpret all mysteries, yet if Jesus washes you not, you have no part in Him.

It is not the power to occupy the pulpit. It is not the power to cast out a devil. It is not the power to work a miracle. It is not the power, even, to shake Heaven or earth that can prove you to have a part in Christit is the simply going down humbly to the fountain filled with blood and being washed there, which is the indispensable qualificationand nothing else can stand in the place of this. Peter, no doubt, was full of zealous enthusiasm. He could say, Though all should deny You, yet will not I. I will go with You to prison and to death. But the greatest imaginable zeal does not prove a man to have a part in Christ if he is not truly washed.   
I do implore you, my dear Hearers, to do what I anxiously wish to do myself, namely, to make sure that you have been cleansed in the blood of Jesus. It is one thing to know about that blood. It is another thing to have it applied to the conscience. It is one thing to know you ought daily to be washed. It is quite another thing to get that daily washing. It is one thing to believe, I ought to be holy. It is another thing to have the Holy Spirit dwelling in me to make me holy. It is one thing to see the faults of othersbut quite another thing to confess my own and to be cleansed from them by the Savior.   
Search yourselves, I pray you. You may have but little time to do it in therefore be on the alert, and examine yourself! For dont you hear the sentence, full of love and full of pity, and yet as stern as the thunderclaps which pealed from Sinais Smoking summitIf I wash you not, you have no part in Me? If He does not justify you. If He does not daily forgive you. If He does not daily sanctify you. If He does not daily perform condescending deeds of tenderness and kindness towards you, you have no part in Him.   
V. So let us close with LESSONS OF WISDOM upon which I linger but a minute or two. The lesson of wisdom which comes first is thislet no supposed humility keep any of you from believing in Jesus Christ. The way of Grace is miracle from beginning to end. Stagger not, therefore, to begin with accepting a miracle of Grace. You say, I cannot believe that Christ could forgive such a Hell-deserving sinner as I am. I have not any claims on Him. I have been such a wretch. I cannot think that simply on my trusting Him, He, out of His abundant mercy, will forgive my sins.   
My dear Friend, if you cannot believe that to begin withit is but the commencement miraclethere are still greater things than these! But I am so unworthy! I know you are, it is all trueyou are much more unworthy than you have any idea of. You do not deserve to live. You do not deserve to be out of Hell. But since God is gracious, and He bids you trust Christ and you shall live, do not be damned because you are too proudly humble to be saved! You tell me I speak sarcastically. I tell you, rather, I speak the Truth of God. It is Satan who deceives you by making you believe that there is any humility in doubting the mercy of God in Christ Jesus!   
What if you are the worst sinner out of damnation? If God tells you He will save you upon your believing and being baptized, why, Man, believe and be baptized and be saved! And may God the Holy Spirit lead you to do that now. What have you to do with saying it is too good a thing? If God chooses to give it, who are you to say it is too good? You must be washed by Christ or else perish! O do not stand back because it seems too good for you to receive! You must be washed, I say, or perish! Take the good that God provides you and be grateful for it.   
What if God Himself came down from Heaven and put on human flesh and suffered and died that you might not suffer and die? I grant you it is a miracle that makes the very seraphim astonished and causes the whole universe to tremble with amazement. But why do you draw back from it and say, Because it is so great I will not receive it? Do you refuse the air because a bounteous God has made it so abundant? Do you refuse to drink of the river because it is so deep and broad? Will you refuse Gods mercy because that mercy is so illimitable, so vast, so Divine? O do not! I say again, damn not yourself under pretense of humilitybut come as you are, and accept the mercy which is freely presented to you in Christ Jesus, in the Gospel which He has bid us preach. Remember, He that believes and is baptized, shall be saved. He that believes not, shall be damned.   
A further lesson of wisdom is thisas you must not let a supposed humility keep you back, so let no other kind of feeling keep you from Christ. The feeling may seem to be very right and very proper, but if it prevents your being saved, it is a bad feeling. I know your human nature may excuse it and say, Why, this is commendable for a man to feel his sin so great! Is it not even praiseworthy? I answer, nothing is commendable which makes a man think that God cannot forgive him. Feel your sin to be as great as you will, but do not, therefore, slander God as though He were unwilling to forgive you.   
Your feeling may look pretty in the darkness of your ignorance, but in the brightness of the eternal light, any feeling that keeps you away from the Cross and away from your Father God is a damnable feeling, and therefore away with it! Believe at once! I charge you to believe in the name of Jesus of Nazareth! I, His servant charge you in His namebelieve Him! As He spoke to the winds and they were hushed, and to the waves and they were stilled, so in His name I speak to you all! I say trust Him and you shall find peace for your spirit and joy for your soul, both now and forever.   
The last word shall be thisremember, my dear Friends, what you are if you remain unwashed. And remember what you will be if you are washed. If you remain unwashed you have no part in Him. The past unforgiven, the present unchanged, the future unsanctified. There remains for you, when the dread summons comes that shall separate your soul from your body, nothing that can comfort, nothing that can afford a ray of hope. Convicted before the bar of God of ten thousand offenses against His righteous Law, convicted of mad, insane rebellion against God in having refused the Gospel of His dear Son, you must be driven from His Presence. And I warn you that within the cover of His Book there is not so much as a single jot or tittle that breathes anything like consolation to a spirit that has once been condemned of God after death.   
Men have tried to contort this Bible and make it say something that might encourage a soul to reject Christ. But there is here nothing but a fearful looking for of judgment and of fiery indignation which shall devour the unbeliever. It is now or never with you! I beseech youlook to Jesus Christ and live! To be washed! How simple! Nothing is asked of you but to take what Christ has made ready for you. To be washed! How necessary! To be washed now! How easy! O cast not away the promise of God through unbelief, but accept the washing, lest you cast yourself into eternal condemnation!   
If you believe in Jesus now, you shall be cleansed, your life shall become new. The preaching of morality helps but little. Men have been preached at with morality till they have become drunkards and swearers. Vice laughs at the preaching of morality. But the preaching of Christ Crucified and the Gospel of Substitution is efficaciousas many here are testifying by their renewed lives and changed behavior.   
Trust Christ, then, and as your present life will be changed, your future life will be unboundedly blessed. When your turn shall come to depart out of the world unto the Father, you shall be with Jesus where He isand you shall behold His Glory. Oh, then, be washed and have part in all the splendor that is to be revealed! Be washed now, and His shall be the glory. Amen.

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CHRISTS NEW COMMANDMENT   
NO. 2936

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, MAY 18, 1905.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, APRIL 4, 1875.

**A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another: as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another. John 13:34, 35.**

I CAN never doubt, or for a moment distrust the affection of my dear people to myself. I certainly do not ask for any more of your love, for I have as much as one man ought to haveperhaps a little more certainly a great deal more than I deserve. I can now fairly turn round and say to you, putting myself altogether on one side, Let brotherly love continue and let the warmth of your affection towards one another increase. And I can say this, too, without anybody daring to insinuate that there is something wrong in the Churchsome division or schism here. Blessed be God, I do not think that a microscopic eye could discover anything of the kind! There may be some of you who do not like certain persons quite as much as you like other people. I do not wonder at that, for there will always be some partialities even among the best of friends. Our Lord Jesus, Himself, had 12 Apostles and out of the twelve, three especially favored ones. and out of the three, one who leaned upon His bosom. There are some people who are more lovable than other people and we can hardly help loving them more than others. Still, I know of no special reason of that kind why I should preach this sermon. I bless the Lord that you are as loving as you are and pray that you may increase more and more in your love to one another.

I am going to speak upon our text thus. First, the title which our Lord gave to this commandment. He called it a new commandment. Secondly, the example by which He expounded itThat you love one another as I have loved you. And thirdly, the result by which He enforced itBy this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.

I. First, then, THE TITLE WHICH CHRIST GAVE TO THIS COMMANDMENTa new commandment.   
Many of you, I do not doubt, have heard the story of Archbishop Usher and Mr. Rutherford. But it is so appropriate to this subject that I cannot help telling it again. The archbishop had heard of the wondrous power of Rutherfords devotion and of the singular beauty of the arrangement of his household, and he wished to witness it himself. But he could not tell how to do so until it occurred to him that he might disguise himself as a poor traveler. Accordingly, at nightfall, he knocked at the door of Mr. Rutherfords house and was received by Mrs. Rutherford. He asked if he could find lodgings there for the night, to which she answered, Yes, for they entertained strangers. She placed him in the kitchen and gave him something to eat. It was a part of her regular family discipline, on Saturday evening, to catechize the children and the servants and, of course, the poor man in the kitchen came in among them.   
Mrs. Rutherford put to all of them some questions concerning the commandments and to this poor man she put the question, How many commandments are there? And he answered, Eleven. Ah, she said, what a sad thing that a man of your age, whose hair is sprinkled with gray, should not even know how many commandments there are, for there is not a child above six years old in our parish who does not know that. The poor man said nothing in reply, but he had his oatmeal porridge and went to bed. Later, he rose and listened to Rutherfords midnight prayer. He was charmed with it, made himself known to him, borrowed a better coat from him, preached for him on the Sunday morning and surprised Mrs. Rutherford by taking as his text, A new commandment I give unto you, and by commencing with the observation that this might very properly be called the eleventh commandment. By-and-by the archbishop went on his way and he and Rutherford had been refreshed together. It is the eleventh commandment and if, the next time we are asked how many commandments there are, we answer, Eleven, we shall reply rightly enough.   
But why is it a new commandment? Is it not included in the ten? You know how our Lord approved the lawyers summary of the Ten CommandmentsYou shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself. How is this a new commandment thenThat you love one another?   
It is new, first, as to the extent of the love. We are to love our neighbor as ourselves, but we are to love our fellow Christians as Christ loved us and that is far more than we love ourselves. Christ loved us better than He loved Himself, for He loved us so much that He gave Himself for us, so that now no one of us is to say, I am to love my friend, my brother, my fellow creatures as I love myself, but to interpret Christs command thus, I am to love my fellow Christians even as Jesus Christ who died for me, has loved me. This is a nobler kind of love altogether to the love which we are to manifest to our neighbors. That is the love of benevolence, but this is a love of affinity and close relationship and involves a higher degree of self-sacrifice than was enjoined by the Law of Moses, or than would have been understood by the bulk of mankind to have been intended by the precept which bids us love one another even as we love ourselves.   
Next, it is a new commandment because it is backed by a new reason. The old commandment was backed by this declaration, I am the Lord your God, which have brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. The Israelite was to obey that Law because of the redemption which God had worked for his nation in Egypt. But we are commanded to love one another because Christ has redeemed us from a far worse bondage than that of Egypt and with a far costlier Sacrifice than the offering up of myriads of paschal lambs. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us. He has brought us out from under the iron yoke of sin and Satan and has broken our bonds asunder. Our enemies have pursued us, but He has destroyed them at the sea, even at the Red Sea. He has redeemed us with His own hearts blood and, therefore, His new commandment comes to us with the greatest possible force, That you love one another as I have loved you.   
It is a new commandment because of the extent of it and also because of the reason by which it is supported.   
It is a new commandment, also, because it is a new love, springing from a new nature and embracing a new nation. I am bound, as a man, to love my fellow man because he is a man. But I am bound, as a regenerate man, to love my fellow Christian still more because he, also, is regenerate. The ties of blood ought to be recognized by us far more than they are. We are too apt to forget that God has made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth. So that by the common tie of blood we are all brethren. But, Beloved, the ties of Grace are far stronger than the ties of blood. If you are really born of God, you are Brothers by a brotherhood that is stronger, even, than the natural brotherhood which enabled you to lie in the same cradle and to hang at the same breast, for brothers according to the flesh may be eternally separated. The right hand of the King may be the position accorded to the one and his left hand may be the position assigned to the other. But Brothers who are truly born of God, share a brotherhood which must last forever! They who are now Brothers and Sisters in Christ shall always be Brothers and Sisters!   
It is a very blessed thing when we are able to love one another because the Grace that is in any one of us sees the Grace that is in another and discerns in that other, not the flesh and blood of the Savior, but such a resemblance to Christ that it must love that other one for His sake! As it is true that if we are of the world, the world will love its own, so is it true that if we are of the Spirit, the Spirit will love His own! The whole redeemed family of Christ is firmly bound together. Born of God ourselves, we keep looking out to see others who have been born-again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible. And when we do see them, we cannot help loving them. There is a bond of union between us at once. There are certain Brethren who hold that communion among Christians ought to be restrictedthey say that if Believers are disobedient, especially with regard to Baptism, they ought not to be communed with. I do not judge my Brothers and Sisters who hold those views, but I do not hesitate to tell them that they hold views which it is quite impossible for them to carry out. If they are, themselves, in the body of Christ they must of necessity commune with all the other members of the mystical body of Christthey cannot help themselves! Suppose that my little finger has been properly washed and cleansed, but that the rest of my hand it not so clean and that, therefore, my finger holds it to be its duty to shut off the rest of my hand from communion with itself? It cannot do itit is impossible unless it is severed from the hand! It must commune with the rest of the body, whether it is washed or unwashed. You may deny your friend the outward form of fellowship because he is not baptized, but you cannot deny him the inner fellowship which is much more important. You are allied to God and therefore you must have fellowship with all others who are allied to God, whether you like it or not! It is not a thing which your church discipline can touchit can no more be bound than can the waves of air which are constantly in motion. The wind blows where it wishes, and the Divine breath of fellowship comes where it pleases and the life of God will manifest itself in all the members of the body of Christ! And neither can you by any possibility restrain it.   
The love which Christ commands His followers to have towards one another is not the ordinary love of man to man as such, but the love of the new-born man to the new-born man. Let us who love the Lord, love each other fervently in that sense. This is a love which arises out of a totally new union. A man who is a Christian belongs to a very special family. That family circle does not comprehend the whole human raceit is a family inside the larger human family, yet separated from it by an inner spiritual life. What if I say that the distance between the saved and the unsaved is like a great gulf? It is true that by the almighty Grace of God, there is a way across that gulf and many pass over itstill, the gulf is very deep and broad. But the moment a man is born unto God he enters that inner circle and becomes a member of a new family. Within that sacred circle of electing love, all bonds of nationality are broken forever. There we are no longer Frenchmen or Englishmen, Americans or Russians, black or white, bond or free, but we are all one in Christ Jesus. There neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails! There the barbarian is no less and the Greek is no more than any other member of the redeemed family. We are Brothers and Sisters because, in Christ we are all in one family and, therefore it is that we are called to a new kind of love, a love which is like the love of the brothers of the same house, only more sublime, and with better reasons lying at the bottom than even the love of consanguinity can boast.   
And, beloved Friends, this is a new commandment because it is enforced by new necessities. Christians ought to love one another because they are the subjects of one King who is also their Savior. We are a little band of Brothers and Sisters in the midst of a vast multitude of enemies. Behold, said Christ to His disciples, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves. If you are true Christians, you will not have the love of worldlingsyou cannot have it! They will be sure to ridicule you, call you fools, or hypocrites, or something equally uncomplimentary. Well, then, cling the more closely to one another! Whatever opposition you meet with outside, let it only weld you into a firmer unit, the one with the other. We are like a small company of soldiers in an enemys country, strongly garrisoned by the vast battalions of the foe, so we must hold togetherwe must be as one man, banded together in closest fellowshipas our Great Captain bids us. God grant that the very fact that we are found in an enemys country may result in making us more completely one than we have ever been before!

When I hear a Christian man finding fault with his minister, I always wish that the devil had found somebody else to do his dirty work. I hope that none of you will ever be found complaining of Gods servants who are doing their best to help their Lords cause. There are plenty who are ready to find fault with them and it is much better that their faultsif they have faultsshould be pointed out by an enemy rather than by you who belong to the same family as they do! Even if you should know that a professor is a hypocrite, it may be the duty of a Christian to say, Let him fall by the hand of another. I would rather not give evidence against him. When I hear my Master say, One of you shall betray Me, I may have a shrewd suspicion that He refers to Judas, but it will be wiser for me to say, Lord, is it I? rather than to ask, Lord, is it Judas?   
Further, dear Brothers and Sisters, this is a new commandment because it is suggested by new characteristics. In our fellow men there may be something lovable, but in our fellow Christians, there must be something lovable. Suppose they are only newly born to Godfor my part, I hardly know of a more beautiful sight than a newborn Christian! I like to hear the prayer of the one who is just convertedthere may be much of mistake and imperfection in it, but that does not spoil it! A lamb does not bleat in quite the same tones that a sheep uses, yet a lamb is a very beautiful object and one likes to hear its feeble notes. And there is a beauty about the lambs in Christs flock as well as about the full-grown sheep. There is nothing more lovely to be seen in the whole world than an aged Believer who has lived very near to God. How calm the old gentlemans spiritand when he begins to talk about the things of God and to testify concerning the love of his Lordhow charmingly he talks! There is much that is beautiful about all true Christians, so try and search out their excellences rather than their defects. If we are, ourselves, in a right state of heart, we are all the more likely to admire that which is good in others, just as Mercy and Christiana, when they came up from their bath, admired one another. I would advise you, Beloved, to imitate those gracious women. There is a beauty about your friend that there is not about yourself. Do not be always gazing in the mirrorthere are fairer sights to be seen than any you will find there! Look into your fellow Christians face and as you see anything there that is the work of the Spirit, love him because of that.   
And, once more, this is a new commandment because it is a preparation for better prospects than we have ever enjoyed before. We who believe in Jesus are going to live together in Heaven forever and ever, so we may as well be good friends while we are here! We shall see each other there in one common glory and be occupied forever in one common employmentthe adoration of our Lord and Master. The remembrance of this Truth of God ought to break down many of the barriers which at present exist in society. There was a wealthy Christian, a man who stood very high in social position, who was in the habit of picking out godly people of a far lower class than that to which he, himself, belonged. He would bring home to his table the farmer from the plow, or the smith from the smithy, and one of his rich friends ridiculed him for seeking such associates. But he replied, I do not think you ought to ridicule me for picking out those who are, socially, lower than myself, for those whom I have brought to my table are men and women who, I believe, will be nearer to the Throne of God in Heaven than I shall be. They are very poor, but they are better, more pious and more gracious than I amso I thought that I might as well pick the best company I could while I was hereand associate with them. I like that gentlemans idea, and I can also bear witness that I have often learned more in an hours conversation with a godly poor man than I have learned from an educated man who has known but little of the things of God! Never judge men by the clothes they wear, but by what they are in themselves! It is a mans heart and, above all, it is the Grace of God that dwells within the mans heart that you and I are to prize and lovemay God help us to do so!   
Thus, I think I have said enough concerning the new commandment which Christ gave to His disciples.   
II. Now I must pass on to the second pointTHE EXAMPLE BY WHICH CHRIST EXPOUNDED THIS NEW COMMANDMENT. As I have loved you, that you also love one another.   
First, Christ loved them unselfishly. He certainly had nothing to gain from associating with them and nothing to learn from them. It is true that He used them to help in the extension of His cause, but He first made them fit to be used. He owed nothing to them and they owed everything to Him. There was nothing in them when He first called themand to the very last there was nothing good in them except what His Grace had put thereand there was not nearly as much of that as there ought to have been, for He had to say, Have I been so long time with you, and yet have you not known Me, Philip? Christians, you also are to love one another, not because of the gain which you get from one another, but rather because of the good you can do to one another.   
I once heard a minister speak very grumblingly of the Baptist denomination. He said, I do not know what the denomination ever did for me. I could not help thinking to myself, Well now, that is a question which has never occurred to me and probably never will. The question that has occurred to me is, What can I do for the denomination? And I think that is the kind of question which every Christian minister ought to ask, not only concerning the denomination, but concerning Christians in general. We ought not to ask, What can these people do for me? No, put the shoe on the other foot and say, What can I do for these people? If you want to love a man, you must not get him to do you a kindness, but you must do a kindness to him and then you will love him. You cannot do good to another person without finding growing up in your heart some degree of interest in the person to whom you have done that good. It is possible that a child may forget its mother, forget that it drew its life, its nourishment and all the comforts of its infancy from its mother, but the mother does not forget that she reared it in its weakness and brought it up to strength. If you want to love a person, do some loving thing for that person and love will spring up in your soul to that person. Our Lord Jesus Christ loved His disciples unselfishlylet us do the same.   
He also loved them very trustingly for, though He was not unwise and put no confidence in man, yet I might slightly alter one of our hymns and say concerning our Lord, Oh, see how Jesus did trust unto Himself unto the childish love of His disciples! He never wore any armor when He was alone with them. In the midst of skeptical scribes and Pharisees, we can see Him standing like a man on His guard, with His sword drawn in His hand, but as soon as He gets among His own followers, He opens His heart to them and tells them many things that He does not tell others so many, indeed, that He once said to them, If it were not so, I would have told you, as if He had no secrets from them, but unveiled His very heart to them! Of course, you cannot do this to the full with all professing Christian but still, when you are among your fellow Christians, do not always go about suspecting everybody. I would sooner be taken in a thousand times than I would unjustly suspect one truehearted man. It is a shameful thing for any one of you to move among your fellow Christians and to be saying in your hearts, I am afraid that many of them are hypocrites. Sir, I am greatly afraid that you are yourself a hypocrite, for most men measure other peoples corn with the bushel that they keep at home! So, if you think ill of other people, the sin is probably in yourself. I have often said that if there is any place where I am quite at home, it is among my own congregation   
*There my best friends, my kindred, dwell! There God my Savior reigns!*   
There must be a hearty spirit of trustfulness between those who love the same Christ or else a lasting union between them is impossible.   
Next, Christ loved His disciples sympathetically. He grieved with them in their griefs and rejoiced with them in their joys. He entered into most intimate fellowship with them in their varied experiences. Let us try to do the same with our Brothers and Sisters in Christ. Let us weep with those that weep and rejoice with those that rejoice. Nothing tends so greatly to oil the wheels of life as a little loving sympathylet us always be ready with a good supply of it wherever it is needed.   
Our Lord also loved His disciples patiently. They must often have grieved Him by their ignorance and unbelief. If any of us had been in His place, we would have said, You set of dummies, we cannot bear with you any longer. But our loving Lord did not talk like that. After He had told them the Truth of God 20 times and yet they did not know it, He went on in the same fashion and told it to them again and again until they did know it. As He was so patient with His disciples, it ill becomes us, who are ourselves so imperfect, to say concerning any of our fellow Christians, I cannot feel any affection for So-and-So, or, I cannot have any communion with So-and-So. Do you talk like that because you perceive some imperfection in them? But, my dear Brother, have not you many imperfections? It may be that some other person is looking upon you in the same cold light in which you are looking upon him and that he is finding as much fault with you as you are finding with him! If so, it is a great pity that any of us should be impatient with one another when our Lord Jesus Christ is so patient with us.

Once more, our Lord loved His disciples practically. His love did not consist in the mere effervescence of transient emotion or in only kind words, but He loved them deeply and shared all that He had with them. He even condescended to wash their feet as though He had been their servant! What more could He do for them? Yet He did far more than that, for He laid down His life for them. He gave up all He had for them. He gave up all the members of His body and all the faculties of His soulHis entire Naturethat He might save His people. Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end. As I have loved you, He said, even so love you one another. What a marvelous exposition of the precept the whole life and death of Jesus Christ make up for us! May we have the Grace to follow where the path is so plainly marked out for us!

III. And now, thirdly, I am to speak of THE RESULT BY WHICH THE PRECEPT IS ENFORCED. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.

Among all of them who know that we are Christs disciples, there is one very important personand that is yourself. If you have love towards Christs disciples, you will know that you are one of His disciples, for how does the Beloved Apostle John put it? We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. It will be one of the clearest evidences to your own heart that you are really a disciple of Jesus when you realize that for Christs sake, you love the whole redeemed family of God! By this test shall all men know that you are His disciples and you shall begin by knowing it yourself.

By this test shall your fellow Christians also know that you are Christs disciples. I do not know of anything which more commends a Christian to his fellow Christians than a true spirit of love. I have read many controversial works and I have admired the force of the arguments in many of them. But when I have read them, I have not gathered from the perusal that the writers on either side were very eminently followers of Christ. They may have beenit was no business of mine to judge as to that matter. They may have been showing other precious qualities while they were contending for the faith once and for all delivered to the saints, but the Grace of Christian charity has not always been very manifest. For instance, if you read the controversy between Mr. Wesley and Mr. Topladywell, I do not know which was the worse of the twothey could both say a thing very sharply when they tried and the devil helped them to make it even sharper. Yet they were, both of them, good men and it was not according to the nature of either of them to say anything bad of the other. It is quite a relief to notice how Mr. Whitefield conducted his controversy with Mr. Wesley. As I have read it, I have said to myself, This man is a Christian and no mistake. It is reported that Mr. Whitefield was one day asked by a partisan, Do you think that we, when we get to Heaven, shall see John Wesley there? No, said George Whitefield, I do not think we shall. The questioner was very delighted with that answer, but Mr. Whitefield added, I believe that Mr. John Wesley will have a place so near the Throne of God and that such poor creature as you and I will be so far off as to be hardly able to see him. As I read such remarks made by Mr. Whitefield, I have said to myself, By this I know, as a Christian, that he must be a Christian, for I saw that he loved his brother, Wesley, even while he so earnestly differed from him on certain points of Doctrine. Yes, dear Brothers and Sisters, if we cannot differ, and yet love one anotherif we cannot allow each Brother to go his own way in the service of God and to have the liberty of working after his own fashionif we cannot do that, we shall fail to convince our fellow Christians that we, ourselves, are Christians!

But the point of our Saviors remark is hereBy this all will know that you are My disciples. That is to say, the outside world will know it. Let me tell you a remarkable instance of this. In the early days of Christianity, a terrible plague broke out in Alexandria. It was very dangerous to be near a person smitten with the disease and to touch such a person meant almost certain death. When the plague broke out, the heathen in Alexandria thrust out of their houses every person who had the slightest sign of the disease and left them to starveand would not even bury their bodies for fear of contagion. But the Christians visited one another when they were sick with the plague and no Christian was left to die unattended. They were zealous to go and visit each other, although they knew that they would, in all probability, catch the disease. And among the carcasses outside the walls of Alexandria there was not found one single corpse of a Christian, for, with sedulous care, they committed the bodies of their beloved to the earth in the sure and certain hope of Resurrection unto eternal life. And the heathen said to one another, What is the meaning of this? And the answer went throughout all Egypt, This is the religion of Jesus of Nazareth, for these Christians love one another. No sermon can be so eloquent to the world as a true manifestation of the love of Christ! And when God restores to His Church genuine, hearty, and sincere Christian loveI trust we have not wholly lost itbut when He gives us much more of it, then shall the world be more impressed by the Gospel than it is at present!

I will tell you an anecdote. It is one which, I fear, might be multiplied a thousand times and yet be true. During a revival, a young woman came into a certain congregation and was impressed by the services. She heard that the Christian Church was the home of union and lovein fact, a little Heaven. And perhaps more charmed by the beauty of the Church than by the beauty of Christ, she joined the fellowship of Believers there. After a little while she heard some Christians speaking very bitterly of others. Indeed, speaking of the faults of others, not at all as if they grieved over them, but as though they rather rejoiced to have something to say against their fellow Christians! Immediately the thought crossed the mind of the young woman, I have been deceived. The Christian Church is not the holy and happy family that I believed it to be. That conviction led to doubts upon many of the doctrines that she had been taught there. She soon neglected the means of Grace and then became skeptical concerning the Savior Himself. All this followed from finding disagreement where she had hoped to find Christian love and union. It pleased the Lord to bring her, at last, back to the Saviors feet, but, for many years she was the subject of great doubt and inward struggleand the occasion of it was the lack of love among Christians! O Beloved, do not let it be so among you! If ours is not a loving Church, I have labored in vain and spent my strength for nothing! If you love not one another, surely you do not love the Savior! But if you are knit together in love, then is our joy fulfilled in you and Christ also rejoices over you!

I have finished my discourse when I have said a word or two to those who are out of the family of Christ. It must be a very sad thing not to be a member of the family of which the Head is the loving Lord, Himself where the law that governs the family is the rule of love and where the distinguishing mark of every member of the family is love, one to another. And if it is true that we must either belong to that family, or else belong to another family of which Cain, who slew his brother, was the firstborn son, it makes it a very solemn matter! There are two seeds in the world and if you do not belong to Christ the Living Seed, you belong to the serpents seed. Woe to the man who is not of the family of God! Egypt had to weep and wail on that very night when Israel, beneath the blood-sprinkled lintel, could afford to sing and shout. And when the day comes for God to let loose the angel of vengeance, woe unto you unless you belong to the family of loveto the host of the living God!

How can I get love? asks one. Love comes by the way of faith. First trust the Master and then you will soon learn to love His servants. Rely upon the Savior and you will then feel an affection for all the saved ones. Commit yourself now into the hands that were pierced for sinners and you will soon joyfully give a loving embrace to those for whom Christs precious blood was shed! May we all meet in Heaven, where love reigns supreme, for our Lord Jesus Christs sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 13:1-17.**

Verse 1. Now before the feast of the Passover. Or, just as it was about to begin   
1. When Jesus knew that His hour was come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end. That is a very beautiful description of Christs deathHis hour was that He should depart out of this world unto the Fatherjust as though He was merely going on a journey, leaving one land for another! And if this is a fair description of such a stormy passage as that of our Lord Jesus, who died for our sins upon Calvarys Cross, it must with equal truth describe the death of any of the children of God. There is also an appointed time for us to depart and to be with Christ which is far better than remaining here. The loosing of the cable, the spreading of the sail, the crossing over the narrow sea, the coming to the eternal haven and the abiding therewhat Christian heart needs to dread this? How much better is it even to look forward to it with ardent anticipation! Think much of the abiding love of ChristHaving loved His ownHis by Election, His by Redemption, for He regarded that as already done which was about to be accomplishedHaving loved His own which were in the worldnot yet in Heaven, but still in the midst of trial, still imperfect, even as you and I areHe loved them unto the end, or, unto the perfection, as it might be rendered. The Alpha of His love which we find in eternity bids us believe that we shall find the Omega of it nowhere but there.   
2-4. And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simons son, to betray Him; Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God, and went to God; He arose from supper, and laid aside His garments; and took a towel, and girded Himself. Notice the wonderful contrast revealed to us in these verses! Our Lord Jesus Christ had a very vivid realization that He had come from God and was going back to God, and that all things had been given into His hand. Yet, while He knew that and had a more than ordinary consciousness of His own dignified Nature and position, He condescended to wash His disciples feet! Though many years elapsed between the event and the time when John recorded it, all the details seem to have been still present in his memory so that he distinctly mentions each separate actHe rose from supper, and laid aside His upper garment and took a towel, and girded Himself.

5. After that He poured water into a basin. The one that ordinarily stood in the guest chamber for the washing of the hands and feet of the guests.   
5, 6. And began to wash the disciples feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded. Then came He to Simon Peter: and Peter said unto Him, Lord, do You wash my feet? You must lay the stress on the pronouns in order to get the full forge of the original. Lord, do YOU wash MY feet? The contrast is between Peters Master and himself.   
7, 8. Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do you know not now, but you shall know hereafter. Peter said unto Him, You shall never wash my feet. That is, NEVER, as long as I live You shall do such a thing as that!   
8-10. Jesus answered him, If I wash you not, you have no part with Me. Simon Peter said unto Him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. Jesus said to him, he that is washed needs not, save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and you are clean, but not all. We have often, in commenting, noticed Peters fault. Perhaps we have noticed that too much. Let us now notice Peters excellence. I admire his humility in thinking it too mean an office for Christ to wash his feet. It seems to me to be a most proper feeling which prompted him to ask, Do You wash my feet? It seemed an overwhelming condescension of love which he could scarcely permit. No doubt he spoke too positively when he said to Christ You shall never wash my feet, but still, his motive in speaking thus was a good one. It was because he could not allow his Lord to stoop so lowhe thought it ill manners to permit such an One as Christ to wash the feet of such an one as the poor fisherman, Peter. I have already said that there was something that was not right and yet that was perfectly natural to this rock disciple, and this dove disciple, who was such a strange mixture of boastfulness and fickleness. Yet do not forget how much of good there was in him. I wish all of us were half as good as Peter. That was a grand utterance, Wash not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. He meant, Lord, let me have all the cleansing I can, not only such as the washing of my feet would bring, but such as the washing of my head and my hands also would bring. Let me be clear of everything which would prevent full fellowship with You, for I long to be altogether one with You.   
Then our Savior meekly, gently, quietly, explained that there was no need for the washing of his head and his hands, for his whole being had already been renewed by the one great act of Regeneration. And as he had been cleansed from sin by the free gift of pardon at the time when he first believed, there was no need of any repetition of the spiritual bathing. All that was required was the washing of his feeta beautiful distinction always to be observed. He that believes in Christ is fully forgiven. He is like a man who has gone into the bath and washed, but, when he steps out of the bath and puts his foot on the ground, he often soils it, so that before he robes himself, he needs to wash his feet again. That is our condition as Believers in Jesuswe are washed in His precious blood and are whiter than snowbut these feet of ours constantly touch this defiling earth so they need, every day, to be washed. Christ our Lord Jesus said to Peter, He that is bathed needs not, save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and you are clean, but not all.   
11. For He knew who should betray Him; therefore said He, You are not all clean. They were all washed so far as their feet were concerned, but not all of them had been cleansed in the sacred bath which removes the stains of sin!   
12-17. So after He had washed their feet, and had taken His garments, and was set down again, He said unto them, Know you what I have done to you? You call me Master and Lord: and you say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one anothers feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. Verity, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If you know these things, happy are you if you do them. Blessed are they who, when they understand the meaning of Christs example, imitate it in their own lives!

HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK412, 891, 87.   
Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #730 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

LET NOT YOUR HEART BE TROUBLED

NO. 730

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING JANUARY 20, 1867, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Let not your heart be troubled:   
you believe in God, believe also in Me.   
John 14:1.**

THE disciples had been like lambs carried in the warm bosom of a loving Shepherd. They were now about to be left by Him and would hear the howling of the wolves and endure the terrors of the snowstorm. They had been like tender plants conserved in a hothouse, a warm and genial atmosphere had always surrounded themthey were now to endure the wintry world with its nipping frosts. And so it was to be proven whether or not they had an inward vitality which could exist when outward protections were withdrawn.

Their Master, their Head, was to be taken from them. Well might they cry with Elisha, My Father, my Father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof! We too, dear Friends, though we have not enjoyed, perhaps, so entire an immunity as did the Apostles, were at one time very graciously shielded from trouble. We had a summertime of joy and an autumn of peace far different than this present winter of our discontent. It frequently happens that after conversion, God, who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb, gives to the weaklings of the flock a period of repose during which they rejoice with David, He makes me to lie down in green pastures, He leads me beside the still waters. But for all of us there will come a time of trouble similar to that sorrowful occasion which led the Savior to utter these memorable heart-cheering words.

If our conscious communion with Jesus should not be interrupted, yet some other form of tribulation awaits us, for the testimony of earths poet that, man is made to mourn, is well borne out by the inspired declaration, man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upwards. We must not expect that we shall be exceptions to the general lot of our race! There is no discharge in this war. We must all be conscripts in the armies of grief. We, too, shall do battle with strong temptations and feel the wounds of adversity. Albeit that yonder ship so lately launched upon a glassy sea has all her streamers flying, and rejoices in a favorable windlet her captain remember that the sea is treacherous, that winds are variable, and that the stoutest vessel may find it more than difficult to outride a hurricane.

I rejoice to see the courage of that young man who has but just joined the army of the Church militant, and is buckling on the glittering armor of faith! As yet there are no dents and bruises on that fair helmet and burnished breastplate. But let the wearer reckon upon blows, and bruises, and bloodstains! No, let him rejoice if he endure hardness as a good soldier, for without the fight where would be the victory? Brethren in our Lord Jesus, without due trial, where would be our experience? And without the experience, where would be the holy increase of our faith, and the joyful triumph of our love through the manifested power of Christ?

We must expect, then, to walk with our Lord to the gates of Gethsemane both His and ours! We must expect to cross the Brook Kedron in company with our Master, and it will be well if we hear Him say to us as He did to His disciples on that eventful night, Let not your hearts be troubled: you believe in God, believe also in Me. My Brothers and Sisters, some of us live at this hour in the midst of trouble. We do not remember any period more dark with portents of evil than the present watch of earths long night. Few events have occurred of late to cheer the general gloom. Our hopeful spirit has been accustomed to say, all things considered, there are no times like the times present. Think about whether any times have been more vexatious and troublesome than those which just now are passing over our head.

The political atmosphere is far from being clear, no, it is thick and heavy with death-damps of mutual distrust which bring no increase to Englands greatness, but greatly the reverse. There are those who think that our trade, especially in its more speculative department, has become thoroughly rotten. And one thing is quite certainmany well-known infamous transactions have sapped the foundations of credit and stained our national honor. Is all England bankrupt, and our wealth a sham? Let us hope not.

But who can see without alarm the great portion of our trade which is going from us through the folly of the many who combine to regulate what ought to be left perfectly free? If our trade continues much longer to depart from us, we shall become a generation of beggars who will deserve no pity because we brought our poverty upon ourselves. There are, we fear, dark days coming upon this land. In fact, the dark days are here, for in no year of the last twenty has there been, Brethren, such deep and wide-spread distress in London as at the present moment.

I am far from endorsing all the fears of the timid, yet I do see much ground for pleading earnestly with God to send to our rulers political wisdom to end the bitter disputes of class with class, and to grant to our whole nation Divine Grace to repent of its many sins, that the chastening rod may be withdrawn.

Apart from these, we have each a share of home-trials. Is there one here who is happy enough to wholly escape from the troubles of the earth? Some have the wolf at the doorshortness of bread just now is felt in the houses of many a Christiansome of you are compelled to eat your bread with carefulness. You go to your God in the morning and ask Him to provide for you your daily food, and repeat that prayer with more meaning than usual, for just now God is making us feel that He can break the staff of bread and send a famine in the land if He so wills it.

Many who are not altogether poor are, nevertheless, in sorrow, for reverses in business have, during the last few months, brought the affairs of many of the Lords people into a very perilous state, so that they cannot but be troubled in spirit. Vexations abound and many a path is strewn with thorns. If this is not the shape of our trouble, sickness may be raging where penury has not entered. Beyond all these there may be afflictions which it were not well to mentiongriefs which must be carried by the mother alonetrials which the father alone must bear, or sorrows in which none but the daughter can share.

We all have our homes full of trials. Day by day this bitter manna falls around the camp. Trials arising among the Church of God are many, and we might add, that to the genuine Christian they are as heavy as any which he has to bear. I am sure, to those of us who have to look upon the Church with the anxious eye of loving shepherds, to those of us who are set by God for the guidance and rule of His people, there are troubles enough, and more than enough, to bow us to the earth. In the best-ordered Church, such as this is and long has been, it must needs be that offenses come. Sometimes it is a jealousy between Brothers. At another time a strife between Sisters.

Sometimes it is this one who has fallen into gross sin (God forgive these who have pierced us through with many sorrows!) and another time it is a gradual backsliding which the pastor can detect, but which the subject of it cannot discern. Sometimes it is a heresy, which, springing up, troubles us. At another time it is a slander, which, like a deadly serpent, creeps through the grass. I have had little enough to complain of in these respects, but still such things are with us, even with us, and we must not count them strange, as though some strange thing had happened to us. While men are imperfect there will be sins among the best of them which will cause sorrow both to themselves and to those of the Lords people who are in fellowship with them.

Worst of all are soul troubles. God save you from these! Oh the grief of being conscious of having fallen from high places of enjoyment! Conscious of having wasted opportunities for eminent usefulness! Conscious of having been lax in prayer, of having been negligent in study, of having beenalas, that we should have to add itunguarded in word and act! Ah, Friends, when the soul feels all this and cannot get to the blood of sprinkling as it wouldcannot return to the light of Gods countenance as it would desireit is trouble, indeed! It is terrible to be compelled to sit and sing

*Where is the blessedness I knew,   
When first I saw the Lord?   
Where is the soul-refreshing view   
Of Jesus and His Word?*

But my tale is all too long. It is clear that this mortal life has troubles enough. Suppose that these should meet and that the man, as a patriot, is oppressed with the ills of his country? Suppose, as a father and a husband, he is depressed with the cares of home? Or as a Christian he is afflicted with the troubles in the Church, and as a saint made to walk heavily before the Lord because of inward afflictions? Why, then, he is in a sorry plight, you say. Indeed he is! But, blessed be God, he is in a plight in which the words of the text are still applicable to himLet not your heart be troubled: you believe in God, believe also in Me.

Ceasing from this dolorous prelude, let us observe that the advice of the text is very timely and wise. Secondly, let us notice that the advice of the text is practicable. It is not given us to mock uswe must seek to carry it out! And lastly, and perhaps that last may yield us good cheer, the advice of the text is very precious.

I. FIRST, THEN, THE ADVICE OF THE TEXT IS VERY TIMELY AND WISE. There is no need to say, Let not your heart be troubled, when you are not in affliction. When all things go well with you, you will need another caution Let not your heart be exalted above measure: if riches increase, set not your heart upon them. The word, Let not your heart be troubled, is timely, and it is wise.

A few minutes thought will lead you to see it. It is the easiest thing in the world, in times of difficulty, to let the heart be troubled. It is very natural for us to give up and drift with the stream, to feel that it is of no use taking arms against such a sea of troublethat it is better to lie passive and to say, If one must be ruined, so let it be. Despairing idleness is easy enough, especially to evil rebellious spirits who are willing enough to get into further mischief that they may have more with which to blame God, against whose Providence they have quarreled. Our Lord will not have us be so rebellious. He bids us pluck up heart and be of good courage in the worst possible conditionand here is the wisdom of His advice, namely, that a troubled heart will not help us in our difficulties or out of them.

It has never been perceived in time of drought that lamentations have brought showers of rain, or that in seasons of frost, doubts, fears, and discouragements, have produced a thaw. We have never heard of a man, whose business was declining, who managed to multiply the number of his customers by unbelief in God. I do not remember reading of a person, whose wife or child was sick, who discovered any miraculous healing power in rebellion against the Most High. It is a dark night, but the darkness of your heart will not light a candle for you. It is a terrible tempest, but to quench the fires of comfort and open the doors to admit the howling winds into the chambers of your spirit will not stay the storm.

No good comes out of fretful, petulant, unbelieving heart-trouble. This lion yields no honey. If it would help you, you might reasonably sit down and weep till the tears had washed away your woe. If it were really to some practical benefit to be suspicious of God and distrustful of Providence, why, then, you might have a shadow of excusebut as this is a mine out of which no one ever dug any silver, as this is a fishery out of which the diver never brought up a pearlwe would say, Renounce that which cannot be of service to you, for as it can do no good, it is certain that it does much mischief.

A doubting, fretful spirit takes from us the joys we have. You have not all you could wish, but you still have more than you deserve. Your circumstances are not what they might be, but still they are not even now so bad as the circumstances of some others. Your unbelief makes you forget that health still remains for you if poverty oppresses you. And if both health and abundance have departed, you are still a child of God and your name is not blotted out from the roll of the chosen! Why, Brothers and Sisters, there are flowers that bloom in winter, if we have but grace to see them! Never was there a night so dark for the soul but what some lone star of hope might be discerned! And never a spiritual tempest so terrible but what there was a haven into which the soul could dock if it had but enough confidence in God to make a run for

it. Rest assured that though you have fallen very low, you might have fallen

lower if it were not that underneath are the everlasting arms. A doubting, distrustful spirit will wither the few blossoms which remain upon your bough, and if half the wells are frozen by affliction, unbelief will freeze the other half by its despondency. Brothers and Sisters, you will win no good, but you may get incalculable mischief by a troubled heartit is a root which bears no fruit except wormwood!

A troubled heart makes that which is bad worse. It magnifies, aggravates, caricatures, misrepresents. If but an ordinary foe is in your way, a troubled heart makes him swell into a giant. We were in their sight but as grasshoppers, said the ten evil spies. Yes, and we were but as grasshoppers in our own sight when we saw them. But it was not so. No doubt the men were very tall, but they were not so big, after all, as to make an ordinary six-foot man look like a grasshopper! Their fears made them grasshoppers by first making them fools. If they had possessed but ordinary courage they would have been menbut being cowardly they subsided into grasshoppers.

After all, what is an extra three, four, or five feet of flesh to a man? Is not the bravest soul the tallest? If he of shorter stature is but nimble and courageous, he will have the best of it. Little David made short work of great Goliath. Yet so it isunbelief makes out our difficulties to be most gigantic and then it leads us to suppose that never a soul had such difficulties beforeand so we egotistically lament, I am the man that has seen affliction. We claim to be peers in the realm of misery, if not the emperors of the kingdom of grief. Yet it is not so. Why? What ails you? The headache is excruciating? Well, it is bad enough, but what would you say if you had seven such aches at once, and cold and nakedness to back them?

The twitches of rheumatism are horrible? Right well can I endorse that statement! But what then? Why there have been men who have lived with such tortures thrice told all their liveslike Baxterwho could tell all his bones because each one had made itself heard by its own peculiar pain. I know that you and I often suffer under depression of spirit and physical pain, but what is our complaint compared with the diseases of Calvin, the man who preached at the break of every day to the students in the cathedral, and worked on till long past midnight, and was all the while a mass of diseasea complicated agony?

You are poor? Ah yes, but you have your own room, scanty as it is, and there are hundreds in the workhouse who find sorry comfort there. It is true you have to work hard! Yes, but think of the Huguenot galley slave in the olden times, who for the love of Christ was bound with chains to the oar, and scarcely knew rest day nor night. Think of the sufferings of the martyrs of Smithfield, or of the saints who rotted in their prisons. Above all, let your eyes turn to the great Apostle and High priest of your profession, and consider Him who endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest you be weary and faint in your mind.

*His way was much rougher and darker than mine, Did Christ, my Lord, suffer, and shall I repine?*

Yet this is the habit of Unbeliefto draw our picture in the blackest possible colorsto tell us that the road is unusually rough and utterly impassable. He tells us that the storm is such a tornado as never blew before, and that our name will be down in the wreck registerthat it is impossible that we should ever reach the haven.

Moreover, a troubled heart is most dishonorable to God. It makes the Christian think very harshly of his tender heavenly Friend. It leads him to suspect eternal faithfulness and to doubt unchangeable love. Is this a little thing? It breathes into the Christian a proud rebellious spirit. He judges his Judge, and misjudges. He has not learned Jobs philosophy. He cannot say, Shall we receive good from the hand of the Lord, and shall we not also receive evil? The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord.

Inward distress makes the humble, meek, teachable child of God to become a willful, wicked, rebellious offender in spirit. Is this a little thing? And meanwhile it makes the family and the outsiders who know the Christian to doubt the reality of those Truths of God of which the Christian used to boast in his brighter days. Satan suggests to them, You see, these Christian people are no better sustained than others. The props which they leaned upon when they did not want them are of no service to them now that they do require them.

See, says the Fiend, they are as petulant, as unbelieving, and as rebellious as the rest of mankind! It is all a sham, a piece of enthusiasm which will not endure an ordinary trial. Is this a small matter? Surely there are mouths enough to revile the Throne of God! There are lips enough to utter blasphemy against Him without His own dear children turning against Him because He frowns upon them. Surely they should be bowed to the earth at the mere suspicion that they could do such a thing, and cry to God to save them from a troubled heart lest they should rebel against Him!

I feel, with regard to the Christian Church, that the truth which I am endeavoring to bring forward is above all things essential. The mischief of the Christian Church at large is a lack of holy confidence in God. The reason why we have had, as a Church, I believe, unprecedented prosperity has been that on the whole we have been a courageous, hopeful, and joyous body of Christian people who have believed in our own principles most intensely, and have endeavored to propagate them with the most vehement earnestness.

Now I can suppose the devil coming in among us and endeavoring to dishearten us by this or that supposed failure or difficulty. Oh, says he, will you ever win the victory? See! Sin still abounds, notwithstanding all the preaching and all the praying. Are not the jails full? Do you see any great moral change worked after all? Surely you will not make the advances you expectedyou may as well give it up. Yes, and when once an army can be demoralized by a lack of spiritwhen once the British soldier can be assured that he cannot win the daythat even at the push of the bayonet nothing can await him but defeat, then the rational conclusion he draws is that every man had better take care of himself, and look to his heels and fly to his home.

But oh, if we can feel that the victory is not precarious nor even doubtful but absolutely certain! If each one of us can rest assured that the Lord of Hosts is with us! That the God of Jacob is our refuge. That the most discouraging circumstances which can possibly occur are only mere incidents in the great strugglemere eddies in the mighty current that is bearing everything before it. If we can but feel that sooner should Heaven and earth pass away than Gods promise be broken! I say, if we can keep our courage up at all timesif from the youngest of us who have lately joined, to the venerable veterans who have for years fought at our side we can feel that we must win, that the purposes of God must be fulfilled, that the kingdoms of this world must become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christthen we shall see bright and glorious things!

Some of you grow discouraged because you have taught in the Sunday school and you have seen no conversions in your class, and you want to sneak away among the baggage. Others of you have tried to preach in the streets and you did not get on, and you feel half inclined not to do anything more. Isnt this right? Some of you have not felt as happy with other Christian people as you would like to be. You do not think others respect you quite up to the mark that you have marked for yourselves on your thermometer of dignity, and you are inclined to run away. Isnt this right?

Now I will boldly say to those of you who are inclined to run, runfor our resolution is to stand fast. Those who are afraid, let them go to their homes for our eyes are on the battle and the crown. Those of you who cannot bear a little roughness and cannot fight for Christ, I had almost said, we shall be better without your cowardly spiritsbut I would rather pray for you, that you may pluck up heart and cry with holy boldness, Nothing shall discourage us. If all the devils in Hell should appear visibly before us, and show their teeth with flame pouring from their mouths as from ten thousand ovens, yet so long as the Lord of Hosts lives, by His Grace we will not fear, but lift up our banners and laugh our enemies to scorn!

*We will in life and death   
His steadfast truth declare,   
And publish with our latest breath   
His love and guardian care.*

There is a great deal more to say, but we cannot say it. Perhaps you will think it over, and perhaps you will perceive that of all the mischief that might happen to a good man, it is certainly one of the greatest to let his heart be troubled. And that of all the good things that belong to a Christian soldier, a bold heart and confidence in God are not the least! As long as we do not lose heart we have not lost the day. But if confidence in God departs, then the floods have burst into the vessel, and what can save it? What indeed, but that eternal love which comes in to the rescue even at our extremity?

II. In the second place, THE ADVICE THAT IS GIVEN IS PRACTICABLEit can be carried out. Let not your heart be troubled. Oh, says somebody, thats very easy to say, but very hard to do. Heres a man who has fallen into a deep ditch and you lean over the hurdle and say to him, Dont be troubled about it. Ah, he says, thats very pretty for you that are standing up there, but how am I to be at ease while up to my neck in mire?

There is a noble ship stranded and liable to be broken up by the breakers, and we speak from a trumpet and say to the mariners on board, Dont be alarmed. Oh, they say, very likely not, when every timber is shivering and the vessel is going to pieces! But when He who speaks is full of love, pity, and might, and has it in His own power to make His advice become prophetic of deliverance, we need not raise difficulties, but we may conclude that if Jesus says, Let not your heart be troubled, our heart need not be troubled!

There is a way of keeping the heart out of trouble, and the Savior prescribes the method. First, He indicates that our resort must be to faith. If in your worst times you would keep your head above water, the life belt must be faith. Now, Christian, do you not know this? In the olden times how were men kept from perishing but by faith? Read that mighty chapter in Hebrews, and see what faith didhow Believers overcame armies, put to flight the army of aliens, quenched the violence of fireand stopped the mouths of lions! There is nothing which faith has not done or cannot do! Faith is girdled about with the Omnipotence of God for her girdle. She is the great wonder-worker.

Why, there were men in the olden times whose troubles were greater than yours, whose discouragements and difficulties in serving God were a great deal more severe than any you and I have known, yet they trusted God! They trusted God, and they were not confounded. They rested in Him, and they were not ashamed. Their puny arms worked miracles, and their uplifted voices in prayer brought blessings from on high. What God did of old He will do nowHe is the same yesterday, today and forever.

Christian, betake yourself to faith. Did not faith bring your first comfort to you? Remember when you were in despair under a sense of sin? What brought you joy? Was it good works? Was it your inward feelings? The first ray of light that came to your poor dark spirit, did it not come from the Cross through believing? Oh, that blessed day when first I cast myself on Jesus and saw my sins numbered on the scapegoats head of old! What a flood of light faith brought then! Open the same window, for the sun is in the same place and you will get light from it. Go not, I pray you, to any other well but to this well of your spiritual Bethlehem which is within the gate, the water of which is still sweet and still free to you.

Ah, dear Friends, there is one reason why you should resort to faith, namely, that it is the only thing you have to resort to! What can you do if you do not trust your God? Under many troubles, when they are real troubles, the creature is evidently put to a nonplus and human ingenuity, itself, fails. We are like the seamen in a storm who reel to and fro and stagger like drunken men and are at their wits end. Oh let us, now that every other anchor is drug, cast out the great sheet anchor, for that will hold. Now that every refuge has failed, let us fly to the Strong for strength, for God will be our helper!

Surely it ought not to be difficult for a child to believe his father! It should not, therefore, be difficult for us to trust in our God, and so to lift our spirits out of the tumult of their doubts. Somebody will say, Well, I can understand that faith is a practical way of getting out of trouble, but I cannot understand how we are to

have faith. Well, in this the Savior helps us. You remember what He said when the people were hungryGive you them to eat. Ah, they said, there are so many! How can we feed them?

The Master began by saying, How many loaves have you? That is just what He says here. He says, It is faith that will get you out of trouble, but how much faith have you? He answers for them, You believe in God. I must do the same by you. Faith is that which will deliver you. You say, Where am I to get it? Well, you have some already, have you not? You have five barley loaves and a few small fishes. You are unbelieving creatures but you have some measure of faith. You believe that there is a God.

Yes, you say. You believe He is unchangeable. You believe that He is full of love, good and kind, and true and faithful. Now really, that is a great deal to begin with! You believe in Godthe most of us believe in a great deal more than thatwe not only believe in a God, and in the excellence of His Character, but we believe that He has a chosen people. We believe that He has made a Covenant with them, ordered in all things and sure. We believe that the promises of His Covenant will be fulfilled, that He never puts away His people. We believe that all things work together for good to them that love God. We believe that the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanses us from all sin. We believe that the Holy Spirit is given to dwell in His people.

Now this is a great deal, a solid fulcrum upon which to place the lever. If you believe all that, you have only properly to employ this faith in order to lift your soul out of the horrible ditch of doubt and fear into which it has stumbled. You believe all this? Surely, then, there is some room for hope and confidence! The Savior goes on to say, You believe in God, very well, exercise that same faith with regard to the case in hand. The case in hand was thiscould they trust a dying Savior? Could they rest upon One who was about to be crucified, dead and buriedwho would be gone from them except that His poor mangled body would remain in their midst?

Now, says Jesus, you see you have had enough of faith to believe in God.

Now exercise that same faith upon Me. Trust Me as you trust God. From this I infer that the drift of the exhortation I am to give you this morning is this. You have believed God about other things. Exercise that same faith about this thing whatever it may be. You have believed God concerning the pardon of your soul, believe God about the child, about the wife, about the money, about the present difficulty. You have believed, concerning God, the great invisible One, and His great spiritual promisesnow believe concerning this visible thing, this loss of yours, this cross of yours, this trial, this present affliction exercise faith about that.

Jesus Christ did, in effect, say to His people, It is true I am going from you, but I want you to believe that I am not going far. I shall be in the same house as you are in, for my Fathers house has many rooms in it. And though you will be here in these earthly mansions and I shall be in the heavenly mansions, yet they are all in the Fathers house, for in My Fathers house are many dwelling places. I want you to believe, says Jesus, that when I am away from you I am about your interests, I am preparing a place for you, and moreover that I intend coming back to you. My heart will be with you, and My Person shall soon return to you.

Now then, the drift of that applied to our case is thisbelieve that the present loss you sustain, or the present discouragement which threatens to overwhelm youbelieve that God has a high design in it! That as Christs departure was to prepare eternal mansions for His people, so your present loss is to prepare you for a spiritual gain. I like that word of Christ when He says, If it were not so I would have told you. When a man makes a general statement, if he knows an exception he ought to mention it. And if he does not mention it his statement is not strictly true. Jesus says, If it were not so I would have told you.

There is a great word of His which says, All things work together for good to them that love God. A very awkward thing has happened to you. The trouble which you are now suffering is a very singular one. Now, if ever there had been any exception to the rule which we have quoted, God, in honor, would have told it to you when He made the general statement, All things work together for good to them that love God. Such is His love and wisdom that if there had been one trial that could happen to one of His people which would not work for the good of that child of His, He would have said, Dear child, there is an exceptionone trouble will happen to you which will not work for your good.

I am positive that there is no exception to the statement that all things work together for good to them that love God, because if there had been an exception He would have put it inHe would have told us of it that we might know how far to trust and when to leave off trustinghow far to rejoice and when to be cast down. Your case, then, is no exception to the rule! All that is happening is working for your everlasting benefit!

Another place, however, another place will reveal this to you. Think of your Fathers house and its mansions, and it will mitigate your griefs. Alas for us if you were all, and nothing beyond, O earth! There is another and a better land, and in your Fathers house, where the many mansions are, it may be you shall be privileged to understand how these light afflictions, which are but for a moment, have worked out for you a far more exceedingly and eternal weight of glory.

Before I close this point, let me say it ought to be a great deal easier for you and me to live above heart-trouble than it was to the Apostles. I mean easier than it was to the Apostles at the time when the Savior spoke to them and for forty days afterwards. You say, How was that? Why because you have three things which they had not. You have experience of many past troubles out of which you have been delivered. They had only been converted at the outside of three years. They had not known much trouble, for Jesus in the flesh had dwelt among them to screen off troubles from them.

Some of you have been converted 30, 40what if I say 60 years? And you have had abundance of troubleyou have not been screened from it. Now all this experience ought to make it easier for you to say, My heart shall not be troubled. Again, you have received the Holy Spirit, and they had not. The Holy Spirit was not given, as you remember, until the day of Pentecost. His direct government in the Church was not required while Christ was here. You have the Spirit, the Comforter to abide with you forever! Surely you ought to be less distracted than they were!

Thirdly, you have the whole of Scripturethey had but a part. They certainly had not the richest Scriptures of all, for they had not the Evangelists nor any of the New Testament, and having, as we have, all that store of promise and comfort, we ought, surely, to find it no hard work to obey the sweet precept, Let not your heart be troubled.

III. THE EXHORTATION OF THE TEXT OUGHT TO BE VERY PRECIOUS TO ALL OF US THIS MORNING, and we should make a point of pleading for the Holy Spirits aid to enable us to carry it out. Remember that the loving advice came from Him who said, Let not your heart be troubled. Who could have said it but the Lord Jesus, the Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with grief?

The mother says to the child, Do not cry, child, be patient. That sounds very differently from what it would have done if the schoolmaster had said it. Or if a stranger in the street had spoken. Do not let your heart be troubled, might be a stinging remark from a stranger! But coming from the Savior, who knows what strong temptations mean, for He has felt the same, it drops like virgin honey for sweetness, and like the balm of Gilead for healing power. Jesus says, Let not your heart be troubled. His own face was towards the Cross. He was hard by the olivepress of Gethsemane. He was about to be troubled as never man was troubled, and yet among His last words were these, Let not your hearts be troubled, as if He wanted to monopolize all tears and would not have them shed so much as one!

He said it as if He longed to take all the heart-trouble Himself and remove it far from them. He said it as if He would have them exercise their hearts so much with believing that they would not have the smallest room left for grief! As if He would have them so much taken up with the glorious result of His sufferings in procuring for them eternal mansions that they would not think about their own present losses, but let them be swallowed up in a mighty sea of joyful expectation. Oh the tenderness of Christ! Let not your hearts be troubled.

He is not here, this morning, in Person, (would God He were!) but oh, if He will but look at us out of those eyes of His which wept, and make us feel that this cheering word wells up from that heart which was pierced with the spear, we shall find it to be a blessed word to our soul! Say it, sweet Jesus! Say to every mourner, Let not your heart be troubled. Brothers and Sisters, the text should have to us the dignity of a command as well as the sweetness of counsel. Shall we be tormented with trouble after the Captain has said, Let not your heart be troubled?

The Master of your spirit, who has bought you with His precious blood, demands that the harp strings of your heart should resound to the touch of His love, and of His love, alone. And will you surrender those strings to be dolorously smitten by grief and unbelief? No, rather like George Herbert, say, My harp shall find You, and every string shall have its attribute to sing. At Your Word, instead of mourning, I will bring forth joy! As You bid me I will put off my sackcloth and cast away my ashes and I will rejoice in the Lord always, and yet again I will rejoice.

Prize the counsel, because it comes from the Well-Beloved. Prize it, next, because it

points to Him. He says, You believe in God, believe also in Me. You know, if it were not for the connection which requires the particular construction here used, one would have looked to find these words, You believe in Me, believe also in God. Jesus was speaking to Jewsdisciples, who from their youth up had learned to believe in Emmanuelbelieve in Me. There, there there is the very cream of the whole matter! If you want comfort, Christian, you must hear Jesus say, Believe also in Me. You must approach afresh to the Fountain, and believe in the power of the blood! You must take that fair linen of His righteousness and put it on, and believe that

*With His spotless vesture on,   
Youre holy as the Holy One.*

You must see Jesus dead in His grave and believe that you died there in Him, and that your sin was buried there in Him. You must see Him rise, and you must believe also in Him, that His resurrection was your resurrection, that you are risen in Him! You must mark Him as He climbs the starry way up to the appointed throne of His reward! This must be your belief, also, in Him, that He has raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Himself. You must see Him far above all principalities and powersthe ever-living and reigning Lordand you must believe that because He lives you shall live, also.

You must see Him with all things put under His feet, and you must believe that all things are under His feet for yousin, death, Hell, things present and things to comeall subject unto the Son that He may give to you and to as many as the Father has given Him, eternal life! Oh, this is comfort! No place for a childs aching head like its mothers bosom! No shadow of a great rock in this weary land like our Saviors love consciously overshadowing us! His own side is the place where He does from the sun protect His flock. This is the pasture where He makes them lie down! This is the river from which He gives them drink, namely, Himself. Communion with Jesus is glory!

The saints feast, but it is upon His flesh! They drink, but it is of His blood! They triumph, but it is in His shame! They rejoice, but it is in His grief! They live, but it is with His life! And they reign, but it is through His power! It is precious advice, then, because it comes from Him and points to Him.

Once more, it is precious advice because it speaks of Him. It says. In My Fathers house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you: I go to prepare a place for you. Jesus is here seen in actionanything which makes us remember Christ should be prized. Jesus Christ comes to comfort usand that comfort is all about Himself. We should greatly prize it. We want to know more of Jesus. One great deficiency is our ignorance of Him, and if the advice of this morning is calculated to make us know Him better and value Him more, let us prize it! Think of all He said and did, and what He is doing for us now.

Now let your thoughts see Him beyond the glittering starry sky with the many crowns upon His head. See Him as your Representative, claiming your rights, pleading before the Throne for you, scattering blessings for you on earth, and preparing joys for you above! That is the last thought, namely, that the advice is precious, because it hints that we are to be with Him forever. An hour with my God, says the hymn, will make up for it all. So it will. But what will an eternity with our God be? Forever to behold Him smiling! Forever to dwell in Him! Abide in Me. That is Heaven on earth. Abide in Me is all the Heaven we shall want in Heaven!

He is preparing the place now, making it ready for us above, and here below making us ready for it. Courage, then, Brothers and Sisters, courage! Let us not fret about the wayour heads are towards home. We are not outwardbound vessels, thank God. Every wind that blows is bringing us nearer to our native land. Our tents are frail, we often pitch and strike them, but we nightly

pitch them *A days march nearer home.*

Be of good cheer, soldier! The battle must soon end. And that bloodstained banner, when it shall wave so high, and that shout of triumph, when it shall thrill from so many thousand lips, and that grand assembly of heroesall of them made more than conquerors, and the sight of the King in His beauty, riding in the chariot of His triumph, paved with love for the daughters of Jerusalem, and the acclamations of spirits glorified, and the shouts and joyful music of cherubim and seraphimall these shall make up for all the battles of

today *And they who, with their Master,   
Have conquered in the fight,   
Forever and forever   
Are clad in robes of light.*

Be that, by Gods Grace, ours. Amen.   
Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307  
PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #1741 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

LET NOT YOUR HEART BE TROUBLED   
NO. 1741

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, SEPTEMBER 23, 1883, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Let not your heart be troubled: you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Fathers house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know. John 14:1-4.**

WE may well feel glad that Gods people, whose lives are recorded in the Old and New Testaments, were men of like passions with ourselves. I have known many a poor sinner pluck up hope as he has observed the sins and struggles of those who were saved by Grace. And I have known many of the heirs of Heaven find consolation as they have observed how imperfect beings like themselves have prevailed with God in prayer and have been delivered in their time of distress. I am very glad that the Apostles were not perfect menthey would then have understood all that Jesus said at onceand we would have lost our Lords instructive explanations. They would also have lived above all trouble of mindand then the Master would not have said to them these golden words, Let not your heart be troubled.

It is, however, most evident from our text that it is not according to our Lords mind that any of His servants should be troubled in heart. He takes no delight in the doubt and disquietude of His people. When He saw that because of what He had said to them, sorrow had filled the hearts of His Apostles, He pleaded with them in great love and besought them to be comforted. As when a mother comforts her child, He cried, Let not your heart be troubled. Jesus says the same to you, my Friend, if you are one of His downcast ones. He would not have you sad. Comfort you, comfort you My people; speak you comfortably to Jerusalem, is a command even of the old dispensation, and I am quite sure that under this clearer revelation, the Lord would have His people free from heartbreak.

Has not the Holy Spirit especially undertaken the work of comfort in order that it may be effectually done? Trials depress the hearts of Gods children, for which the most tender ministry fails to afford consolation and then it is most sweet for the failing comforter to remember the unfailing Comforterand to commit the case of the sorrowful spirit into Divine hands. Seeing that one Person of the blessed Trinity has undertaken to be the Comforter, we see how important it is that our hearts should be filled with consolation. Happy religion in which it is our duty to be glad! Blessed Gospel by which we are forbidden to be troubled in heart! Is it not a thing greatly to be admired that the Lord Jesus should think so carefully of His friends at such a time?

Great personal sorrows may well be an excuse if the griefs of others are somewhat overlooked. Jesus was going to His last bitter agony and to death, itself, and yet He overflowed with sympathy for His followers. Had it been you or I, we would have asked for sympathy for ourselves. Our cry would have been, Have pity upon me, O my Friends, for the hand of God has touched me! But, instead of that, our Lord cast His own crushing sorrows into the background and bent His mind to the work of sustaining His chosen under their far inferior griefs. He knew that He was about to be exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death. He knew that He would soon be in an agony through bearing the chastisement of our peace. But before He plunged into the deep, He must dry the tears of those He loved so well and, therefore, He said most touchingly, Let not your heart be troubled.

While I admire this condescending tenderness of love, at the same time I cannot help adoring the marvelous confidence of our blessed Lord, who, though He knows that He is to be put to a shameful death, yet feels no fear, but bids His disciples to trust Him implicitly. The black darkness of the awful midnight was beginning to surround Him, yet how brave His WordsBelieve also in Me. He knew, in that threatening hour, that He had come forth from the Father and that He was in the Father and the Father in Himand so He says, You believe in God, believe also in Me. The calm bearing of their Master must have greatly tended to confirm His servants in their faith. While we see here His confidence as Man, we also feel that this is not a speech which a mere man would have uttered, even had he been a good manfor no mere creature would thus match Himself with God.

That Jesus is a good Man, few question. That He must be God is, therefore, proven by these words. Would Jesus bid us trust in an arm of flesh? Is it not writtenCursed is the man that trusts in man, and makes flesh his arm? Yet the Holy Jesus says, You believe in God, believe also in Me. This association of Himself with God, as the object of human confidence in the time of trouble, betokens a consciousness of His own Divine power and Godheadand it is a mystery in whose difficulties faith takes pleasureto see in our Lord Jesus, the faith of a Man for Himselfand the faithfulness of God for others.

Come then, dear Friends, close up to the text and may the Spirit of God be with us! I will read the text again very distinctly. Pray that you may feel the words even more powerfully than the Apostles felt them, for they had not yet received the Comforter, and so they were not yet led into all the Truth of Godin this we excel them as they were that nightlet us, therefore, hopefully pray that we may know the Glory of our Lords Words, and hear them spoken into our very soul by the Holy Spirit. Let not your heart be troubled: you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Fathers house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know.

These Words are, in themselves, much better than any sermon. What can our discourse be but a dilution of the essential spirit of consolation which is contained in the Words of the Lord Jesus? Now let us, first, taste of the bitter waters of heart-trouble and, secondly, let us drink deep of the sweet waters of Divine consolation!

I. First, then, LET US TASTE OF THE BITTER WATERS. Because I have said these things unto you, sorrow has filled your heart. I would not confine the comfort to any one form of affliction, for it is a balm for every wound. But still, it will be well to enquire what was the particular trouble of the disciples? It may be that some of us are passing through it, now, or we may be plunged in it before long. It was thisJesus was to dietheir Lord, whom they sincerely loved, was about to go from them by a shameful, painful death. What tender heart could bear to think of that? Yet He had told them that it would be soand they began to remember His former Words in which He had said that the Son of Man would be betrayed into the hands of wicked men and would be scourged and put to death.

They were now to pass through all the bitterness of seeing Him accused, condemned and crucified. In a short time He was actually seized, bound, carried to the High Priests house, hurried to Pilate, then to Herod, back to Pilate, stripped, scourged, mocked, insulted. They saw Him conducted through the streets of Jerusalem bearing His Cross. They beheld Him hanging on the tree between two thieves and heard Him cry, My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? A bitter drink was this! In proportion as they loved their Lord, they must have deeply grieved for Himand they needed that He should say, Let not your heart be troubled.

Today, those who love the Lord Jesus have to behold a spiritual repetition of His shameful treatment at the hands of men, for even now He is crucified afresh by those who account His Cross a stumbling block and the preaching of it foolishness. Ah me! How is Christ still misunderstood, misrepresented, despised, mocked and rejected of men! They cannot touch Him, really, for there He sits, enthroned in the Heaven of heavens! But as far as they can, they slay Him over again and again! A malignant spirit is manifested to the Gospel as once it was to Christ in Person. Some with coarse blasphemies and not a few with cunning assaults upon this part of Scripture, and on that, are doing their best to bruise the heel of the Seed of the woman. It is a huge grief to see the mass of mankind pass by the Cross with averted eyes as if the Saviors death was nothing nothing, at least, to them. In proportion as you feel a zeal for the Crucified and for His saving Truth, it is wormwood and gall to give in this age of unbelief. Christ Jesus is nailed up between the two thieves of superstition and unbelief, while around Him still gathers the fierce opposition of the rude and the polished, the ignorant and the wise.

In addition to this, the Apostles had for an outlook the expectation that their Lord would be away from them. They did not, at first, understand His saying, A little while and you shall not see Me: and again, a little while, and you shall see Me, because I go to the Father. Now it dawned upon them that they were to be left as sheep without a shepherd, for their Master and Head was to be taken from them. This was, to them, a source of dread and dismay, for they said to themselves, What shall we do without Him? We are a little flock; how shall we be defended when He is gone, and the wolf is prowling? When the Scribes and Pharisees gather about us, how shall we answer them? As for our Lords cause and kingdom, how can it be safe in such trembling hands as ours? Alas for the Gospel of salvation when Jesus is not with us!

This was a bitter sorrowand something of this kind of feeling often crosses our own hearts as we tremble for the ark of the Lord. My heart is sad when I see the state of religion among us! Oh for an hour of the Son of Man in these darkening days! It is written there shall come, in the last days, scoffersand they have come, but, oh, that the Lord Himself were here in Person! Oh, that the Lord would pluck His right hand out of His bosom and show us, once again, the wonders of Pentecost, to the confusion of His adversaries and to the delight of all His friends!

He has not come as yet. Nearly 2,000 years have rolled away since He departedthe night is dark and there is no sign of dawn! The ship of the Church is tossed with tempest and Jesus has not come to us! We know that He is with us in a spiritual sense, but, oh, that we had Him in the Glory of His power! Surely He knows our need and the urgency of the times and we are apt to cry, It is time for You, Lord, to work, for they make void Your Law. But they felt a third grief, and it was thisthat He was to be betrayed by one of them! The 12 were chosen men, but one of them was a devil and sold his Lord. This pierced the hearts of the faithfulthe Son of Man is betrayed.

He is not taken by open seizure, but He is sold for 30 pieces of silver by one whom He entrusted with His little store. He that dipped with Him in the dish had sold Him for paltry gain. This cut them to the heart, even as it did the Master, Himself, for our Lord felt the treachery of His friend. Of this water the faithful at this hour are made to drinkfor what do we see at this day? What do we see in various places but persons that are reputed to be ministers of the Gospel whose main business seems to be to undermine our holy faith and batter down the Truths of God which are commonly received in the Christian Church? Certain of them preach as if they were ordained, not of God, but of the devil! And anointed, not by the Holy Spirit, but by the spirit of infidelity!

Under the banner of advanced thought, they make war upon those eternal Truths for which confessors contended and martyrs bledand by which the saints of past ages have been sustained in their dying hours! It is not an enemythen we could have borne and answered it. If the outward and avowed infidel attacks Inspiration, let him do so. It is a free country, let him speak! But when a man enters our pulpits, opens the Sacred Volume, and denies that it is inspired, what is he doing there? How does his conscience allow him to assume an office which he perverts? To make him a shepherd who is a wolfto make him a dresser of the vineyard who, with his axe, cuts up the very roots of the vinesthis is an incomprehensible folly on the part of the churches! It is a dagger to every believing heart that Judas should be represented in the Christian Church by so many of the professed ministers of Christ! They betray their Master with a kiss.

Then there came another pang at the back of this, for one of them, though true-hearted and loyal, would that night deny his Lord. Peter, in many respects the leader of the little company, had been warned that he would act the coward and vehemently deny his Lord. This is bitterness, indeed, of which those that love the Church of God are compelled full often to drinkto see men whom we cannot but believe to be the disciples of Jesus Christ carried away by temptation, by fear of man or by the fashion of the timesso that Christ and His Gospel are virtually denied by them!

The fear of being thought dogmatic or labeled a Puritan closes many a mouth which ought to be declaring Him to be the Son of God with power and extolling His glorious majesty in defiance of all that dare oppose Him! The hearts of some who best love Jesus grow heavy at the sight of the worldliness and lukewarmness of many of His professed followers. Hence it seems to me to be a most seasonable hour for introducing you to the sweet waters of our text, of which I bid you drink till every trace of bitterness is gone from your mouthfor the Master says to you, even to you Let not your heart be troubled: you believe in God, believe also in Me.

II. Under our second head LET US DRINK OF THE SWEET WATERS and refresh our souls. First, in this wonderful text our Master indicates to us the true means of comfort under every sort of disquietude. How does He put it? Let not your heart be troubledbelieve! Kindly look down your Bibles and you will see that this direction is repeated. He says, in the opening of the 11th verse, Believe Me. And then, again, in the second clause, Believe Me. I thought, as I tried to enter into the meaning of this sacred utterance, that I heard Jesus at my side saying thrice to me, Believe Me! Believe Me! Believe Me!

Could any one of the 11 that were with Him have disbelieved their present Lord? He says, Believe Me! Believe Me! Believe Me! as if there was great need to urge them to faith in Him. Is there no other cure, then, for a troubled heart? No other is required! This is all sufficient through God. If believing in Jesus, you are still troubled, believe in Him againyet more thoroughly and heartily. If even that should not take away the disquiet of your mind, believe in Him to a third degreeand continue to do so with increasing simplicity and force. Regard this as the one and only medicine for the disease of fear and trouble! Jesus prescribes, Believe, believe, believe in Me! Believe not only in certain doctrines, but in Jesus Himself in Him as able to carry out every promise that He has made! Believe in Him as you believe in God!

One has been, at times, apt to think it easier to believe in Jesus than in God, but this is a thought of spiritual infancymore advanced Believers find it not so. To a Jew, this was certainly the right way of putting it, and I think to us Gentiles it is, also, when we have been long in the faith, for we get to believe in God as a matter of coursebut faith in Jesus requires a further confidence. I believe in Gods power in creation in that He can make what He wills, and shape what He has made. I believe in His power in Providence, that He can bring to pass His eternal purposes, and do as He wills among the armies in Heaven and among the inhabitants of this lower world. I believe, concerning God, that all things are possible with Him. Just in that way I am called upon to believe in Jesus, that He is as Omnipotent in power and as sure in His working as the Lord from whom come all the forces of natureand just as certain to accomplish His purposes as God is to achieve His design in the works of Providence.

Relying upon the Savior with the implicit faith which every rightminded man renders towards God, we shall only give our Lord the faith which He justly claims. He is faithful and true and His power can effect His promiselet us depend trustfully upon Himand perfect peace shall come into our hearts. These disciples knew that the Savior was to be away from them, so that they could not see Him nor hear His voice. What of that? Is it not so with God, in whom we believe? No man has seen God at any timeyet you believe in the invisible God working all things, sustaining all things! In the same manner believe in the absent and invisible Christ, that He is still as mighty as though you could see Him walking the waves, or multiplying the loaves, or healing the sick, or raising the dead! Believe Himand sorrow and sighs will flee away!

Believe in Him as always living, even as you believe in the eternity of God. You believe in the eternal existence of the Most High whom you have not seen! Even so, believe in the everlasting life of the Son of God. Yes, though you see Him die, though you see Him laid in the grave, yet believe in Him that He has not ceased to be. Look for His reappearance, even as you believe in God. Yes, and when He is gone from you, and a cloud has received Him out of your sight, believe that He lives, even as God lives and because He lives, you shall live, also! You believe in the wisdom of God; you believe in the faithfulness of God; you believe in the goodness of GodEven as you believe in God, says Jesus, believe also in Me. Faith in Jesus Christ, Himself, as an ever-living and Divine Person, is the best quietus for every kind of fear! He is the King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, The Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace! And therefore you may safely rest in Him. This is the first ingredient of this priceless comfort.

But now our Lord proceeded to say that though He was going from them, He was only going to His Fathers house. In My Fathers house are many mansions. Yes, and this was sweet comfort. I am going, He said, and on My way you will see Me scourged, bleeding, mocked and buffeted. But I shall pass through all this to the joy, rest and honor of My Fathers house. God is everywhere present, and yet as on earth He had a tabernacle in which He specially manifested Himself, so there is a place where He, in a peculiar manner, is revealed. The Temple was a type of that matchless abode of God which eye has not seenwe call it Heaven, the pavilion of God, the home of holy angels and of those pure spirits who dwell in His immediate Presence.

In Heaven God may be said to have His habitation and Jesus was going there to be received on His return to all the honor which awaited His finished service. He was, in fact, going homeas a son who is returning to his fathers house from which he had gone upon his fathers business. He was going where He would be with the Father, where He would be perfectly at rest, where He would be above the assaults of the wickedwhere He would never suffer or die againHe was going to reassume the Glory which He had with the Father before the world was! Oh, if they had perfectly understood this, they would have understood the Saviors words, If you loved Me, you would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father.

Imagination fails to picture the Glory of our Lords return; the honorable escort which heralded His approach to the Eternal City; the heartiness of the welcome of the Conqueror to the skies! I think the Psalmist gives us liberty to believe that when our Lord ascended, the bright ones of the sky came to meet Him and cried, Lift up your heads, O you gates; and be you lift up, you everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in. May we not believe of bright seraphs and ministering angels that

*They brought His chariot from on high   
To bear Him to His throne;   
Clapped their triumphant wings and cried, The glorious work is done!?*

He was seen of angels. They beheld that joyous re-entry, the opening of the eternal doors to the King of Glory and the triumph through the celestial streets of Him who led captivity captive and scattered gifts among men! They saw the enthronement of Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, but was then and there crowned with glory and honor!

These are not things of which these stammering lips of mine can speak, but they are things for you to consider when the Spirit of the Lord is upon you. Muse upon them for your delight! Jesus has gone by the way of Calvary up to His Fathers house! All His work and warfare done, He is rewarded for His sojourn among men as Man. All the shame which His work necessitated is now lost in the splendor of His mediatorial reign! You people of God, be no more troubled, for your Lord is King, your Savior reigns! Men may still scoff at Him, but they cannot rob Him of a ray of Glory! They may reject Him, but the Lord God Omnipotent has crowned Him! They may deny His existence, but He lives! They may rebelliously cry, Let us break His bands asunder, and cast His cords from us, but the Lord has set His King upon His holy hill of Zion and none can thrust Him from His Throne! Hallelujah!

God has highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow. Let not your hearts be troubled by the noise of controversy and the blasphemy and rebuke of an evil age! Though there is confusion as when the sea roars and the fullness thereof, and the wicked foam in their rage against the Lord and against His Anointed, yet the Lord sits upon the flood! The Lord sits King forever. Again, let us say, Hallelujah! The Prince has come unto His own again! He has entered into His Fathers palace! The heavens have received Him! Why should we be troubled?

Thirdly, our Lord gave His servants comfort in another wayHe gave them to understand by implication that a great many would follow Him to His Fathers house. He did not only assure them that He was going to His Fathers house, but He said, in My Fathers house are many mansions. These mansions are not built to stand empty! God does nothing in vain and, therefore, it is natural to conclude that a multitude of spirits, innumerable beyond all count, will rise in due time to occupy those many mansions in the Fathers house! Now, I see in this great comfort to them because they doubtless feared that if their Lord was absent, His Kingdom might fail. How would there be converts if He were crucified? How could they expect, poor creatures as they were, to set up a kingdom of righteousness on the earth? How could they turn the world upside down and bring multitudes to His feet whom He had purchased with His blood, if His conquering right arm was not seen at their head?

The Lord Jesus in effect said, I am going, but I shall lead the way for a vast host who will come to the prepared abodes. Like the corn of wheat which is cast into the ground to die, I shall bring forth much fruit which shall be housed in the abiding resting places. This is one part of our comfort at this hour. It matters little how men fight against the Gospel, for the Lord knows them that are Hisand He will ransom, by power, those redeemed by His blood! He has a multitude according to the Election of Grace whom He will bring in. Though they seem, today, to be a small remnant, yet He will fill the many mansions! This stands fast as a rock All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me; and him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out.

They boast that they will not come unto Christ, but the Spirit of God foresaw that they would reject the salvation of the Lord. What said Jesus to those like they? You believe not, because you are not of My sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me: and I give unto them eternal life. The wicked unbelief of men is their own condemnation! But Jesus loses not the reward of His passion. We fling back into the faces of the despisers of Christ the scorn which they pour upon Him and remind them that those who despise Him shall be lightly esteemedtheir names shall be written in the earth. What if they come not to Him? It is their own loss, and well did He say of them, No man can come to Me except the Father which has sent Me draw Him. Their wickedness is their inability and their destruction! They betray, by their opposition, the fact that they are not the chosen of the Most High.

But the redeemed of the Lord shall come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads. He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied. This matter is not left to the free will of man, so that Jesus may be disappointed! Oh no, they will not come unto Him, that they may have lifebut they shall yet know that the eternal Spirit has power over the human conscience and will, and can make men willing in the day of His power! If Jesus is lifted up, He will draw all men to Him. There shall be no failure as to the Lords redeeming work, even though the froward reject the counsel of God against themselves. What Jesus has bought with His blood, He will not lose! What He died to accomplish shall surely be performed! And what He rose again to carry out shall be effected though all the devils in Hell and unbelievers upon earth should join in league against Him! Oh, you enemy, rejoice not over the cause of the Messiah, for though it seems to fall, it shall arise again!

But our Lord went much further, for He said, I go to prepare a place for you. I think He did not only refer to the many mansions for our spirits, but to the ultimate place of our risen bodies, of which I will speak before long. In our Lords going away, as well as in His continuance in His Fathers Presence, He would be engaged in preparing a place for His own. He was going that He might clear all impediment out of the way. Their sins blocked the roadlike mountains, their iniquities opposed all passagebut now that He is gone, it may be said, The breaker is come up before them, and the Lord on the head of them. He has broken down every wall of partition and He has opened every iron gate. The way into the kingdom is opened for all Believers. He passed through death to Resurrection and Ascension to remove every obstacle from our path.

He went from us, also, to fulfill every condition, for it was absolutely necessary that all who entered Heaven should wear a perfect righteousness and should be made perfect in characterno sin can enter the Holy City! The saints could not be perfected without being washed in His precious blood and renewed by the Holy Spirit. And so the Savior endured the death of the Crossand when He arose, He sent us the sanctifying Spirit that we might be fitted for His rest. Thus He may be said to have prepared the place of our rest by removing from its gateway the sin which blocked all entrance. He went away, also, that He might be in a position to secure that place for all His people. He entered Heaven as our Forerunner, to occupy the place in our name; to take possession of Heaven as the Representative of all His people.

He was going that He might, in Heaven itself, act as Intercessor, pleading before the Throne of God and, therefore, be able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by Him. He was going there to assume the reins of Providence, having all things put under His feet, and having all power given to Him in Heaven and in earth so He might bless His people abundantly. By being in Heaven, our Lord occupies a vantage-ground for the sure accomplishing of His purposes of love. As Joseph went down into Egypt to store the granaries, to prepare for Israel a home in Goshen, and to sit upon the throne for their protection, so has our Lord gone away into Glory for our goodand He is doing for us, upon His Throne, what could not so advantageously have been done for us here.

At the same time, I am inclined to think that there is a special sense in these words over and above the preparing of Heaven for us. I think our Lord Jesus meant to say, I go to prepare a place for you in this sense that there would, in the end, be a place found for their entire manhood. Mark that word, a place. We are too apt to entertain cloudy ideas of the ultimate inheritance of those who attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Heaven is a state, says somebody. Yes, certainly it is a statebut it is a place, tooand in the future it will be more distinctly a place. Observe that our blessed Lord went away in bodynot as a disembodied spirit but as One who had eaten with His disciples, and whose body had been handled by them. His body needed a place. And He is gone to prepare a place for usnot only as we shall be for a while, pure spirits, but as we are to be ultimatelybody, soul and spirit.

When a child of God dies, where does his spirit go? There is no question about that matterwe are informed by the inspired Apostleabsent from the body, present with the Lord. But matter and something yet remains. My spirit is not the whole of myself, for I am taught so to respect my body as to regard it as a precious portion of my complete selfthe temple of God. The Lord Jesus Christ did not redeem only my spirit, but my body, too, and consequently He means to have a place where Ithis person who is here, in the wholeness of my individualitymay rest forever. Jesus means to have a place made for the entire manhood of His chosen that they may be where He is and as He is. Our ultimate abode will be a state of blessedness, but it must also be a place suited for our risen bodies!

Heaven is not, therefore, a cloud-landan airy something, impalpable and dreamy. Oh, no, it will be as really a place as this earth is a place! Our glorious Lord has gone for the ultimate purpose of preparing a suitable place for His people. There will be a place for their spirits, if spirits need a place, but He has gone to prepare a place for them as body, soul and spirit. I delight to remember that Jesus did not go as a spirit, but in His risen body, bearing the scars of His wounds. Come, you that think you will never rise again! You who imagine that the scattering of our dust forbids all hope of the restoration of our bodies! We shall go where Christ has gone and as He has gone. He leads the way in His body and we shall follow in ours. Ultimately there shall be the complete redemption of the purchased possessionnot a bone shall be left in the regions of death not a relic for the devil to glory over!

Jesus said to Mary, Your brother shall rise again. He did not need to say your brothers spirit shall live immortally, but your brother shall rise again. His body shall come forth out of the tomb. Well might the Apostles hearts be comforted when they learned the blessed errand upon which their Lord was going!

The next consolation was the promise of His sure returnIf I go away to prepare a place for you, I will come again. Listen, then! Jesus is coming again! In the same manner as He ascended, He will returnthat is, really, literally and in bodily form! He meant no play upon words when He so plainly said, without proverb, I will come again, or more sweetly, still, I go away and come again unto you. This is our loudest note of joy, Behold, He comes! This is our never-failing comfort! Observe that the Savior, in this place, says nothing about death; nothing about the peace and rest of Believers till He is come, for He looks on to the end. It is not necessary to put every Truth of God into one sentenceand so our Lord is content to mention the brightest of our hopesand leave other blessings for mention at other times. Here the consolation is that He will comecome personally to gather us in!

He will not send an angel, nor even a host of cherubim to fetch us up into our eternal state, but the Lord, Himself, will descend from Heaven. It is to be our marriage day and the glorious Bridegroom will come in person! When the Bride is prepared for her Husband, will He not come to fetch her to His home? O Beloved, do you not see where our Lords thoughts were? He was dwelling upon the happy day of His ultimate victory when He shall come to be admired in all them that believe! That is where He would have His peoples thoughts be. But alas, they forget His Advent. The Lord shall comelet your hearts anticipate that day of days! His enemies cannot stop His coming!

Let not your heart be troubled. His enemies may hate Him, but they cannot hinder Him. They cannot impede His glorious return, not by the twinkling of an eye! What an answer will His coming be to every adversary! How will they weep and wail because of Him! As surely as He lives, He will come, and what confusion this will bring upon the wise men who at this hour are reasoning against His Deity and ridiculing His Atonement! Again I say, Let not your heart be troubled as to the present state of religionit will not last long. Do not worry yourselves into unbelief though this man may have turned traitor, or the other may have become a backslider, for the wheels of time are hurrying on the day of the glorious manifestation of the Lord from Heaven!

What will be the astonishment of the whole world when, with all the holy angels, He shall descend from Heaven and shall glorify His people? For that is the next comfortHe will receive us! When He comes, He will receive His followers with a courtly reception. It will be their marriage reception! It shall be the marriage supper of the Son of God! Then shall descend out of Heaven the new Jerusalem prepared as a bride for her husband. Then shall come the day of the Resurrection and the dead in Christ shall rise. Then all His people who are alive at the time of His coming shall be suddenly transformed so as to be delivered from all the frailties and imperfections of their mortal bodiesThe dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed. Then we shall be presented spirit, soul and body without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thingin the clear and absolute perfection of our sanctified manhoodpresented unto Christ Himself.

This is the sweetest idea of Heaven that can be, that we shall be with Christ, that we shall see Him, that we shall speak to Him, that we shall commune with Him most intimately, that we shall glorify Him, that He will glorify us and that we shall never be separated from Him forever and ever! Let not your heart be troubledall this is near at hand and our Lords going away has secured it for us. For this was the last point of the consolation, that when He came and received His people to Himself, He would place them eternally where He is, that they may be with Him.

Oh, joy! Joy! Joy! Unutterable joy! Can we not, now, once and for all, dismiss every fear in the prospect of the endless bliss reserved for us? *See that Glory, how resplendent!   
Brighter far than fancy paints!   
There in majesty transcendent,   
Jesus reigns, the King of saints!   
Spread your wings, my Soul, and fly   
Straight to yonder world of joy!   
Joyful crowds, His throne surrounding,   
Sing with rapture of His love!   
Through the heavens His praises sounding, Filling all the courts above.   
Spread your wings, my Soul, and fly   
Straight to yonder world of joy!*

The Lord talks to us as if we now knew all about His goings and doings and so we do as far as all practical purposes are concerned. He says, Where I go you know. He is not gone to a place unknown, remote, dangerous. He has only gone home. Where I go you know. When a mother sends her boy to Australia, she is usually troubled because she may never see him again, but he replies, Dear Mother, the distance is nothing, nowwe cross the ocean in a very few weeksand I shall speedily come back again.

Then the mother is cheered. She thinks of the ocean as a little bit of blue between her and her sonand looks for him to return if necessary. So the Savior says, Where I go you know. As much as to sayI told you, I am going to your own Fathers house, to the mansions where your spirits will soon come. And I am going for the blessed purpose of making it ready to receive you in the entirety of your nature. You are thus made to know all about My departure and My business. I am going to a glorious place which eye has not seen, but My Spirit will reveal it to you. You know where I am going and you know, also, the way by which I am goingI am going through suffering and death, through Atonement and righteousnessthis is the way to Heaven for you, also, and you will find it all in Me. You shall, in due time, enter Heaven by My Atonement, by My death, by My sacrifice, for I am the way. You know the way, but remember, it is only the way and not the end. Do not imagine that the wicked can make an end of Me! Believe that Christ on the Cross, Christ in the sepulcher is not the end, but the way.

This, Beloved, is the way for us as well as for our Lord. He could not reach His crown except by the Cross, nor His mediatorial Glory except by death! And that way once made in His own Person is open for all who believe in Him. Thus you know where the Lord has gone and you know the roadtherefore, be encouraged, for He is not far awayHe is not inaccessible! You shall soon be with Him. Let not your heart be troubled. Oh, brave Master, shall You be followed by a tribe of cowards? No, we will not lose heart through the trials of the day. Oh, holy Master, You did meet Your death with song, for, after supper they sang a hymn! Shall not we go through our griefs with joyful trust? Oh, confident Lord, bidding us believe in You as in God, Himself, we do believe in You, by Your Grace, and we also grow confident!

O, my Master, Your undisturbed serenity of faith infuses itself into our souls and we are made strong! When we hear You bravely talking of Your death which You had to accomplish at Jerusalem, and then of Your afterGlory, we, also, think hopefully of all the opposition of ungodly men and, waiting for Your appearing, we solace ourselves with that blessed hope! Make no tarrying, O our Lord! Come quickly! Amen.

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A PREPARED PLACE FOR A PREPARED PEOPLE   
NO. 2751

A SERMON   
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, NOVEMBER 3, 1901.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, MAY 25, 1879.

**I go to prepare a place for you.   
John 14:2.**

**Giving thanks unto the Father, who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. Colossians 1:12.**

MY real text is not in the Bibleit is one of those Christian proverbs which are not Inspired in words, but the spirit of which is Inspired, Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people. You have often heard that sentence. It is familiar in your mouths as household words, and well it may be.

Yet I shall have two texts from the Scriptures. The first will be our Saviors words to His disciples, I go to prepare a place for you, from which we learn that Heaven is a prepared place. And the second will be Pauls words to the Colossians, Giving thanks unto the Father, who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light, from which we learn that there is a prepared people, a people made qualified to be partakers of the inheritance which Christ has gone to prepare for them!

I. I am not going to have any further preface, but I will begin at once to speak upon THE PREPARATION OF HEAVEN. I go to prepare a place for you.

It is many months since I began to turn this sentence over. I think I might truly say that for several years I have thought of it, and thought of it again, and thought of it yet againthat our Lord Jesus Christ, before returning to Heaven, should say to His disciples, I go to prepare a place for you. Is there any difficulty about this passage? Yes, it is very difficult to explain. Indeed, I do not think that we really can know all that Christ meant when He uttered these words. A father said to his children, when the summer sun had waxed hot, I shall go to the seaside today to prepare a place for you. His little child asked, What does father mean when he says that he will prepare a place for us? And his mother answered, My child, I cannot tell you all that your father means, but you will see when you get there. But now it must be enough for you that although you do not know what Father will have to do at the seaside in preparing a place for you, he knows what he is going to do.

And, dear Friends, there is this consolation for us that even if we can hardly guess what it is that Christ can find to do to prepare Heaven for us, He knows what is needed, and He knows how to do it! And that is infinitely better than our knowing, because even if we knew what was needed, we could not do it. But with Christ to know and to do are two things that run parallel. He knows that there are certain preparations to be made. He knows what those preparations must be and He is equal to the task of making them! He has not gone upon an errand which He cannot fulfill. And when we get to Heaven, we shall knowperhaps it may take us a long while to find it all outbut we shall know and discover throughout eternity what He meant when He said, I go to prepare a place for you.

I do not profess to be able to explain our Lords words, but I am going simply to make a few remarks upon them. And first, I ask you to notice that Heaven is already prepared for Christs people. Christ has told us that when He comes in His Glory, He will say to those on His right hand, Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. So, there is an inheritance which the Father has already prepared for the people whom He gave to His Son and this inheritance is reserved for them. But if it was prepared from the foundation of the world, how can it be said to be prepared by Christ? The explanation probably is that it was prepared in the eternal purpose of the Fatherprepared by wise forethoughtarranged forpredestinated prepared in that senseit was provided in the eternal arrangements of Jehovah, that there should be a suitable place for His people to dwell in forever. He made the pavilion of the sun and He gave the stars their appointed positionswould He forget to prepare a place for His people? He gave to angels their places and even to fallen spirits He has appointed a prisonso He would not forget, when He was arranging the entire universe, that a place would be needed for the twice-born, the heirs of Grace, the members of the mystical body of Christ Jesus, His brethren who were to be made like unto Him. Therefore, in purpose, plan and decree, long before God had laid the foundations of this poor world and the morning stars had sung together over creations six days work accomplished, He had prepared a place for His people! It was not actually prepared, but it was in the purpose and plan of the eternal mind and, therefore, might be regarded as already done.

Our Lord Jesus Christ has gone to Heaven, He says, that He may prepare a place for His servants, and we may be helped to form some idea of what He means by this expression if we just think a little about it. And, first, I am sure that must be a very great and glorious place which needs Christ to prepare. If we do not know all that He means, we can get at least this much out of His declaration. He spoke this world into being. It was not, but He said, Be, and it was at once made. Then He spoke it into order, into light, into life, into beauty. He had but to speak and what He willed was done. But now that He is preparing a place for His people. He has gone to Heaven on purpose to do it. He used to stand still here on earth and work miracles, but this was a miracle that He could not perform while He was here. He had to go back to His home above in order to prepare a place for His people. What sort of place, then, must it be that needs Christ Himself to prepare it? He might have said, Angels, garnish a mansion for My Beloved. He might have spoken to the firstborn sons of light and said, Pile a temple of jewels for My chosen. But, no, He leaves not the work to them, but He says, I go to prepare a place for you.

Brothers and Sisters, He will do it well, for He knows all about us. He knows what will give us the most happinessand what will best develop all our spiritual faculties forever. He loves us, too, so well that as the preparing is left to Him, I know that He will prepare us nothing secondrate, nothing that could possibly be excelled. We shall have the best of the best, and much of it! We shall have all that even His great heart can give us! Nothing will be stinted for, as He is preparing it, it will be a right royal and Divine preparation. If, when the prodigal came back to his father, there was the preparation of the fatted calf, the music and dancing and the gold ring and the best robe, what will be the preparation when we do not come home as prodigals, but as the bride prepared for her husband, or as the Beloved children, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, coming home to the Father who shall see His own image in us and rejoice over us with singing? It is a grand place that Christ prepares, I know, for never was there another such a lordly host as He is! It is a mansion of delights, I know, that He prepares, for never was there another architect with thought so magnificent as His, and never were other hands so skilled at quarrying living stones and putting them, one upon another, as His hands have ever been! This thought ought to cheer us muchit must be something very wonderful that Christ prepares as a fit place for His people.

And I think I may add to this, that

it must be something very sweet when it is prepared. If you go to a friends house and just fal1 in with the ordinary proceedings of the family, you are very comfortable and you are glad not to disarrange anything. But if, when you arrive, you see that everything has been done on an extra scale to prepare for your coming, you feel still more grateful. It has often happened to an honored guest that he could not help observing that he was not being treated as his friends lived every day of the week and all the year round. That guest chamber had evidently been newly furnished and everything that was possible had been thought of to do him honor. If you were treated thus as a guest, there was pleasure for you in the fact that so much had been prepared for you. Did your husband ever take you to a new house and point out to you how he had purchased everything that he thought would please you? Had that little room been furnished especially for you and did he anticipate your tastes, providing this little thing and that that he knew you would like? Well, it was not merely that you enjoyed the things, themselves, but they all seemed to you so much sweeter because they had been prepared for you by your beloved husband. And when you get to Heaven, you will be astonished to see this and that and the other joy that was prepared for you because Christ thought of you, and provided just what you would most appreciate. You will be no stranger there, Beloved! You will say, There has been here a hand that helped me when I was in distress. There has been here, I know, an eye that saw me when I was wandering far from God. There has been in this place a heart that cared for methat same heart that loved me and that bled for me down below upon the Cross. It is my Savior who has prepared this place for me!

I do not know whether I can convey to you all my thoughts upon this theme, but it does seem to me so pleasant to think that we are going to a place where we shall not be the first travelers through the country but where a Pioneer has gone before usthe best of pioneers who went before us with this one objective in His mind, that He might get all ready and prepare the place for us. I think, Brothers and Sisters, that those who will be there before us will say, when we arrive there, We are glad you have come, for everything has been prepared for you. It would be an eternal sorrow in Heaven if the saints should miss their way and perish, as some falsely tell us, for then, what about the preparations for their reception? They would all have been made in vainharps prepared which no fingers would ever playand crowns which no heads would ever wear! I do not believe it! I have never dreamed that such a thing could happen. I feel certain that He who prepared the place for the people, will prepare the people for the place and that if He gets all ready for them, He means to bring them Home that they may enjoy the things which He has laid up for them that love Him.

I know that I am not explaining the preparation of Heaven, yet I hope I am draining some comfortable thoughts out of the subject. If Christ is preparing Heaven, then it will be what our Scotch friends call, a bonny place. And if it is prepared for us, when we get there, it will exactly fit us. It will be the very Heaven we wanteda better Heaven than we ever dreamed ofa better Heaven than we ever pictured even when our imagination took its loftiest heights! The Heaven of God and yet a Heaven exactly suited to such happy creatures as we then shall be!

Now, however, let us try to come a little closer to the subject and attempt to explain our Lords words. Jesus Christ has gone to prepare a place for His people. Does not this refer, if we keep it to its strict meaning, to the ultimate place of Gods people? You see, Christ mentions a place, not a state. And He speaks of going to it, and coming back from itI go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself. Christ is speaking of Himself in His full Manhood, without any figurative meaning to His words. He meant that He was going with all His Human Nature, away from this world. And that He was going to prepare a place for us, intending to come again, with all that glorified Human Nature about Him, to receive us unto Himself! This does not mean His spiritual coming in death, nor any kind of spiritual coming, as to its first meaning, at any rate. I am persuaded that the clear run of the words involves our Lords coming, in His Second Advent, when He will come to receive, not you or me as individuals who, one by one, will enter into rest, but to receive His whole Church into the place which He shall then have prepared for her. After the Resurrection, you must remember, we shall need a place to livea literal, material place of abode, for this body of ours will be alive as well as our spirit and it will need a world to live ina new Heaven and a new earth.

I am not going to enter into any speculations about the matter, but it seems clear enough to me, in this text, that Christ is preparing a place somewhere not for disembodied spirits, for they are already before the Throne of God perfectly blessedbut for the entire manhood of His people, when spirit, soul and body shall be again united and the complete man shall receive the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body, and the whole manhood of every Believer shall be perfected in the Glory of Christ. I do not know what better world, in many respects, there could be than this, so far as material nature is concerned. It is so full of the beauty and loveliness that God pours upon it on every side! It is a wonderful world

*Where every prospect pleases,*

*And only man is vile*   
but I could not reconcile myself to the idea that this world would be Heaven. No. My thoughts rise far above the loftiest hills, the most flowery meadows, the rolling ocean and the flowing rivers. Earth has not space enough to be our Heaven! She has too narrow a boundary and she is too coarse a thing, bright gem though she is, for perfected manhood to possess throughout eternity! It will do well enough for the thousand years of Gloryif it shall literally be thatwe shall reign with Christ upon it during the millennial age. But it is a drossy thing and if it ever is to be the scene of the new heavens and the new earth, it must first pass through the fire. The very smell of sin is upon itand God will not use this globe as a vessel unto honor until He has purified it with fire as once He did with water. And then, perhaps, it may serve for this higher purpose, but I scarcely think it will. Even now Jesus is preparing and has gone away on purpose to prepare a place for usand He will come again, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of Godand He will catch His people away and will bear them to the eternal home where their happiness shall know no end. That is what I suppose to be the meaning of our Lords words.

But, perhaps you say to me, what do you mean by what you have been saying? I replyI do not know to the fullest. I can but dimly guess at the meaning of what my Lord has saidthat He is doing something so glorious for ALL His people that, perhaps, if I did know it, I might not be allowed to tell you, for there are some things which, when a man knows them, it is not lawful for him to utter. Did not Paul see a great deal when he was caught up into paradise? Yet he has told us very little about it, for there was a finger laid upon his lips that bade him know it for himself, but not to tell it to others. Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for them that love Him. And though He has revealed them unto us by His Spirit, even the Spirit who searches the deep things of God, yet is it not possible for us to tell all that has been revealed to us!

It strikes me that there is some little light to be obtained concerning this preparation of Heaven by Christ if I leave the direct and literal meaning of the words and think of the future state as a whole rather than in detail. Do you not think, dear Friends, that our Lord Jesus Christ prepares Heaven for His people by going there? I mean this. Supposing you were to be lifted up to a state which was looked upon as heavenly, but that Jesus was not thereit would be no Heaven to you. But wherever I may go, when I do go, if Jesus is already there, I do not care where it is! Wherever He is shall be my Heaven, for, as I said in the reading, [the exposition at the e and of the sermon] that is our very first and last thought about Heavento be with Christ where He is! To be with Christ is far better than to be anywhere else! Well, then, the first thing that Christ had to do, in order to prepare Heaven for His people, was to go to Heaven, for that made it Heaven! Then were Heavens lamps kindled. Then did Heavens heralds ring out their supernal melodies. Then did the whole of the New Jerusalem seem to be ablaze with a glory brighter than the sun, for, the Lamb is the light thereof. When He comes there, then all is bliss! Do you not see, Beloved, that He has prepared Heaven by going there? His being there will make it Heaven for you, so you need not begin asking what else there will be in Heaven! There will be all manner of rare delights to spiritual men, but the chief of them all will be that Jesus is there! As Rowland Hill used to sing, so may you and I comfort ourselves with this thought

*And this I do findwe two are so joined Hell not be in Glory and leave me behind.*

If I may but be where He is, that shall be Heaven to me!   
But another reflection is thisthat our Lord Jesses Christ has pre  
pared Heaven for His people by the merit of His Atonement. Thus has He   
opened the Kingdom of Heaven to all Believers. He tore the veil and made   
a way into the Holiest of All for all who trust Him. But, in addition to   
that, He perfumed Heaven with the fragrance of His Sacrifice. If Heaven

is the place of the Godhead, as we know it is, we could not have stood   
there without the Mediator! If Heaven is the Throne of the great King, we   
could not have stood there without the cloud of perfumed incense from   
Christs meritorious death and righteousness ever rising up before that  
Throne of God! But now, Heaven is a safe place for the saints to enter.   
Now may they tread that sea of glass like as of fire and know that it is   
glass, and that no fire from it will consume them. Now will they be able   
to come up near to God and not be afraid. I quote again a passage that  
often leaps to my lipsa text of Scripture which is often shamefully misusedWho among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? Why, none of us could unless   
Christ had changed us by His Gracebut now we may do so! What is the Scriptural answer to those questions, Who among us   
shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? What do the Scriptures say? Listen! He that walks   
righteously and speaks uprightly. He that despises the gain of oppressions, that shakes his hands from holding bribes, that stops his ears   
from hearing of blood and shuts his eyes from seeing evils. He shall dwell  
on high: his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall  
be given him; his waters shall be sure. Your eyes shall see the King in   
His beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off.   
This is the man who shall dwell there! With God, who is a consuming   
fire, we, like the holy children in the burning fiery furnace, shall find it  
safe to dwell and find it bliss to dwell because Christ is there! But there   
would have been no Heaven in the Presence of God for any man that   
lives, after sin had once come into the world, if Jesus had not gone there   
as the High Priest of old went up to the blazing throne whereon the Shekinah shone and sprinkled it with blood out of the basin, and then waved   
the censer to and fro till the thick smoke hid the cherubim and, for a   
while resting, spoke with God. Even so has Christ gone within the veil  
and sprinkled His own atoning blood upon His Fathers Throne and then  
waved aloft the censer full of the incense of His mercy! And now it is safe   
for us to have access with boldness to the Throne of Glory as well as to   
the Throne of Grace. Thus has He prepared a place for us!   
Another meaning, I think, is allowable, namely, that Christ has prepared Heaven for us by appearing there in His Glory. I said that His very  
Presence made Heaven, but now I add that His Glory there makes Heaven yet more glorious. How does Christ describe the heavenly state? Father, I will that they, also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I   
am; that they may behold My Glory. It will be their bliss, then, to see His   
Glory, but there would have been no Glory for them to see if He had not  
gone there in His Glory! But now with His Presence there, in all His majesty and splendor, Heaven is still more glorious! Oh, how I long to see   
Him in His Glory! Long to see Him, did I say? I would part with all the  
joys of time and sense to gaze upon Him seated upon His Throne. Oh,  
what will it be to see Him? You have seen how painters have failed when  
they have tried to depict Him. The bravest artist may well tremble and   
the brightest colors fade when anyone tries to paint Him even in His humiliation! There is no other face so marred as His face was, but what will   
it be in Heaven when it is marred no more? No tear in His eyes! No spit   
running down His cheeks! No giving of His face to them that pluck out  
the hair, but, oh, the Glory of Manhood perfected and allied with Deity!   
The King in His beauty! Why, I think to see Him but for a minute, if we   
never saw Him again, might furnish us with an eternity of bliss! But we   
shall gaze upon Him, in His glory, day without night, never fainting, or   
flagging, or tiring, but delighting forever to behold Him smile, forevermore to call Him ours and to see Him still before us! He has gone to Heaven,  
then, in His Glory and, surely, that is preparing a place for us! Besides that, we cannot tell what arrangements had to be made in order to prepare a place of eternal blessedness for the Lords redeemed.   
Certain it is that in the economy of the universe, everything has its place.   
Men have discovered, as you know, what they call evolution. They think   
that one thing grows out of another because long before they were born   
everybody with half an eye could see that one thing fitted into another   
and, as one step rises above another step by a beautiful gradation, so do   
the created things of God. Not that they grow out of each other any more   
than the stones of a staircase grow out of one anotherthey rise above   
each other, but they were so made from the first by the skill and wisdom   
of God. That a dewdrop should be precisely of the size and shape that it   
is, is necessary to the perfection of the universe. That there should be insects born in such a month to fertilize the flowers that bloom in that   
month, and others to suck the sweetness of those flowers is all necessary. God has arranged everything, from the little to the great, with perfect skill. There is a place for everything with God and everything in its   
place.   
It was a question where to put man. He once had a place. When God   
created this world, He made a pyramid and set man upon the very top of   
it, giving him dominion over all the works of His hands. But then man   
fell. Now it is more difficult to restore than it was, at first, to place. Often   
and often you must have found that when a thing has gone awry, it has   
cost you more trouble to set it right than if it had to be made de novo.   
Where, then, was the place for man to be? O matchless Love, O sacred   
Wisdom that provided that mans place should be where Christs place   
was and is! Lo, He who came down from Heaven and who was also in  
Heaven, has gone back to Heaven! He carried manhood with Him and, in  
so doing, one with Him, His Church, has found her place. His union to  
the Godhead has found a place for His Church at the right hand of God,  
even the Father, where Christ sitsand all is as it should be! As I have already told you, I do not know much about this matter, but   
I should not wonder if there has been going on, ever since Christ went up   
to Heaven, a putting things straightgetting this race of creatures into   
its proper place and that other race, and the other race, so that, when we   
get to Heaven, nobody will say, You have got my place. Not even Gabriel   
will say to me, Why, what business have you here? You have got my  
place. No, noyou shall have a place of your own, Belovedand all the   
members of Christs Church shall find a place prepared which no one   
else shall be able to claim, for nobody shall be dispossessed or put out of  
his rightful position.   
It struck me, as I turned this subject over in my mind, that our Lord   
Jesus Christ knew that there was a place to be prepared for each one of  
His people. It may beI cannot tellthat in some part of the society of   
Heaven, one spirit will be happier than it might have been in another  
part. You know that even though you love all the Brethren, you cannot help feeling most at home with some of them. Our blessed Lord and Master had no sinful favoritism, yet He did love 12 men better than all the rest of His disciples. And out of the 12 He loved three whom He introduced into mysteries from which He excluded the other nine. And even out of the three, there was one, you know, who was that disciple whom Jesus loved. Now, everybody here has his favorites. I do not know if we shall carry anything of that spirit to Heaven. If we do, Christ has so prepared a place for us that you shall be nearest, in your position and occupation, to those who would contribute most to your happiness. You shall be where you can most honor God and most enjoy God. You would be glad enough to be anywherewould you not?with the very least of the saints in Heaven if there be any degrees of glory among their thrones, or at His feet, as long as you might see Christs face. But, depend upon it, if there is any associationany more intimate connectionbetween some saints than among others, Jesus Christ will so beautifully arrange it that  
we shall all be in the happiest places.   
If you were to give a dinner party and you had a number of friends  
there, you would like to pick the seats for them. You would say, Now,   
there is So-and-So. I know that he would like to sit next to So-and-So.  
And you would try to arrange it so. Well, in that grand wedding feast   
above, our Savior has so prepared a place for us that He will find us each  
the right position. I was talking, this afternoon, with one whom I very   
dearly love and she said to me, I hope my place in Heaven will not be far  
from yours. And I replied, Well, I trust so, too, but we are not married   
or given in marriage there. Such ties and such relationships must end,  
as far as they are after the flesh, but we know that there have been  
bonds of spirit that may still continue. I sometimes think that if I could   
have any choice as to those I should live near in Heaven, I should like to   
live in the region of such strange folk as Rowland Hill and John Berridge.  
I think I should get on best with them, for we could talk together of the   
way wherein God led us and of how He brought souls to Christ by us.  
Though some said that we were a deal too merry when we were down below and that the people laughed when they listened to us, and some   
spoke as if that were a great sin, we will make them laugh up yonder, I   
guarantee you, as we tell again the wonders of redeeming love and of the  
Grace of Godtheir mouths shall be filled with laughter and their tongues with singing! And then   
*Loudest of the crowd Ill sing,   
While Heavens resounding mansions ring With shouts of Sovereign Grace*   
and I expect each of you who love the Lord will do the same! I have no time for the other part of the sermon. You must come again

to hear about THE PREPARED PEOPLE. But let me just say this to you  
The place is prepared, are you prepared for it? Do you believe on the Lord   
Jesus Christ? If so, your preparation has begun. Do you love the Lord  
and love His people? If so, your preparation is going on. Do you hate sin   
and do you pant after holiness? If so, your preparation is progressing.   
Are you nothing at all and is Jesus Christ your All-in-All? Then you are almost ready and may the Lord keep you in that condition and, before  
long, swing up the gates of pearl and let you into the prepared place! May the Lord bring us all safely there, for Jesus sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 14:1-12; COLOSSIANS 1:1-19.**

John 14:1. Let not your heart be troubled. This is one of those verses that you may read as slowly as you like and spell out every letter and find honey in it all.

1. You believe in God, believe also in Me. As Jews, they had already known and seen the power of God. They were now to rise to the faith of Christians and to believe in Jesus their Savior. Even though they should see Him die, they were not to doubt Him. You believe in God, believe also in Me.

2. In My Fathers house are many mansions. So there is room for many. There are homes for many. There is wealth for many. In My Fathers house are many mansions.

2. It were not so, I would have told you. The Savior seems to say to His disciples, I keep nothing back from you. Had there been some sorrowful fact to be revealed to you, I would at length have told you of it.

2. I go to prepare a place for you. There must be a Heaven, for I am going there, Myself, and I am going on purpose to make it ready for you.   
3. And If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. That is the first and simplest idea of Heavento be with Christand I think it is the last and most sublime idea of Heaven, too! To be with Christthat where I am, there you may be also.   
4, 5. And where I go you know, and the way you know. Thomas said unto Him, Lord, we know not where You go; and how can we know the way? The Apostles blundered and lost themselves in the words of their Master, instead of entering into the spirit of what He said. So we must not wonder if we often do the same. Unless we wait upon God to be instructed by His Spirit, even the most plain passages of Scripture may be obscure to us.   
6, 7. Jesus said unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father, but by Me. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also. And from henceforth you know Him, and have seen Him. Jesus had been talking about the many mansions and now He talks about the Father. Is the Father, then, the same as Heaven? Yes, indeed to come to the Father is to come to perfect blessedness, to know the fullness of His eternal love and to enjoy it in face-to-face communionthis is Heaven! What higher bliss can we desire?   
8, 9. Philip said unto Him, Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us. Jesus said unto him, Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He that has seen Me has seen the Father, so how can you say, Show us the Father? Do we, then, see the Father when we see Christ? And is the Fathers Presence Heaven? Then Christ is Heaven and to be with Him is Heaven! It is even so. He is the way to Heaven, the truth of Heaven, the life of Heaven. He is Heavens everything *His track I see, and Ill pursue   
The narrow way, till Him I view*   
and when I view Him, shall I not have seen the Father and have entered into the Fathers rest?   
10-12. Do you not believe I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of Myself: but the Father that dwells in Me. He does the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me: or else believe Me for the very works sake. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believes on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do because I go unto My Father. In consequence of Christs going to the Father and the Spirit of God descending upon Christs disciples, they are enabled to outdo their Master in some forms of holy service! For instance, some of them brought more to the faith than Christ Himself had done during His lifetimeand so realized the fulfillment of this promiseThe works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do because I go unto My Father.   
Colossians 1:1-14. Paul an Apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who are at Colosse: Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which you have to all the saints, for the hope which is laid up for you in Heaven, whereof you heard before in the word of the truth of the Gospel; which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and brings forth fruit, as it does also in you, since the day you heard of it, and knew the Grace of God in truth: as you also learned of Epaphras our dear fellow servant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ; who also declared unto us your love in the Spirit. For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that you might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness; giving thanks unto the Father, who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light: who has delivered us from the power of darkness, and has translated us into the Kingdom of His dear Son: in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins. As we read these words, we cannot help noticing how positively the Apostle speaks. There are no, hope so, trust so, ifs and, buts. It is all, it is so and, it is so. And, beloved Brothers and Sisters, concerning eternal matters, nothing but certainties will suffice for us. Allow uncertainties about your estates if you will, but we must have positive assurance concerning eternal things! And nothing short of this ought to content our spirits. Can we all say, as we listen to these words, God has delivered us from the power of darkness; He has translated us into the Kingdom of His dear Son, in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins?   
15. Who is the image of the invisible God. Admire this delightful passage in which the Apostle seems to burn and glow while he describes his Lord and Master, who is the image of the invisible God.   
15-19. The first-born of every creature: for by Him were all things created, that are in Heaven, and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether they are thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist. And He is the Head of the body, the Church: who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things He might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell. Blessed be His glorious name! Amen.

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THE WAY TO GOD   
NO. 245

**DELIVERED ON SABBATH MORNING, MARCH 27, 1859, BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE MUSIC HALL, ROYAL SURREY GARDENS.

**No man comes unto the Father, but by Me. John 14:6.**

THERE are many men in this world who so far from coming to God are going as far as they can from Him. Nothing would delight such men so much as to be clean rid of His Presence and to be entirely escaped from the bounds of His dominions. They would be content to make their bed in Hell, if they could thus find a satisfactory answer to the question, Where shall I go from Your Spirit, or where shall I flee from Your Presence? Their hearts are at enmity with God. They hate His Words and His ways. They know that God is angry with them. And they in return are angry with God.

There is another class who are but very little in advance of these. It cannot be said of them, with the same emphatic meaning, that they actually hate God, but nevertheless they run from Him. Perhaps they would indignantly repel a charge of abhorring God, but nevertheless, it is true of them, that they live in utter disregard of Him. They say in their hearts No God. God is not in all their thoughts. They may have sublime thoughts of nature, but few yearnings after Him who made nature. They think much of time and sense and of the things that are below. But as to eternity and its substantial realities, the things that are unseen and everlasting, these they scarce can think upon.

Beware, you that forget God, for your state is no better than the state of those I first described. The wicked shall be turned into Hell. Those who hate God shall feel His torment, but so shall their companions, for thus runs the text, The wicked shall be cast into Hell with all the nations that forget God. It is not needful that you should hate Godonly that you should go to war with Him in order to destroy yourself. The simple neglect of Him is enough to ruin you. Thus has the Apostle put it, How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? You need not fly upon the thick bosses of Jehovahs buckler. You need not rush upon the point of his glittering spear. Stand still and do nothing. Regard Him notshut your eyes to His existence and engross yourself with the groveling toys of earth and you have as surely destroyed yourselves as if you had defied Him to His face. Neglect of God is the open gate of damnation. To forget God is to ensure a portion in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone.

There is to be found, however, upon the face of the earth a third class of men who would not like to be classed among the enemies of God and who can truly say that they are not utterly indifferent with regard to His favor. They would prefer to be numbered with those who are seeking God. Their desire is to go to their Father. They may not as yet, perhaps, be brought to that only way at coming which He has ordained, but still their profession is that they desire to worship God and to come before Him with thanksgiving and show themselves glad in Him. It is to this very character, one that has so much that is hopeful in it, that I shall address myself particularly this morning. But indeed, to everyone in this assembly would I desire to preach the great truth of the text. No mandesire he ever so earnestly, labor he ever so diligentlyno man comes unto the Father, but by Jesus Christ.

When Adam was perfect in the garden of Eden, God walked with him in the cool of the day. God and man held the most intimate and affectionate communion with one another. Man was a happy creature. God was a condescending Creator and the two met together and held sweet converse and communion. But from the moment when Adam touched the forbidden fruit, the way from God to man became blocked upthe bridge was broken down, a great gulf was fixedso that if it had not been for the Divine plan of Grace, we could not have ascended to God, and neither could God in justice come down to us. Happily, however, the Everlasting Covenant ordered in all things and sure, had provided for this great catastrophe. Christ Jesus the Mediator had in old eternity been ordained to become the medium of access between man and God.

If you want a figure of Him, remember the memorable dream of Jacob. He laid him down in a solitary place and he dreamed a dream which had in it something more substantial than anything he had seen with his eyes wide open. He saw a ladder, the foot whereof rested upon earth and the top thereof reached to Heaven itself. Upon this ladder he saw angels ascending and descending. Now this ladder was Christ. Christ in His humanity rested upon the earth, He is bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh. In His Divinity He reaches to the highest Heaven, for He is very God of very God. When our prayers ascend on high they must tread the staves of this ladder and when Gods blessings descend to us, the rounds of this marvelous ladder must be the means of their descent. Never has a prayer ascended to God save through Jesus Christ.

Never has a blessing come down to man save through the same Divine Mediator. There is now a highway, a way of holiness wherein the redeemed can walk to God and God can come to us. The kings highway

*The way the holy Prophets went   
The road that leads from banishment.*

Jesus Christ, the Way, the Truth and the Life. Let us think for a moment of Jesus Christ as the way to God. The reason why man cannot come to God as he did in the garden is that God is the same, but man is changed. God is as affectionate and as condescending as ever, but man is unholy and impure. Now God is as pure as He is affectionate, while God is love it is just as true that God is infinitely just and holy. His holy eyes cannot endure iniquity. If, then, a sinful creature could obtain access to God, if a rebellious creature could come into the immediate presence of the Most High, the effect must be disastrous in the extreme, for it would be a necessity of Gods nature that He must utterly devour the creature in which He sees sin to be.

Come into the presence of God, O Sinner, and you might as well march into a consuming fire. As Nebuchadnezzars furnace burned the men who came to throw in the three holy children so must God, the consuming Fire, burn and destroy usif we approach Him with our prayers and thanksgivingswere it not for the interposition of Jesus Christ the Mediator. I say this is a necessity of His nature. God is necessarily Just and justice cannot endure a sin. God is necessarily pure and holyHe might sooner cease to be God than cease to be pure. Now, the approach of impurity to Him He must repel. Though no laws can bind Him, yet the law of His nature never can be broken. His nature is, I will by no means clear the guilty. He is slow to anger, He is great in power and He is ready to forgive, but so long as guilt lies unforgiven He is also ready to punish, no, He must punish or else cease to be.

Consequently, no man can come to God as a sinner, unless he comes to Him to be utterly destroyed and that without remedy. You do not wish so to come to God. Happy is it, then, that we are enabled to tell all our fellow creatures of a way whereby we can come with joy and gladness to the Fatherthrough Jesus Christ.

Now, this morning I shall have to divide my subject into three or four heads and notice   
I. Some men have a desire to come to God in worship, but there are many who desire to come to Him the wrong way. You will sometimes meet with men who say, Well, I do not go up to a Church or Chapelit is all ridiculous. I do not read the Bible. I have no faith in Christ. But I spend my Sunday in the open airin that glorious temple which God has built. How Divinely can I worship Him there, while the lark, singing, up to Heavens gate ascends. While every flower tells me of Him whose breath perfumes it and whose pencil paints. While all the cattle on a thousand hills are lowing forth his praise I feel that in His temple does everyone speak of His glory. What need for me to go and hear what you call the Gospel, to join in the united song of praise, or bend my knee in prayer? I worship the god of nature, says such a man, not the God of Revelation, but the god of nature.   
To this man we reply in the words of our text. Your thanksgiving and your praise are unacceptable to the God you worship, for that God has declared that no man comes to Him except through His Son, Jesus Christ. If then, you reject the way of access and persist in bringing your prayers and your thanksgivings to Him in a way which He does not acknowledge, remember, this shall you have as the answer to your prayers and your thanksgivings. You shall lie down in sorrow when God shall come to judge you at the Last Great Day. The true Christian can go from nature up to natures God, because he has come from natures God down to nature. No man can climb the steeps and go from nature up to natures God, unless he has first descended. God must take you up into the mount where He dwells, first, and then you can come down, as Moses did from the top of Sinai. But, until He has caught you up there, your weary feet shall be exhausted and your strength decay before you can reach the God of nature through your works.   
Now, my Friend, you may be very sincere, as you imagine, in all your prayers and thanksgivings offered to the unpropitiated God of nature in your garden, or in the fields, but, sincere though they are, they miss the mark. They are not shot from a bow which is strong enough to carry them to their desired target. They miss the mark, I say, and they shall fall back on your own head to your injury. But they shall not reach the Throne of God. But I observe here that those men who talk about natural religion, as far as I know them, have no religion at all. I have noticed that the people who say, I can worship God without attending any religious service, or believing in Jesus, do not really do so. I have sometimes had an opportunity on a Sunday of seeing many worshippers of the god of nature come down the lane where I reside. They consist, for the most part, of men who carry cages with them in which to catch birds on the common.   
There is another very respectable confraternity of men who go to a boxing place somewhere about there, where they spend their day in the bowling alley and many fist fights. These might adopt the cry of our genteel sinners, We dont want to go into a Church or Chapelwe spend our Sunday in the worship of the god of nature. And very fine worship it is. I mostly find that those people who worship the god of nature worship the god of fallen naturethat is, the devilnot the God of the glorious nature which is spread about us in the roaring sea, the rolling flood and the blooming meads. No, for the most part the men who talk like that know, in their own conscience, that the god they worship is their belly, their own lusts. And they glory in their shame. Dont believe all the nonsense that you hear from the Sunday league and all that, when they talk about worshipping the god of nature. Do they do it? Follow any of them into their privacy and see whether any of this fine devotion of theirs has any existence whatever and I think you will discover at once that they are greater hypocrites than the men they call hypocrites.   
But again, is it not rather a suspicious circumstance that these men who are so much ahead of us, that worship the god of nature prefer the company, according to their own confession, of sheep and bullocks and horses and skylarks, to the presence of the saints of God? It looks rather suspicious when a man finds more congenial company in a sheepfold than he does in an assembly of intelligent beings. It looks as if his own mind were brutish when he can never get his spirit wound up into devotion till he gets into the midst of brutes. For my part, I feel more able to worship God in the great congregation, in the assembly of the saints, than anywhere Else. In the courts of the Lords house, in the midst of you, O Jerusalem, praise the Lord! I know that all His works praise Him. It is my joy to feel that the changing seasons are but the varied characteristics of Godthat spring speaks of His tenderness and love, summer of His majesty, autumn of His bounty and winter of His awful power. But still I know that in His sanctuary I behold His glory yet more fully and there I discover Him to my hearts solace and delight. The true Christian can worship God in nature. But a man who has not learned to worship God in his house, I am quite sure has not learned to worship God anywhere.

Natural religion is a lie. Men may say much about it, but it does not exist. Trace these Pharisaic members of the synagogue of Satan to their homes and you will find that they make this natural religion an excuse for religion. It is an utter impossibility for any man to come to God in worship, save through Jesus Christ. See, then, how my text shuts out of all acceptance with God all those who do not receive Christ to be the Son of God, the Mediator. Men sometimes say, All are rightwhether they are Jews or Gentiles, whatever they may be, they are all right. Now, be it understood once and for all, that the religion of Christ gives no heed to such a fancy. It claims for itself, alone, the solitary throne in the kingdom of religious truth. It uses no chains and racks to obtain an unwilling profession of its faith. But the unbeliever is not flattered with promises of securityrather, he is threatened with a doom dreadful beyond all thought.   
There is not, in this Book of God, one single sentence which could lead me to believe that there is a way to God for the Mohammedan, for the Jew, or for anyone who does not come to Him through Jesus Christ. The religion of Christ is exclusive in this. It declares that no other foundation can man lay than that which is laid, Jesus Christ. It declares that no man can come to God except through Jesus. All the charity of which some men talk is deceitful and valueless. We can have no hope for those who receive not Christ. We pity them, we love them, we pray for them, we plead for them that they may be brought to this. But we dare not deceive them, we dare not tell them that God will hear their prayers, if they will not come to Him through Jesus Christ. No, we will be as tolerant as Jesus was, but Jesus Himself said, He that believes not must be damned, and whatever you may beUnitarian, Socinian, Infidel, deist, theist, or whatnothowever sincere your prayersGod abhors and hates them if you do not offer them through Jesus Christ, the one way between the sinner and God.  
II. Other men there are who, conscious that they cannot come to God as perfect beings in worship, desire to approach Him in the way of penitence. But mark, even in the way of penitence, no man can come to God except through Jesus Christ. Those tears in your eyes, when Jesus the Sun of Righteousness shines on them, are as diamonds in the esteem of the God of Mercy. But even your tears and sighs and groans cannot prevail with the heart of God, unless they are mingled with a humble faith in Jesus Christ, His only Son. In vain you weep till your eyes are red to blindness. In vain you groan till your ribs burst with your expanding heart of agony. In vain you kneel till your knees are stiff with prayer. God hears you not. He accepts you not until you make mention of Jesus the crucified, His Son, the Savior of mankind. Oh, it is mournful to see how men try to approach God in any way but through Jesus Christ.   
You have the Romish Church putting men to penance, in order that they may so come to God. It was but one day this week I went into a Romish cathedral and there, to my disgust and horror, I saw poor women on their knees, going entirely round the cathedral having as a penance to pray before a whole set of pictures that were exhibited upon the walls. Well, I thought, if this be acceptable to their god, I am sure it would not be to mine! To give these poor women the rheumatism, or something worse, in order that god might be pleased with them, is the most extraordinary way of going to work that I know of. What a god must theirs be, that is pleased with poor souls when they torture themselves.   
Behold the monkif he would gratify his god, he must not wash himself. For their god is a god of filth and according to their own confession, cleanliness is not acceptable to him. Again, he must fasttheir god is a god of starvation. It is quite clear he is not our Godfor our God is a God of bounty. The poor monk must flog himselfhe must flagellate his poor back till the blood runs down in streamstheir god delights in the blood of his creatures, evidently, and nothing pleases him so much, according to their own confession, as for his creatures to torture themselves. Happily however, their god has nothing whatever to do with our God. Their god is an old Romish pagan demon that was cursed of old and is cursed now. But our God is a God who takes delight in the happiness of his creatures, who, if there is any merit anywhere, would sooner see it in our happiness than in our sorrow, although, mark you, there is no merit in either. When we come to God in penitence we must bring but one oblation, for there is but one way of offering acceptable penitence to God and that is through Jesus Christ our Lord.   
We will imagine there is a man over yonder who is feeling that he has been guilty, but he desires to be forgiven. Oh, says he, I know I am guilty. I feel that I deserve Gods wrath. Well, I will promise I will never be drunk again. I will not swearmake a resolution that I will be better. Ah, Friend, ah, Friend! You will never come to God in penitence that way. O Man, that waythat way of worksis a way of death. The very first time you put your foot on it I can hear the low mutterings of the thundercurseCursed is every man that continues not in all things that are written in the book of the Law to do them. Go on with your resolvestry to carry them out. You shall find that this road of yours will grow more difficult every day. The more you do, the more you will have to do. When you have climbed a hill, you will see a mountain beyond. When you have forded a stream, you will see a sea before you and no means of crossing it. The way to Heaven through good works would be a very hard one, even if it were a possible one. Conscience is like the horseleechit always cries, Give, give, give. Conscience is never satisfied with the best works that we can do. It always wants more.   
But ah, I remind you, Man, that if you go on in that way of works and seek to be forgiven through it, your destruction is as sure as if you did run in the way of sin. Mark you, Man, the Jews of old would not accept the righteousness of Christ and they went about to establish their own righteousness and would not submit themselves to the righteousness of Christ and hence they perished and that without mercy. And so shall you. O turn from that way! God will not receive you in it. Turn from it! If you were perfect and had never broken Gods Law at all, then might you be saved by the Law. But one sin breaks the Law to shivers and you cannot mend the breach. You are lost if you stand on the footing of works. Come away, then, come away! Come to the Cross of Christ! There is no way to Heaven but by Jesus Christ. Come! Both from your works and your sins. Look to Him and live. Look to Him and see your sins forgiven. Look to Him and behold your penitence accepted and a gracious answer given.   
III. There are other men who feel, Well, we know Jesus must forgive our sins, it is through His sufferings that we must be pardoned. But, say they, we desire now to be acceptable to God all the days of our life. We will therefore endeavor to come to God in a way in which He shall accept us. Many there are that light upon a way like this. We will be very scrupulous, say they, in all our transactions, exact in our dealings with men and bountiful in our liberality to God. In this way shall we be accepted. Christ, say they, shall be trusted to take away our sins but we will have the clothing of ourselves with a robe of righteousness. We will let Christ wash us and wash our works, too, if He pleases. But at least we will be the manufacturers of our own virtues and excellencies. God shall accept us through what we doJesus shall make up the deficiency. He shall darn a hole or two that may occur in the garment, but nevertheless we will stick to the old cloth throughout and though we do hear that our righteousnesses are as filthy rags, yet we will have them washed and wear them over again, rags though they are.   
Now, mark, my Hearers, as when we come to God first we must bring nothing with us but the blood of Christ, so when we come to Him afterwards, we must still bring nothing but the same offering. A guilty sinner, when he approaches Gods Throne, can never be pardoned, except by pleading the blood once shed by Christ. The highest saint, the most eminent professor, can no more be accepted by God than the meanest sinner, unless he still pleads the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ. The Arminian, despite his denial of it, has in his own mind, a notion that his acceptance with God in some measure depends upon his own actions. Although many Arminian divines say that they do not believe this, yet they must nevertheless believe it. It lies at the very root and basis of their fallen doctrine. They believe that if the Christian falls into sin, God will cast him out of His family. And I say it follows as a necessary influence that acceptance of a Christian, must, on that theory, depend on good worksso that in coming to God he comes through his own good behavior and not through what Jesus did.   
Now mark, this is an offensive falsehood and as damnable an error as if I were to preach that salvation was entirely by works. There is no part of the Christians experience in which a Christian can deal with God otherwise than through Christ. At the beginning it is all through Christ. In the middle it is all through Christ. And in the end it must be the same. If it were possible for you, my Brother, to be clean rid of sin, you still could not come to God except through Christ. When your faith shall grow into assurance, when the follies of your life shall all be expunged, when your character shall be saintly, when your heart shall be perfectly sanctified even then the means of access and the mode of acceptance of your soul before God will remain unalterable and unchanged. Jesus, Jesus, JESUSthe path for the sinner and the way for the saint. No road to God even for the holiest manno road to Gods acceptance, but through Jesus and through Jesus, only.

Do we not each of us in ourselves at times have an aptness to come to God in some other way than through Jesus Christ? Now you have preached well, says Satan, you have been successful in such-and-such a labor. Ah, says the devil, how liberal you have been in such-and-such a cause. Now go to God in prayer. And we go and we pray with such assurance we think we are sure to be heard. But perhaps without our knowing it there is lurking at the bottom of our excellent fluency in prayer an evil thought that surely God will hear us, for we have been so diligent and liberal. And on the other hand, when we have been committing sin, when conscience chides us, then we go to the Throne and we are half afraid, because we say God will not hear us. Is not that still pride? Why, were we ever better than we are now? Were we not always and are we not now, as bad as ever we can be? In ourselves is there anything that can commend us to God? Is not the very fact that when in our good state we come boldly and when in our low state we come timidly, proof that there is lurking in us a secret suspicion that we are to come to God by something that is in us?   
Oh, if we could but learn this Truth of God and stand to itour acceptance with God depends upon nothing that we do, or can donothing that we can think, or feel, or bebut depends wholly and entirely and solely upon what Jesus is and what He has done and what He has suffered! Let us once get that thoughtand it is in the textwe shall then be able, by the Divine assistance of the Holy Spirit, to come to God at all times with boldness, knowing that we were so coming through Christ and therefore we might always come boldly to the Throne of Grace.   
Have I here today?I am sure I havesome timid soul that is afraid to come to God through Christ? Ah, my dear Brothers and Sisters, I know your fear and I can pity you. But I know your fear and I can blame you, too. What? Are you afraid to come to God through Christ and do you want someone to speak to Christ for you? Oh, foolish Heart! You do need a Mediator in coming to God, but you do not need any in coming to Christ. Go to Him just as you are, without making yourself any better. Go straight away, rags and sin and leprosy and blotches and sores and all, straight away to Him. Do not be afraid that the Father will reject you if you come alone through Him. Let me lead you, my poor, timid Brother, to this way. Come with me. Do you see yon Cross? Do you mark that glorious Man dying on it in agonies that cannot be described? Do you not think that those sufferings are enough to expiate the wrath of God? Why, listen to Him! Will you not believe what He says?It is finished! He cries before He gives up the ghost.   
Now, if Jesus thought it finished, do you not think it so? If He Himself thought that He had done enough, is not that enough for you that is enough for Him? Come boldly, for Jesus smiles upon you. His blood is droppinghis heart is still flowing with the blood and water. Come! None ever were cast outshall you be the first? Those arms that are nailed to the Cross are wide open, as if they would show you that they can receive the biggest of sinners. Those feet that are nailed to the Cross are fastened there as if they meant to stop there and wait to be gracious to you. O do you see His pierced side, it seems as if it said to you, My heart is not hard to reach. See, here is a straight road to it opened by the Roman spear. Come, breathe your sighs into My heart and I will hear and answer.   
Come, Soul! Come this way. How safe it is, for over it hangs the banner of Jehovahs love. And on the ground is the mark of blood of the Saviors footsteps. This gory pathway to the Throne of God, I now entreat you to enter. Jesus made it. Jesus smoothed it. Jesus dyed it with His blood. Come, come away poor soul! Come, put your trust alone in Jesus and then you need not come to God the Father with trembling and with dismay. God help you, timid one, God help you. You have no need to despondJesus said He will cast out none that come to Him by faith.  
IV. I shall not keep you much longer, but I must now observe that there are others who desire to come to God in communion. You will meet, every now and then, with a devout man who has but very imperfect notions of the Gospel and who, nevertheless, has a kind of reverence for the living God. He is an astronomer and he will tell you that an undevout astronomer is mad. He says that while his eyes look through the telescope glass upon the wondrous worlds that float in ether, he communes with God, marvels at His power and admires His matchless benevolence and skill. The geologist, too, will tell you that when digging into the deep foundations of the world and bringing out those old inhabitants, who in days of yore stalked through gigantic forests, he feels he can talk with God the Eternal Onethat those gray hairs of an ancient world remind him of the Ancient of Daysand the bones of a buried generation all remind him of the Eternal One, who was before all things and by whom all things consist.   
Now, these men are sincere. But do not imagine for an instant that their devotion is acceptable, or that their communion is true and real, unless in this they tincture and savor their communion with the knowledge that Jesus Christ is the only way of access to God. Oh, Soul, if you would walk with God, as Adam did in Eden and it is quite possibleif you would walk with Him as Enoch did and that is quite possible, tooif you would see Him face to face and talk to Him as a man would talk with his friend, remember you must be set in the cleft of the rock, Christ Jesus, or else you cannot do it. Once let a man stand in that cleft and see Jesus blood, then he can commune with God in nature readily enough. Standing at the foot of the mountain he may see that hill like a wedge piercing the ebon darkness and his soul may climb the summit and enter into the invisible. He may look upon that awful summit as upon an ambassador sent from earth to Heavenand his spirit may seem to rise on the mountaintop, until it appears to grasp the hand of the Almighty One.   
But mark, the steep summit of fellowship cannot be climbed, except Jesus Christ lend Himself to be the sacred ladder and gives strength to the weary footsteps of our faith. He is the way to God. He is the Truth to guide us. He is the life to enable us to run in the road. Without Christ there is no way to communion, no truth in communion and no life in our pretended fellowship. Christian, take heed that you never try to commune with God except through Jesus Christ. Never try to commune with Him even through the Holy Spirit, if you forget Christ. The Holy Spirit acts the communion. But still, Christ is the medium through which it flows. The Holy Spirit runs through Christ as through a channel. As water from the conduit runs through the pipe, so fellowship must run through Jesus Christ. There can be no coming of God to us and no going of our soul to God, except through the highway of communion, Jesus Christ, the Man and yet the God.   
V. And lastly, to concludeWho is there among us who does not desire to come to God in Heaven? Lives there a man with soul so dead that he has no desire for another and a better world? Is there a heart so seared that it never longs to be at restan eye so blind that it never looks into the hereafter and a soul so stolid that it never leaps with exulting spirit, in the prospect of a world of joy and happiness? The wild untutored savage of the woods looks to another world and when some beloved one is buried, he lights a fire upon the grave, to light the spirit through the dreary shades of death, that it may find its way to paradise. And then he sits upon the grave, when the fire is quenched and thinks of the spirit that is gone and hopes for it that it has gone to the kingdom of the blessed, to the land of the hereafter. Never is he content, unless he hopes that the spirit of his beloved one is gone to a better land.   
And shall it be imagined that any of us who are living in a Christian country are shutting our eyes to the future and never think of looking beyond the grave? There are many hereno, all of us are longing for another and a better world. O world of woe, what were you if you were not a steppingstone to a world of bliss? O land of graves and shrouds, of pick-axe and of spade, what were you if we did not dive through you into the land of light? O vale of tears, what were you, if it were not that you are the pathway to the mountain of transfiguration? O valley of Baca, filled with tears of sorrow, till the pools thereof are overflowingwhat were you, if you did not lead to the tabernacles of our Godthe peaceful sanctuary in which we hope to dwell?   
But there is no way to Heaven, whatever our hopes may be, but through Christ. O spirit of man, there is no way to the gates of pearl but through the bleeding side of Jesus. These are the gates of Paradisethese bleeding wounds. If you would find your way to Gods bright Throne, find first your way to Jesus shameful Cross. If you would know the way to happiness, tread in that path of misery which Jesus trod. What? Attempt another way? Man, are you mad enough to think that you can rend the posts and bars and gates of Heaven from their perpetual places and force your way by your created strength? The arm of God shall dash you down to the nethermost pit. Or do you think to purchase with your riches and your gold a foothold in paradise? Fool! What is your gold where streets are made of it and where the gates are solid pearlwhere the foundations are of jasper and the walls whereof are precious gems?   
And do you think to get there by your merits? Ah, fool that you are, by pride fell the angels and by your pride you fall. In your talking of merit you confess that you are Lucifer himself incarnate. Away with you! Heaven is not for such as you are. But do you say, I will leave my wealth after I have gone. I will build a hospital, or feed the poor. Then let

men pay you. You have worked for your nation, let them pay the debt. Let them rear the stony pillar and set your effigy upon the top. If you have worked for your country, let your country pay you what they owe to you. But God, what does He owe to you? You have forgotten him, you have despised his Son, you have rejected his Gospel. Be you warrior, statesmanPatriot, let men pay you. God owes you nothing and all you can do will not bribe Him to admit you to His palace, if you come not in the right way through Jesus Christ, who lived and died and is alive forever more and has the keys of Heaven at His side.   
Come, now, you that have nothing to bring, come to Christ this morning, you perishing, you guilty and you lost. Gods ambassador stands before you and as though Christ did woo you, he pleads with you to come to Jesus NOW. You that are under conviction of sin and want salvation, believe on Him now. In your heart, poor sinner, say  
*Just as I am, without one plea,  
But that Your blood was shed for me,  
And that you bid me come to You,   
O Lamb of God, I come.*   
The invitation is freely given, the proclamation is openly made. My God is not a God of hatred and of anger. He is a God of love. He bids you who are thirsty, who are longing to see His face, He bids you now come. And He tells you and he confirms the same with an oathAs I live, says the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked but that the wicked turn from his way and liveturn you, turn you from your evil ways. For why will you die, O house of Israel?   
Come now! The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that hears say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. O Spirit of God, draw sinners to Christ! O glorious One, be pleased now to draw them to the Father, through Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

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JESUS THE WAY   
NO. 2938

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, JUNE 1, 1905.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, IN THE YEAR 1862.

**Jesus said unto him, I am the way.   
John 14:6.**

IT is coming on dark and we are lost among the mountains. There is an awful precipice there, a quarter of a mile straight down. There is a bog over yonder and if a man once gets into it, he will never get out again. There is a forest yonder and if one should be lost in its tangled paths, he will certainly not find his way out till the rising of the sun. What do we need just now? Why, we need someone who will tell us the way! Our friend the philosopher, with whom we talked half-an-hour ago, was very valuable to us, then, and gave us a great deal of information. But, as he does not happen to know the way, we would sooner have the poorest peasant lad that feeds the sheep upon the hills for a companion than that man. The classic scholar, who has been repeating to us some admirable lines from Horace and delighting us with an admirable quotation from Virgil, did very well, indeed, for us while we could see our path and had hope of reaching our home by nightfall. But now the poorest lass with uncombed hair who can just point the way to the cottage where we may rest tonight will be of more value to us. What we need is to know the way!

This is just the case, dear Friends, with poor fallen humanity. The need of mankind is not the refined lecture of the learned, nor the acute discussion of the debaterwe simply need someone, be it a lad or be it a lass, to show us the way! And the most precious person you and I have seen, or ever shall see, will be the person who shall be blessed and honored of God to us to say, Behold the way to God, to life, to salvation and to Heaven. I shall not need, then, to offer any apology for coming out again to show the way. There are many here who are lost and there are some upon whom the shades of night are falling. Their hair is gray, they pant as they walk and rest upon their staff for the support of their tottering legs. Their case is dangerous and when they cannot, of themselves, discover the pathway, surely they will heed any voice, however hoarse, from any person, however rough he may be, if they may but discover what is the way to eternal life!

Travelling some time ago, the coachman, when it was getting nearly dark, informed us that he had never been on that road beforeand one can hardly tell how pleased we were to see a signpost. Now, a signpost is not a very interesting thingthere is nothing very poetical about it. It may be questionable whether it decorates the road as it sticks out an arm with only a word or two written on it, but, toward night, when neither the driver nor you know the way, it is about the most pleasant thing you can greet! I shall stand here tonight as a simple signpost. The words may be dry, but it shall be enough for you if they do but show you the way! Mr. Jay tells us that on one occasion, when riding on the mailcoach to Bath, he asked a great many questions of the coachman. He asked, Whose seat is that? What squire owns that fine lawn? And what gentleman is the squire of yonder parish? To all which questions the driver only answered. I dont know. I dont know. At last, Mr. Jay said to him, Well, what do you know? Why, he said, I know how to drive you to Bath. Well, now, I pretend to no greater knowledge than thisI do know the way to Heaven and I do hope I shall be able to tell it to you so plainly and so simply that some here who are lost as in a wild forest may see the path and, by the Grace of God, be enabled to run in it!

I. First of all, then, let us notice THE EXCLUSIVENESS OF OUR TEXTI am the way.   
Christ declares that He, and only He, is the way to peace with God, to pardon, to righteousness and to Heaven! Falsehood may tolerate falsehood, but truth never can. Two lies can live in the same house and never quarrel. But truth cannot bear a lie even though it should be in the highest part of the attic! Truth has sworn war to the knife against falsehood and hence it never knows what it is to admit that its contrary can shake hands with itself. The Hindu meets the Muslim and he says, No doubt you are sincere as well as we are, and you and we shall at last meet in the right place. They would salute the Christian, too, and say the same to him, but it is a necessity, if our religion is true, that it should denounce every other and that it should say unto those who know not Christ, Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Yes, it goes still further and pronounces its anathema upon those who pretend to any other way! Though we or an angel from Heaven preach any other Gospel than that which you have received, let him be accursed. I simply mention certain other ways to assure you, in Gods name, that there are roads which lead to Hell and that none of them can bring you to Heavenfor there is only one way by which the soul can came to God and find eternal lifeand that way is Christ!   
I think I see mankind lost as in a great wilderness. There are no paths and there comes suddenly before the sad eyes of the lost wayfarers, a hag whose hand is blood-red and with her eyes flashing fire she points and says, Lost men, this is the way. And what is that before our eyes? I see the car of Juggernaut rolling through the streets and crushing, at every revolution of its wheels, a poor mans flesh and bones which, when the spirit has departed with a groan, lie there a monument of superstition! And having pointed there, this hag will tell the mother to take her child and throw her dear one into the river Ganges. This is the way, says the foul hag of Superstition, by which you are to came to God. But we denounce her! In Gods name, we denounce her as a demon escaped from Hell! Shall I give my first-born for my transgressions, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? Ah, no, God abhors such a sacrifice! You cannot, in your reason, think that what is abhorrent to you can be acceptable to God! That what you yourselves would loathe to look upon can be delightful to Him! No, Brothers and Sisters, God asks no laceration of the flesh, no starving, no hair shirts, no cord about the loinsfor all these He cares nothingthey are a weariness to Him. If you would please God, speaking after the manner of men, you are more likely to do it by being happy than by being miserable! Do you think that a man would please other men by groans and sighs? I think not. And how, then, should he please God by putting himself to torture if God is such a God as we find revealed to us in Holy Writ? Turn, then, all you nations of the East and oh, that all lands would turn from this cruel lie, for this is not the way to Heaven!   
In our own country we have much more lovely deceivers than this old hagfalse prophets who are more likely to mislead you. Let me glance at some of the popular ways of going to Heaven which will surely lead to Hell. There is the way of good works. I had thought that we had scattered so many millions of tracts, preached so much is the streets and talked so long about men being saved by the blood of Christ and not by themselves, that really, the old-fashioned heresy of self-righteousness would have been driven out of the field! But it still holds a firm position. When I get into conversation with people, I find, in all grades of society, there is still the same belief that men will go to Heaven by what they did.   
Ah, said one to me yesterday, I suppose you sometimes feel cast down. Yes, I said, I do. Why, said he, I should think the best men at times can hardly look back upon their lives with pleasure and, therefore, they must feel a little afraid for the future. Oh, I said, if I had to look on my past life as the ground of my expectations for the future, I would be cast down, indeed! But do you not know that all my good works will not save me and that all the sins I have ever committed in the past will never damn me? No, he said, and he looked astonished at such strange doctrine as that! The Gospel teaches, indeed, that when a man believes in Christ, the sin of the past is all blotted out and Christs righteousness is given to him so the man is not saved by what he

is, nor damned for who he was, but he is saved through Jesus Christ and through Jesus Christ alone.   
I sat in a boat not a great while ago, and while the man was rowing me, I thought I would talk with him. He began to talk to me about sundry new lights that had sprung up in the village. People always take more notice of will-o-the-wisps than they do of the sun, itself. The question at length arose how he hoped to go to Heaven. Well, he had brought up eight children, he had never had any help from the parish, he was an honest man and always did his neighbors a good turn. When the cholera was rife, he was about the only man in the village that would get up at night and run for the doctorand he felt that if he did not go to Heaven it would fare very badly with most people. So, indeed, I am afraid it will, and with him, too, if that is all he rests on!   
I tell these two stories, culled from two classes of society, because I know we have need to keep on repudiating this old lie of Satans that men are to be saved by their works. Those fig leaves that Adam wove together to cover his nakedness are still in favor with his descendants. They will not take the robe of Christs righteousness, but will rather go about to save themselves. A word or two with you, my Friend. Do you say you will go to Heaven by keeping the Law of God? Ah, you have heard the old proverb about locking the stable when the horse is gone? I am afraid it is very applicable to you! So you are going to keep the stable shut, now, and you are sure the horse shall never get out? If you will kindly go and look, you will find it is already out! Why, how can you keep to Law which you have already broken? If you would be saved, the Law of God is like a chaste alabaster vase which must be presented to God without crack or spotbut do you not see that you have broken the vase? Why, there is a crack there! Ah, you say, that was a long time ago. Yes, I know it was, but it is still a crack. And there is the black mark of your thumb just underneath there. Why, man, the vase is already broken and you cannot go to Heaven by your good works when you have none! No, you have broken all Gods Commandments. Read the 20th Chapter of Exodusread it through and see if there is a single Commandment which you have not violated! And I think you will soon find that from the first to the very last, you will be obliged to cry, I have sinned, O Lord, and am condemned in this thing! You have already broken the Law of God.   
But then you will tell me that you have not broken it in public and that you cultivate an outward respect for it. Yes, but what does it matter if inwardly the heart is wrong? Even if a man could keep the outward letter of the Law without flaw or mistake, yet, inasmuch as by reason of the spirituality of the Law it is utterly impossible that any of the fallen race of Adam can keep it. No man can be saved by it!   
I heard a story the other day which illustrates the way in which people make a distinction between inward and outward sin. A certain Sunday school superintendent happened to hear a girl at the end of the school crying very bitterly after the other scholars had gone. He went to her and asked her what she was crying about and she said, The lady superintendent has kept me and has been talking to me about my dress. She says I ought not to dress so fine. I pay for it, Sir, and I have a right to wear it. The lady was called and after some little conversation with the superintendent, who was wise and prudent, the girl was sent home. Now the lady herself was noted for the fineness of her dress. She was most elaborately dressed at all times so, after the girl was gone, our friend put this question to her, Miss So-and-So, you will excuse me, but did it never suggest itself to you that your own dress is rather fine? Yes, she said, but then, that girl has flowers in her bonnet. Well, he said, excuse meand he looked at herI think you have flowers in yours. Ah, yes, she replied, but do you not see, mine are inside my bonnet and hers are outside? Now, this is just how some people speak about sin. You condemn a man because he is such a sinneryou would not associate with such a great sinner! If you would but look at yourselves, you would see that you are as great a sinner as he is, only here is the differenceyou have the blotches of character inside and he has them outside! In truth, sometimes, the outside sinner is the less discreditable of the two. Do you really think that God makes such vain and empty distinctions as this? No, verily. If sin is in you or on you, whether it is inward or outward sin, it destroys you! And since you cannot keep the Law in your inward parts, why go about to strain and break yourselves with impossibilities?   
This is not the way to Heaven. Since Adam fell, no man has ever passed through this gate into everlasting life. Besides, even supposing that the past were blotted out, you cannot keep the Law of God in the future, for what is your nature? It is such a base one that it is sure to violate the Law. You have heard of the women who were ordered to fill a large vessel with water and were told to bring the water in buckets that were full of holes. This is just your toilyou have to fill the tremendous ocean of the Law and your buckets are full of holes! Your nature, mend it all you may, and repair it as you will, is still full of holes and your pretended goodness will ooze out drop by drop and, more than that, your labors shall be like water spilt upon the ground which cannot be gathered up. O Sirs! I pray you, do not seek to enter Heaven by the works of the Law, for thus says the Spirit, By the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified.   
There is another guide, however, that is quite as popular, or rather more so. He calls himself Sincere Obedience. This is how he puts it Well, if I cannot keep the whole of the Law, yet I will trust to the mercy of God to make up for the rest! I have no doubt that what I do may go some considerable way and then the Lord Jesus Christ will make up the weight. I may be a little deficient, perhaps an ounce or two, but them the Atonement will come in and so the scale will be turned in my favor. Ah, and do you think that Jesus Christ will ever yoke Himself with you to work out your salvation? I have trod the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with Me. This is the triumphant shout of the Warrior as He comes back from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah and do you think that after that peerless speech, your puny voice will be heard saying, But I was there! I did my part and my portion? No, verily, you sin in indulging the thoughtand you do but doubly curse yourself in imagining that Christ will ever do part of the work and will allow you to be His helper! Like the work of Creation, so is that of Salvationof the Lord alonefrom the beginning to the end it is not of man, neither by man.   
There is another error, too, which is popular in certain quarters, and that is, salvation by ceremonies. We have it in the Catholic Church this very day. Certain hocus-pocuses pronounced by the priest and the thing is done. We have a similar sleight of hand, too, in that which is next door to the Church of Romethe Puseyite community in our own land. We are nothing! We are not regularly ordained! We are laymen. We have no right to preach and so forth. But theythe immediate descendants of the Apostlesthey are the menone touch of their finger, one mark of the cross and an heir of wrath becomes instantaneously a member of Christ, a child of God and an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven. Tis true, the child may afterwards come to be hanged, but we are told that we ought unfeignedly and devoutly to believe that it was, in holy sprinkling, then and there, made a part of the body of Christ! Do you believe it? Englishmen, do you believe it? Has the echo of Wycliffes voice so died out that these base-born hirelings of Rome are to come back and usurp dominion over your consciences? Sons of the Covenanters, descendants of the glorious Puritans, will you ever tolerate thisworse than Romanismthis disguised Popery which endeavors to enter by stealth into your church? No, verily, let it be accursed! As said the Apostle, so say we! And from Gerizim to Ebal let all Israel say, Amen!   
Oliver Cromwell once walked into the House of Commons while he was yet Mr. Cromwell, the member for Huntington and, putting down his hat, he said, I have just come from St. Pauls Cross, and I have heard a man there preach flat Popery. Indeed, if Mr. Cromwell were here now, he might go into many of our churches and say, I heard a man there preach flat Popery. But I do trust, dear Friends, that the honest protest of Gods ministers and the earnest zeal of those blessed men of God who are in the Established ChurchI mean the Evangelical clergywill still be able to keep down this very popular delusion! You might as well hope to be saved by the mumblings of a witch as by the doings of a priest! You might as well hope to enter Heaven by blasphemies as by a priest mumbling over certain words which he thinks to have virtue in them! God, even our God, has denounced again and again those who delight in these errors and who keep back the blood of Jesus and the power and merit of His righteousness! Do not, I pray you, any of you think that this is the way to Heaven, for it is not! Jesus said unto him, I am the way.   
I scarcely need to mention any more of these old roads, for each man seems to have one for himself. One man is subscribing so many pounds to charity, so it is well with him. Another intends to build a row of almshouses, so it is well with him. Another was always of a very respectable family and hopes he shall not be sent with common folks down to Hell and so, with one thing and another, all men have some sort of refuge! But I say to you again, if you have any refuge but that which is set forth in the text, it is a refuge of lies and the hail shall sweep it away! May God sweep it away tonight and leave you bare and without any shelter, that you may be led to accept Christ as the way, the only way to Heaven!

Understand us, then. We may seem intolerant. We may seem to speak very harshly, but it is as much as our soul is worth to have any mistake here. There is no way to Heaven but one! That one way is Christ and if you walk in it, you must simply, wholly and only trust in what Jesus Christ did on the Cross and what He does today in His intercession in Heaven. And he that comes not in by this door shall never come in at all! He that will not bend his back to this yoke shall not be accepted of God. Heaven has but this one gate and if you will not enter this, there remains nothing for you but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation.   
II. We have now to notice THE PERSONALITY OF THE TEXTI am the way.   
We will suppose again that we have lost our way and we meet a man and ask him which is the way. He says, I am the way. What does he mean? If he had said, I am the guide, I could understand that, but he says he is the way! Suppose he has a horse and carriage and I ask him the way and he says, I am the way? No, you are the conveyance along the way, not the way. I cannot comprehend how you can be the way. But I will suppose that I am in a tract of country, something like that which is left bare by the receding tide at the mouth of the Solway Firth. Young men and children sometimes go far out on those sands and the tide may suddenly return before they are well aware of itand so they may be left to drown. We are two children playing on the sands and suddenly we perceive that the sea has shut us in all round and there is no possibility for us to get to land. But here comes a man on a noble horse and as we cry to him, Sir, which is the way of escape? he stoops down from his horse, steadily lifts us up, and then says, My children, I am the way. Now here we can perfectly understand it because he does the work so fully, so wholly, and so entirely himself that it becomes common sense for him to say, I am the way of escape for you. Or put it in another way. There is a fire yonder. There is a child up at the window and he enquires the way of escape. A strong man lifts up his armsall he wants the child to do is just drop down and let him catch him, so he answers, I am the way, my child! If you would be delivered from the burning house, I am the way of deliverance.   
You see, if He only showed us the way in which we should go, Christ could not say, I am the way. But when He does it all from first to last, when He takes it altogether out of our hands and makes it His own business, from the Alpha to the Omega, then it becomes no straining of human speech for the Master to say, I am the way. Let us put it plainly. You are in debt to God, Sinner. You say, How can I pay Him? Can I lie in the flames of Hell? If I do, even if I should abide with eternal burnings, I cannot pay the debtI must lie there forever. Christ replies, I am the way, and He speaks the truth because He is the Payer and the Payment. He, in your place, Sinnerif you now believe on ChristHe, in your place, took all your guilt and paid all your debts, even to the utmost farthing! If you are a Believer, your discharge is signed and sealed, for there is nothing due from you to God but faithfulness and love.   
But you tell me that you owe to God perfect obedience. You doand Christ has perfectly obeyed and He tells you, therefore, I am the way. He has kept the Law, magnified it and made it honorable. And what you have to do is to take the work that He has finished and you shall find Him to be the way. Do you want to be a child of God tonight? Christ says, I am the way. Be one with Christ and then, as Christ is Gods Son, you will be Gods child, too! Would you have peace with God? Trust Christ tonight. Put your soul in Christs handsHe is our Peace and so will He be the way to peace for you. Would you, in fine, be saved tonight? O my dear Hearers, are there not some among you who would tonight be saved? Then Jesus says, I am the way, not merely the Savior, but the Salvation! Trust Christ and you have salvation, for Christ says, I am your salvation. Take Him and in taking Him, you have the blood that washes, the robe that clothes, the medicine that heals, the jewels that decorateyou have the life that shall persevere and the crown that shall adorn! Christ is All-in-All! All you have to do is trust Christ and, trusting Him, you shall find Him to be the way from the beginning, even to the end!   
III. But I must close by urging you to accept the counsel here implied. I am the way. Not merely, I was the way for the thief on the cross, but, I am the way for you tonight. Not, I will be the way when you feel your need more, and when you have worked yourself into a better state, but, I am, Sinner, the way right now. I am the way for you just as you areto all that you need, I am the way. We sometimes see railways approaching towns, but they do not bring them right into the heart of the place. And then you must take a cab or an omnibus to finish the journey. But this way runs right from the heart of manhoods depravity into the very center of Glory and there is no need to take anything to complete the road. You recollect what good Richard Weaver said on that platform when he was illustrating the fact of Christ saving sinners and saving them now? He told us a story of his friend in Dublin who took him a first class ticket for Liverpool, as he said, All the way through, and you will remember how he illustrated this by saying that when he came to Christ, he put his trust in Him and had a first-class ticket to Heaven all the way through. I did not get out to get a new ticket, he said, there was no fear that my ticket would be exhausted half-way, for it was a ticket all the way through. I paid nothing, said Richard, but that didnt mattermy ticket was enough. The guards came and looked in and said, Show your tickets, Gentlemen. They didnt say, Show yourselves, but, Show your tickets, and they didnt come to the door and say, Now, Mr. Weaver, you have no business in that class carriage. You are only a poor man. You must come out. You are not dressed smartly enough. No, as soon as they saw my ticket, the ticket all the way through, that was enough! And sowell said that man of Godwhen the devil comes to me and says, Richard Weaver, how do you hope to get to Heaven? I show him the ticket. He says, Look at yourself. No, I say, that is just what I am not going to do! I look at my ticket. My doubts and fears say, Look at what you are. Ah, never mind what I amI look to what Christ gave me and which He bought and paid for Himselfthat ticket of faith which will surely carry me all the way through.   
That is about the end of the journey, you see. The ticket will take you to the end. Christ is the way to the end, too, but I want, tonight, to show you that He is the way to your end as well as to Gods end! Christ has run the railroad right into Heaven, but does it run from where I am? Because, if not, if there is a space between me and the place where that railway stops, how am I to get there? I cannot have the cab of Morality, for the axle is broken. I shall not get up into the great omnibus of Ceremonies, for the driver has lost his badge and I am sure there will be mischief come of that. How, then, am I to get there? I cannot get there at all unless the road comes right here to where I am. Well, glory be to God, it does come to just where you are tonight, Sinner! There needs no addition of yoursno preparing for Christno meeting Jesus Christ half-wayno cleaning yourselves to let Him give you the finishing touchno mending your garments, that He may afterwards make them superfineno, but, just as you are, Christ says, I am the way.   
But you say, Lord, what would You have me to do? Do? He says. Do? Nothing but believe on Metrust Metrust Me now. Did I hear one up in those boxes in the top gallery say, When I get home tonight, Ill pray? I hope you will, but that is not the Gospel. The Gospel is, trust Jesus Christ now! Christ is the way NOWnot only from your chamber to Heaven, but from this place, from the very spot where you now are, to Heaven! I say again, dear Brothers and Sisters, that I abhor from my very heart that new kind of legality which is preached by some ministers who will have it that we must not tell the sinner to believe on Christ now, but that he must undergo a preparatory process of conviction and the like. This is Popery back again, for it has the very essence of Popery within it. Instead of that, I lift up my Masters Cross before the dying and the deadbefore the blind, the ruined and the filthy, and sayTRUST JESUS CHRIST AND YOU ARE SAVED!   
But I have many sins. He had many drops of blood! But I am a great sinner. He is a great Savior! But I am so black. His blood is so efficacious that it can make you as white as snow! But I am so old. Yes, but He can make you to be born-again! But I have rejected Him so often. He will not reject you! But I am the last person in the world to be saved. Then that is where Christ beginshe always begins at the last man! But, I cannot believe that. Cannot believe what? What did I ask you to believe? I cannot believe. Cannot believe what? I say again! My Master is the Lord from Heaven that cannot lie and you tell me you cannot believe Him? My Master never lied to angel or to men and He cannot, for He is Truth itself! And this is what He says, that whoever among you will trust Him tonight, He will save you! And if you say you cannot believe Him, you make God a liar because you believe not on His Son Jesus Christ!   
I charge you, by the Day of Judgment and by the flaming world, say not that the God who made you will lie to you! Sinner, there shall never be found in Hell a spirit that can say, I trusted Christ and was deceived. I rested on the Cross and its rotten timbers creaked and failed me. I looked to the blood of Jesus and it could not cleanse me. I cried to Heaven, but Heaven would not hear. I took Jesus in my arms to be my Mediator and yet I was driven from the gate of mercy. There was no pity for me. Never, never shall there be such a case! I would to GodI was about to say that I were not preaching to depraved men and yet to whom else should we go?because this is the sorrowful reflection, that so many of you will turn on your heels and say, There is nothing in it.

But who are those who will look to Christ? Why, those whom God has chosen! In whom the Spirit, as the result of Divine Election, will effectually work and who shall be the real trophies of the Redeemers passion! But, mark you, you have all heard the Gospel tonightand when you and I meet face to face while the trumpet of judgment is ringing in every human earwhen this solid earth shall shake, when the Heavens shall bow and the stars shall pale their feeble lightI will bear this witness, that I told you plainly the way of salvation! And in that great day I shall be able to say to each one of you, If you perish, your blood lies not at my door. Is there one who has not understood me? Is there one who still thinks that he is shut out and that he cannot be saved? To you, Sir, yes, to you, I add this extra word, He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him! And though you are black with robbery, or red with blood, or stained with lust up to your elbows, He is able still to save! And trusting Himwith all your heart trusting Himyou shall find that He will surely bring you to the place where He shall see you with delight, having washed you in His blood!

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **ROMANS 6.**

Verse 1. What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that Grace may abound? This seems to be a very plausible temptation. It is one which frequently came in the Apostles way and, therefore, he very often had to denounce it. It is one of the vilest suggestions of Satan that could possibly come to men.

2. God forbid! How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? The whole spirit of the Gospel is opposed to the idea of sinning because God is gracious. It is a horrible Satanic suggestionAs pardon can be so easily obtained from God, let us sin the more against Him. The bare suggestion is utterly degrading and diabolical.

3. Know you not that as many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Was not that the real meaning of our Baptism? Had it any meaning whatever unless we were really dead with Christ and therefore were buried with Him?

4. Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even as we also should walk in newness of life. There is a parallel between Christ and the true Christian. There is a likeness between the Head of the Church and the members of His mystical body. Christ died and was buriedand His people are reckoned as dead and buried in Him.

5-7. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. That is, he that died to sin when Christ died is free from sins condemning power.

8-10. Now if we are dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him: knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dies no more, death has no more dominion over Him. For in that He died, He died unto sin once: but in that He lives, He lives unto God. In the next verse, the parallel between Christ and Christians comes up again. As Christ died and was buried, and rose from the dead and now lives to die no more, so is it with us who believe in Him and are in Him by a vital union. In Him we died and in Him we rose, and in Him we now live in newness of life.

11-13. Likewise reckon you also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield you your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. Your membersthat is, the various parts of your body and the faculties of your mind are to be yielded up to God as instruments of righteousness.

14. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for you are not under the Law, but under Grace. While you were under the Law and simply heard it command you to do your duty, the command seemed to awaken all the hostility of your nature so that you remained under the dominion of sin. But now no longer does the Law speak to you as it did before. You are not now under the Law, but another principle governs you. The Grace, the favor, the love which God has shown to you in Christ Jesus, appeals to your heart and you cheerfully yield to it the obedience which, when the Law demanded it, your unregenerate spirit refused to render!

15. What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the Law, but under Grace? God forbid! Again the Apostle is shocked at such a suggestion. There are some who have denied that the Law was binding upon them in any sense and who, therefore, have claimed liberty to sin. But they can find no footing anywhere within the sacred enclosure of Gods Word.

16. Know you not that to whom you yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants you are to whom you obey? Whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? If, then, a man lives a life of sin, he proves that he is the servant of sin, for he has obeyed its commands! And let that man know assuredly that he has nothing to do with Christ while he is living in sin! But if a man lives in obedience to Christ and seeks after righteousness and true holiness, that man is evidently the servant of righteousness and so the servant of God.

17. But God be thanked, that you were the servants of sin, but you have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered to you. Or, as the marginal reading renders it, in harmony with the original, whereto you were delivered, for the doctrine was the mold and you were the metal, reduced to a molten condition, and then poured into the mold to take the shape of Gospel Truth. God be thanked for thisthat though you did formerly serve sin, you now serve it no longer.

18, 19. Being then made free from sin, you became the servant of righteousness. I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as you have yielded your members, servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members, servant to righteousness unto holiness. How powerfully this plea ought to sound with any whose former life was full of positive, plain uncleanness in the sight of God! And how earnestly should the redeemed spirit cry to God to preserve the body pure and chaste before Him!

20. For when you were the servants of sin, you were free from righteousness. You did not then trouble yourselves about that matter at allyou left the things of God and piety alone.

21. What fruit had you then in these things whereof you are now ashamed? For the end of these things is death. You had such pleasure as sin could give you, but was it worth having? You derived some profit, perhaps, from evil pursuits, but did the profit ever make up for the loss which you thereby sustained? O you who have had experience of sin to the full, has it, after all, turned out to be the fair and lovely thing that it once seemed to be? No, the serpent had azure scales, but its fangs have poured poison into your blood! It came to you with all manner of deceivableness of unrighteousness, like Jezebel with her painted face, but it has worked nothing for you but sorrow and sufferingand it will work your eternal ruin unless God, in His great mercy, shall prevent it.

22. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, you have your fruit unto holiness, and in the end, everlasting life. Oh, what wondrous changes the Grace of God works! But now. Paul must have rejoiced to write those two words. He had dwelt upon what men were before the Lord began to deal with them in mercy, but now he could say, being made free from sin, and become servants to God, you have your fruit unto holiness, and in the end everlasting life.

23. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.   
Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #3544 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE ONLY ROAD   
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**Jesus said to Him, I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man comes to the Father but by Me. John 14:6.**

JESUS had been speaking about the Father, about His going to the Father, about the Fathers house and about going there. And He was asked by Thomas this question, We know not where You are going, and how can we know the way? We are to understand this verse as being an answer to that question. He tells him where He was going, namely, to the Father, and also the way to the Father, namely, by Himself.

Now this verse has been read and read, too, with a great deal of profit, without always being read correctly. For instance, suppose I were to divide my sermon into three parts, tonight, and show that, first, Christ is the way? Secondly, that He is the truth? And thirdly, that He is the life? I do not think I should be able to give you the meaning of the text, for you will observe that He is not speaking about three thingsHe does not say, I am the way, and the truth, and the lifeHe is speaking about only one thing, namely, that He is the way, and then the two words, truth and the life, are put in to explain what He means by the way. So I think.

Luther, taking the first meaning and putting in an, and, for it is necessary to put one in to make it out, says Christ is the way, that is, through Him men begin to be Christians. Secondly, He is the truth, that is, through Him they are instructed further in the faith. Thirdly, He is the life, that is, through Him they enter into eternal blessedness in the life to come.

Now it is very true, but it is not the Truth of God taught hereat least, we think not, certainly if we follow the strict analogy of the language. Augustine read the passage this way, I am the way, the true way and the living way. But that is not quite it. There is truth in that and it is more correct than Luthers readingbut we cannot see the sense without some considerable violation of the language. It is true, but not the Truth of God taught here.

What we want to do is not only to preach about the Truth of God, but the Truth of God that is in our text. It appears to us that this was our Lords meaningI am the way to God. That is the great teachingNo man comes to the Father but by Me and I am the way in this respect that no man can come to know the truth with regard to the Father except He knows Me as the truth. And, secondly, no man can possess the life by which He comes to the Father except He receives Me as the life. I am the way to the Father in a double senseof being the truth which teaches men about the Father and being the life which enables men to come to the Father and have practical communion.

Believing that to be the meaning of the text, we will try and work it out. First, then, Christ is the way to the Father as He is the truth. Secondly, He is the way to the Father as He is the life. And, thirdly, taking the general statement with which the verse closes, He is altogether and in all respects the only way to the FatherNo man comes to the Father, but by Me.

To begin, then I. CHRIST IS THE WAY TO THE FATHER SO FAR AS HE IS THE TRUTH. He is so in this respectnobody knows the Father until, first of all, He knows Jesus Christ. God the Father is to be seen in Nature. He has painted every flower and He it is that hangs every blade of grass with the glistening pearl of dew. But so dim are our eyes and, after all, so little of the more spiritual parts of His Character could God reveal in mere materialism, that man does not behold God there. We are often told that we are to go from Nature up to Natures Godjust about as easy to go from the higher pinnacle of the Alps to the stars! The step is too long for human nature. Men have never taken it. Those men of old who ransacked Naturethe old philosophers and teachers of the heathendid not discover God. The world, by wisdom, knew not God.

Oh, what a maze of deities they hadwhat strange gods! What strange characters they gave to God! Our very childrenin their classical learning in schools, get their minds polluted by reading the deeds of beings that were called gods among the heathens. If a man does not form the same false conception of God the ancient heathen did, it is partly to be accounted for by the almost unconscious effect of Christianity upon mens minds! Men cannot form such ideals of God living in England as they could, living in Greece, before the Gospel had been preached thereyet every idea of God that is not drawn by men from Revelation and is not brought to men through Jesus Christ, the Mediator, is sure to be a false one, a lopsided onean ideal of God in which some one virtue preponderates to the destruction of others. It is not God at all! It is a gross caricature of God. It is, in fact, no more God that men think out by reason than the golden calf was God which came out of the fire when Aaron had thrust gold into it. They did not know God.

You have only to take up the works of any of our great original thinkers who scorn to call themselves Christians, and though you will see that Christianity has molded their thought, you will only see truth so far as it has done that, unconsciously, to themselves. But where you get their real thoughts and reasonings, you will find that they have not come to the Father because they have neglected the great Truth of God which is in Christ, which is the way to the great Truths which are in God the Father.

Now while this is true with regard to the Person of the Father, Himself, let me remind you, in the next place, that it is true with regard to everything about the Father. Now there is one doctrine in Scripture which is peculiar to the Father. It is the doctrine of Election. The Father has chosen us to be His people. Everywhere in Scripture it is put down as the work of the First Person of the blessed Trinityto choose a people to Himself that shall show forth His praise. Now there are many persons who want to get at that doctrine. I have known many unconverted people want to understand it. I frequently get letters from persons troubled about it. They say that they should feel peace if they could understand that doctrine.

But, beloved Friends, if any such are here tonight, I will speak to them. You cannot get to Electionyou cannot get to the Father by a direct road from where you are. Just read that signpost. No man comes to the Father but by Christ. If, then, you want to understand election, begin with Redemption! You will never understand the eternal choice till you begin at the Cross. Begin with this, God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. Do not begin at the 9th of Romans. You had much better begin at the 3rd of John, Like as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

You will be worrying yourself, bothering your poor head and tormenting your poor heart for many years if you try to get to the Father first! Your business is to take Gods Law and ruleand go to the Son upon the Cross, firstand then to the Father upon His Throne. It would be a strange thing if our children would insist upon going to the University before they went to grammar school. They would never learn anything in that way because the studies of the University are too severe for them until, first of all, they have gone to preparatory schools. It were an odd thing, indeed, if every man that took down his Bible, should always begin it backwards and read Revelation firstand if every man read the Lords Prayer beginning at, Amen, and went backward to, Our Father!

Yet some minds will persist in this. There is a charm to them about the mystery of Sovereignty and Election, and they must begin with that. Little children, why must you first eat strong meat? Here is milk for yoube satisfied with your milk! It will strengthen you. You shall have the strong meat, by-and-bye, when, by reason of use, your senses have been exercised! Listen to Christs tender words, No man comes to the Father but by Me. There is no way to Election except through Redemption.

And now, another illustration of the same Truth of God. Even the Fatherhood of God is known only in Christ. This is what is mainly intended in this verse. It is not known as a Truth of God, till, first of all, we know the Truth concerning Christ. And the Truth concerning Jesus, the FirstBorn and elder Brother, is the way to learn the truth concerning the entire family. What a muddle there is made in this world about the Fatherhood of God. According to some, we are, all of us, all alike His children and He must be, indeed, a strange Father if His dealings with the sons of men are to be considered as the dealings of a Father.

Indeed, we can very well understand why some have said, How can we account for this pit of Hell? Would a father put his children there? Certainly he would not. And if God is a Father to all mankind, alike, and in the same sense, then it would be utterly unaccountable that there should be any eternal destruction from the Presence of the Lord. But this fatherhood is a fiction, a sheer and clear fictionan invention of modern times! There is another fatherhood in which God is the Father of the twice-born, the Father of the regenerate. The God and Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and, next of all, those who are in Jesus Christ. And when you come to know Christ as the Sonand yourself as one with Himthen you begin to know what the Fatherhood of God means in its specialty to the elect, in its truth, in its depth and in its blessed outflowthat, being a Father, He chastens us, He loves us, feeds us, guides us, trains us, educates us and provides for us an inheritance which none shall ever be able to take from us!

I venture to say it here, again, that no man knows anything in truth about the Fatherhood of God till he knows something about union with Christhis own sonship by virtue of his brotherhood with Jesus. No man comes to the Father but through the Son!

And now I shall take another point of the same great Truth of God. It is commonly thought that anybody can understand the mercy of Godat any rate, we can get to it. But, Beloved, an infinite deal of mischief has been created in this world by a mistaken notion about mercy with regard to Godthat God is not very particular about our sins, that He does not judge us too severely, that He knows we are tempted a great dealthat we have strong passions and, therefore, He winks at it all and, notwithstanding that we are not what we ought to be, yet He will graciously overlook it and accept us. That is the common notion of Gods mercy, but there is nothing whatever in Holy Scripture to support itthere is no grain of evidence that such mercy as that is in the heart of God at all!

The Lord is angry with the wicked every day! He hates sin, even a single sin! He will by no means spare the wicked. He neither closes His eyes against sin, nor will He stay His hand from the punishment of sin. No man comes to the Fathers mercy till He has learnt Christ! But when you come to Jesus Christand you understand that God took His Son from His bosom and put Him to death in our place that He might have mercy upon us without the violation of His justicewhen we see how He made Christ to be our Substitute, in order that He might freely and fully forgivethen we see what kind of mercy Gods mercy is! It is not mercy to the sinHe punished thatit is mercy to the sinner! It is not mercy that thinks little of sin, for He put His Son to death when sin was laid upon Him! It is not mercy that winks at sin and treats it as though it were a trifle, for He made His Son cry out, Why have You forsaken Me? It is a kind of mercy that is consistent with the fiercest wrath against every particle of iniquity! The Lord is a consuming fire and will by no means spare the guilty! Every transgression shall have its recompense of reward.

But yet He is a God merciful and gracious, passing by transgression, iniquity, and sin, and this you can only know the meaning of when you know Christ as the Truth of God that conducts you to the great Truth of the mercy of God! Equally, the same remark might be made upon Gods justice, but I shall not tarry upon that. I shall rather close these observations upon this first head by saying that we do not truly know the power and dominion of God till we, first of all, know Christ. We may know God to be Omnipotent. We may understand that He does as He wills, but that Truth, in its real force, never breaks upon the soul till it shines through the Mediator! I am alarmed to think of Gods greatness. I am afraid when I think of His supremacy. I know that He can do as He wills and yet I rebel! I know that He can punish me, that He can crush meand I tremble in His Presencebut I feel no love to Him until I see His love to me in the Person of His dear Son.

And then, in a moment, I bless Him, for He is Omnipotent, and I can see His Omnipotence on all sides. I bless Him that He is the King! Let the children of Zion be joyful in the King. I thank Him that He does as He wills. I rejoice that He does, for He only wills to do that which is for the good of His own chosen ones. You cannot love God in any one of His attributes, or know Him aright and truly unless it is through first knowing Jesus Christ!

Beloved, then let me say to you, gathering all up in oneyou will do serious mischief to yourselves if you study any Truth concerning God apart from Jesus Christ. Luther was quite right when he said, I will have nothing to do with an absolute god. I will not try to study him as god. I know that I cannot look at the sun; I must have a smoked glass to look throughI must have the Person of the God-Man to take away the blinding Glory of the invisible Godinvisible because too bright for my eyes to gaze upon. You must have God in Christ. I will not try to study anything else.

Our preaching, if we do not preach Christ, is useless! We may preach what we like about the Father, what we like about portions of Scripture but if there is no Christ, there will be no good come of it. Somebody once said, Why is it that the Methodists and others get people to hear them and they have conversions, but you do not find crowds go to hear Unitarians, neither do you hear of conversions? And somebody said, There is no blood in the Unitarian religion and the blood is the very life of it. Leave out the atoning Sacrifice and you have left out the marrow from the bones, and the bones from the body! The fabric becomes soft, weak, powerless, yes, you have left out the very soul of the Gospel if you leave out Christ, the Mediator, Christ, the Surety, Christ, the Atonement, Christ suffering in our place! As our preaching ought to be full of Christ, so let your studies of Scripture be!

Read everything in the light of Christ! Calvinism I believe in, but not Calvinism without Christit becomes fatalism then. I am thankful to hear the practical preacher who preaches the precepts, but I do not believe in his preaching without Christ. He will get into legal bondage as sure as he is a man. The one thing that will keep preaching alive is to keep Christ in itChrist at the top, Christ at the bottom, Christ in the middle and Christ all the way through! Many a mans theology is a very gold pot of ointment, but there is a nasty fly in it that will make it stinkand there is nothing that will get the stinking fly out of the ointment but ChristHe keeps our theology sweet and pure. We do not know Christ, Himself, nor anything about Him to any saving and practical purpose, except in that way. The Truth of God that is in Christ is the way by which we get to the Truth concerning God.

And now we shall pass on to the second point.   
II. CHRIST IS THE WAY TO THE FATHER AS HE IS THE LIFE. We get life through Himthen we come to God. But we are dead till we get Christand God is not the God of the dead, but of the living! We are dead, I say, till we get Christ and the place of the dead is on the earthnot in Heaven. Bury the dead out of my sight, corruption cannot inherit the Kingdom of God! Now observe we never come to God till first we get life enough in Christ to have Him as a hope of pardon. I never dared think of coming to God till, first of all, I saw that He had laid help upon One that is mighty, even upon Christ Jesus. When I understood that the onlybegotten Son of God became Man for the sinners sake and suffered in the sinners place, then I thought, There is hope for me.   
And the next thought I had was, I will arise and go unto my Father, and I will confess my sin, hoping that He will have mercy upon me. Is there one here that wants to be reconciled to God? Soul, your only hope of ever being reconciled to Him is on the Crossit is through Jesusand only through Jesus, that you can have even half a hope that is worth having of ever being the friend of God. Oh, look there! Go to His bleeding wounds to get life and you will then begin to get to God!   
But it was later when that hope grew into possession and into faithit was then that we came to God by Christ. Many of you remember when you not only had a hope of being pardoned, but knew you were! Perhaps you remember the very day when all the load of your sin was rolled off your shoulders and you felt light as air, though, before, your heart had been heavy as lead. You remember that time. Did you not, at that moment, look at God and bless Him with all your heart? Did you not feel you loved Him because He blotted out your sin? Did you not feel that day that you could talk to Him, that you could praise Him, that you could magnify Him, that you could live for Him and die for Him? I know I did! I knew I had come to God because in Christ I had the full assurance that my transgressions were forgiven me! The life that gives the assurance of pardon is the life which is the way by which we come to God. Since then, Belovedsince we have come to God through complete pardon, we have often come to Him in prayer. But I will ask you, Did you ever get to the Father in prayer except through the Son? Have you ever tried to pray and forgotten Christ? If you have, it has been a dead failure!   
Remember the Primitive Methodist Prayer Meeting, where the brother got hampered in prayer and could not go on? Somebody in the meeting cried out, Plead the blood, Brother! Plead the blood! Yes, and then the man began to pray again! You have always found it so, I knowthat you could not pray till you got to pleading the blood. I have many a time been with God in prayer, asking for a great blessingand I have felt that I had not got it till I could come to such a text as this, Do it, for You have promised it. Do it, for You will glorify Your Sondo it for His sake, He deserves it! You have promised that He shall have the full reward for His souls travaildo it for His sake.   
Then I have felt I have got it, for I had got the Father because I had pleaded the Son. The Sons life within my soul had helped me to plead His precious merit and the life that showed itself in the breath of prayer enabled me to get to God the Father. You must have felt this, Believersyou must have felt this, I know. It is just the same when coming to God in praise. It is easy enough to sing a Psalm, pleasant enough to get a hymn and hum it over to yourself, alone, but for real worship of God and thorough devout praise of Him, you will never do it unless you have been, first, to the foot of the Cross! There is no music that is sweet to God unless Christ tunes the harp. If there is no blood on the harp, there will be no music such as God can accept. When the Lord touches the tongue, then it praises Him arightbut only if He touches it with a drop of Jesus bloodnothing else! Oh, let the redeemed of the Lord say so, says the Psalmistlet the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom He has redeemed out of the hands of the enemyas if He felt that nobody could praise God so well as those that had tasted of the redemption that was by Christ Jesus. The way for every chorister to come unto God with a sincere thank offering in to come via Crucisby the way of the Cross! Only in that way can He be accepted with His thank offering.   
But, Beloved, I trust we know what it is to come to God as a matter of lifelong experience. It ought not to be by fits and starts that we come to the Father, but, like Enoch, we are to walk with God! It should be habitual with us, to commune with the Most High. But, mark you, it can never be so unless it is habitual with us to rest upon the finished work of Christ. Lose your sense of acceptance in the Beloved and you will lose communion with God! Get away from the foot of the Cross and you have got away from the foot of that ladder, the top of which reaches to Heaven. There is no other ladder but Christ, Himself, in His Atonement. Get away from that and you have taken away the bridge by which you can get to God at all! Fellowship with God must come through faith in Christ! The meeting place under the Law is the meeting place under the Gospel.   
Now, under the Law, the only meeting place was the Mercy Seat, the propitiatory that covered the Law, that golden slab covered the Law on stone. There God met with His people. And Jesus Christ covers Gods Law completely! Our sins are not seenHis righteousness, His propitiation that is seen and God will meet us there! But He will meet us nowhere else! We can only come, then, to communion with the Father by reckoning and resting upon the mediatorial work of the Son. And assuredly, at the last, we shall want to come to the Father through Christ when the veil that now separates us from the invisible world shall begin to be torn in two. We shall long to be in the many mansions and to hear our Fathers welcome, but we shall have to die with Jesus name upon our lips in order to get there! We shall have to rise, tooour spirit will have to mount with Jesus! He must give it the wing and when our body rises, it must be in the image of Jesus and in the life of Jesus, otherwise we cannot come to the Father for the Glory entrance or the Grace entrance.

It is because Christ is the life that we are able to come. We have no way, whatever, and no possibility of ever discovering a way by which, in our life, we can have fellowship with Godthe God of our salvation except by receiving life through Jesus Christ! Oh, men and women, I trust you desire to be at one with your Maker! I trust you wish to be friends with Him who can crush you as a moth between His fingers! I hope there is a desire within your soul to have Him for a Friend whom nothing can endure to have for an enemy! If, then, you will come to God, there is the gatethat gate with the mark, with the blood markyou must go through therethrough the wounds of Jesus!   
You get to Gods heart only in that way. He has shut every other gate of mercy, if there ever were another open, and this one stands open as the only onebut it is open night and day! You must come to God the Father through Jesus Christ the Son, who suffered, died, rose again and sits at the right hand of His Father forever.   
Now we shall close our discourse by the third point, but very briefly. The last sentence of the text takes a sort of sweepa broad sweep. It does not state that Christ is the way because He is the truth, or because He is the life, only, but it says without exception, No man comes unto the Father but by Me, by which I understand, first, that   
III. CHRIST IS THE ONLY WAY THAT GOD HAS APPOINTED by which we can come to the Father. The priest tells me that I must get to the Father only through him. He is a liar and there is no other answer necessary but that! We need not enter into such a question to debate with him. I would as soon believe a cow, if it could speak and tell me that I was to come to God by it, as believe that I was to come to God through a sinner like myself! No, God does not come to me in that shapeHe has better ways and modes. There is one God, says the Scripture, and one Mediator between God and man, the Man, Christ Jesus. In that way we believe, but in the way of priestcraft we do not believe and may God save us from it!   
This is the only one, the absolutely solitary way to God, for God never appointed anotherthat is to say, He has never appointed a way through ceremonies, nor a way through frames of feeling, nor a way through good works. What is the picture of the way to Heaven by good works, Why, it is Mount Sinai all on a blaze, like Etna smoking and heaving like a great volcano! And where are the people that want to get to Heaven by good works? There they are, down in the valley! There is a great ring set round the mountain. Why dont they come up? In the first place, they do not want to come up, for the mountain is altogether on a smoke! Even Moses said, I do exceedingly fear and quake. In the next place, they cannot come up, for there are boundaries set about the mountainand if so much as a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart. You cannot get nearer to God than that on the footing of works, for Mount Sinai is the symbol of works! Look to the flames that Moses saw, and shrink, and tremble, and despair! You cannot get to God that way!   
Calvary is the mountain! Why do you leap high hills? This is the hill that God has chosenthe Calvary of the Crossthe Golgotha of the tremendous Sacrifice! There you can get to GodHe has appointed that to be the place where you shall meet with Him. Oh, do not try to find another way! Be not so arrogant as to say, This is my way, but take Gods way and come humbly, now, to Jesus Crucified, and you shall meet with God and find mercy and pardon tonight! It is the only appointed way.   
Next, it is the only actual way. You never did meet the man that got to God except through Jesus Christ. I have known men who talked about worshipping the pure god of Nature. I knew one who never went to a place of worship and when I spoke to him, he said, I worship God in my own garden. I said, Yes, I suppose that is a god made of wood. I think I heard you knocking him down the other morning. And I believe that is the true worship of Nature. It does not go much beyond that sort of thing and, if you find out those who profess to find God without coming to Jesus Christ, you will find their god is their belly and that they worship pleasureand they lie in their throat when they talk about coming to God apart from Jesus Christ! They do not come! No one ever did come and no one ever shall comethe majority of them do not want to come. He that casts off Christ casts off God with Him, or he that says, I would come to God, but will not come to Christ, contradicts himself.   
There is, deep down in his very soul, a hatred of God, the very true God, or else there would be no hatred to the Christ of God. But Jesus Christ is the way, the only way and, blessed be Gods name, He is an open way! Whoever desires to come to God the Father, tonight, may come through Jesus Christ! The way to God is open. There are no bolts nor bars, no bogs across the road to keep a sinner out. Gods mercy is as free as the air we breathe to every soul that will take Christ and rest in Jesus Christ. This is the one conditioncome to God by Christand you may come. Come now! Come with all your sins about you! Come in all your filth, and rags, and leprosy. Come, though the sentence of wrath hovers over you and the black clouds of justice threaten to smite you with the lightning of eternal wrath! You may come now and as you are, tonight, if you will but come through Christ.   
We need a Mediator between our souls and God, but we do not need any mediator between our souls and Christ. We need to get ready to come to God, but we need not get ready to come to Christ! You cannot come to God unless you are washed in the blood of Christ and clothed in the righteousness of Christ! But you may come to Christ just as you areno need to rid yourselves of one foul blot. Come just as you are, without any good thing, whatever, without even enough goodness in you to be seen with a microscope! Come just as you are, even if you have so much sin that eternity could scarcely hold it! You may come to Christ though you are almost as bad as a devil. Though, in some respects, you are a very devil, yet you may come to God in Christ, but not to God out of Christ! You must come to Christ, first, and, at the foot of the Cross, look up to the atoning Sacrifice. There is a way to Gods heart for you, even you!   
And this way is a most suitable one for all here present. You know if there is a ladder, it is no use to anybody if it does not go to the top. If I want to go up to the top of a houseand a ladder goes only half-wayit is of no use to me. If I want to go to God, I need a way that reaches up to God. Now Christ is, Himself, God. He will lead us right up to God through Himself if we get to Him.   
Now, a ladder that went to the top would be no good for me if it did not go down to the bottom! Though it reached to the top of the house, yet if it only went half-way down, I could not get there. Christ is a Man just like myself. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was born of a virgin and was a sufferer of human infirmities, even as you areand died as you will. He lived in suffering, as you may. Oh, then, lookthe Ladder has its foot in His Humanity and, again, has its top in His Deity! Climb it! He is a suitable Savior for you!   
What kind of Man was Jesus Christ when He was here on earth? He was very holy, but was He very reserved? Was He distant? Did He turn His back when He saw a sinner? Did He get to the other side of the street lest He should touch him and so be defiled with the presence of a publican or a harlot? The Pharisees did that, but not the Master, for this Man received sinners and ate with them! He sat at the same table with them and He was called the friend of publicans and sinners. Oh, Sinner, what a Christ, Christ is! What a suitable Savior for you! Do not think, today, that He is the judge of sinners! Today He is the friend of sinners! Do not look at Him, today, as though He were the censurer of sinners, the critic and the cynic against sinners. No, but the lover of sinners souls! Oh Sinner, may His Spirit draw you to come to Him, tonight, in these pews!   
Let this silent cry go up, Jesus, Son of Man and Son of God, bring me to Your Father! Teach me Your Father by teaching me Yourself! Give me life before God by giving me life in You. You are the wayYourself, in Your own Person. I trust Yoube the way for me, for me, for me, unworthy though I am! Dear, dear Savior, glorify Your mercy by forgiving my sin, my great sin, and accept my unworthy person through Your infinite compassion, and reconcile me unto God.   
Oh, such a prayer as that will be heard! Have you prayed it? It is heard! If you do not feel it is heard, pray it again! Keep on praying it but, above all, look to Christ upon the Cross! Count the purple drops as they distil from His dear wounds! Remember that He was God that died upon that Cross. Sit and look, and look, and look, and look again! Look, I say, and look againand if peace does not come with looking, keep on looking and you will get peace thereand faith there, and life there! You will not take faith to Christyou will get faith from Christ! Keep on looking! Keep on looking!   
I heard a Brother say the other day that what he saw, he always looked at. And that is a sensible thing to do with a great many things, but, above all, with Christ. If you see Him, keep on looking at Him! It does not merely say, See Christ, but, Look unto Him, look unto Him, and be you saved, all you ends of the earth. God grant you that gracious lifelook, for Jesus Christs sake. Amen.

END OF VOLUME 62   
Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #942 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE WAY   
NO. 942

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, JULY 24, 1870, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Jesus said unto him, I am the way.   
John 14:6.**

THE most precious things lie in the smallest compass. Diamonds have much value in little space. Those Scriptural sayings which are fullest of meaning are many of them couched in the fewest words. Who shall measure the depth of that sentence, God is love? Or that other, God is light? Who shall know the lengths and breadths of this declaration, Christ is all? How clearly is the whole Gospel condensed into that line, By Grace are you saved! There are many more Divine Words of a like character, all short, and as sweet as they are short, precious beyond comparison, and as brief as precious. Our text, with its four words, and those all monosyllables, and none of more than three letters, is among the chief of these Bibles in miniature. I am the way.

It were difficult, and it were as wicked as difficult, to be otherwise than simple in preaching such a text as this. May God grant that some of you may be reached by my simple testimony, and led in the way to Heaven. May those who are already in the way be strengthened, comforted, and quickened in it. And may God be glorified and sinners convertedthen our hearts shall be exceedingly glad.

I. We shall go at once to the text, and consider, in the first place, HOW JESUS CHRIST IS THE WAY, AND HOW HE COMES TO BE SO. How is He the way? A way supposes two pointsfrom which and to which. Christ is the way from mans ruin to the Father. Our Lord was speaking of mans coming to the Father, so we know where the way leads, and we know very well that the way were of no service unless it came to where we are by nature, and that is in the place of ruin and of wrath. Christ is the way that leads from the City of Destruction to the Celestial Cityfrom the ruin of our father Adam right up to the glory of our Father who is in Heaven.

Christ is the way, then, first, from the guilt of sin to the Father. The great difficulty wasHow is sin to be put away? Many attempts have been made to remove it, but there is no way of our escaping from the guilt of sin except by Jesus Christ. Some have hoped for pardon by future good conduct, but as we all know, the payment of a future debt can by no means discharge a past debt. So even the perfect future obedience of man, could he achieve it, could not touch his past sins. Self-righteousness, therefore, even if it could reach perfection, would not be the way.

Some hope much from the mercy of God, but the Law knows nothing of clearing the sinner of guilt by a Sovereign act of mercythat cannot be done. For then Gods Justice would be impugned, His Law would be virtually annulled. He will by no means clear the guilty. Every transgression must have its just recompense of reward so that the absolute mercy of God as such is not the way out of the guilt of sin. That mercy is blocked up by avenging Justice, and over the face of that star of hope called absolute mercy there passes an eclipsing shadow because God is righteous as well as gracious.

There is no way by which a sinner can escape from the guilt of sin but that which is revealed in Jesus Christ. God has sent forth His Son, His only Son. The Word was made flesh and came under the Lawupon that mysterious Being who combined both Godhead and manhood in one Person, the Lord has laid the iniquity of us all. By imputation the transgressions of His elect have been laid upon their Covenant Head, so that He was numbered with the transgressors, and He bore the sin of many. He voluntarily undertook to be the Substitute and Covenant Surety of His chosen.

And in this way, by the transferring of sin from the sinner to Christ, the sinner ceases to be regarded as a sinner, and his guilt is removed. Here is the way for that sinner to approach the Father. His sin is laid upon Christ, who became the Substitute for all sinners that ever have believed or ever shall believe on Him. The whole mountain mass of the sins of Believers lies not on them any longer, but on Christ. He has taken their transgressions, He has borne their iniquities, their sins are moved from them and laid on Him.

Now listen! The only way in which sin can be taken from any one of us is by this method. It is not imputed unto us, it is imputed unto HIM. But think not that the sin which was laid upon Christ of old lies upon Christ now. It does not, for the day came when the punishment for all that sin was demanded. The sword of vengeance awoke against human sin, and it would have destroyed all the flock, but the Shepherd came into the place of the flock, and He bore the strokes of the sword. And there upon yonder once accursed, but now forever blessed, tree, the Savior endured the fullness of Divine wrath on account of sin.

Now, where is the sin of His people? He has cast it into the depths of the sea. By bearing its punishment He has caused it no more to exist. It is as though it had never been. It is annihilated, it is gone! If it is searched for, it cannot be found. Jesus Christ, by His taking the sin and then discharging all the liability that was due to God from that sin, has forever finished transgressionmark the wordmade an end of sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness for His people.

Now, Sinner, if you would get away from your sin, Christ is the way. This is the way by which you can escape from it. I have already told you that your future reformation cannot remove your past sins. Neither can the mercy of God, considered as an attribute by itself, clear you from your sin. But this wonderful deed of love and wisdom, this marvelous transaction that makes Heaven and earth ring with grateful songs when glorified spirits see further into it, and when angelic intellects are able to grasp it this wondrous transaction can clear you from sin as it has cleared many of us. For we are this day before God justified, so that none can lay anything to our charge.

Sinners we are in ourselves, but not sinners before Gods Judgment Seat, for Jesus has made us clean. We are whiter than snow, our sins being removed from us far as the east is from the west by our great atoning Substitute. Here is a way consistent with Divine Justice, a way exactly meeting what you need. Oh, I pray God that while the words are used, I am the way, your spirit may say, Blessed be His name, Jesus shall be my way. I will this day believe on Him and thus escape from my guilt.

The text refers to the guilt of sin, but then, I am the way is as true concerning the wrath of God on account of sin. You will see at once, and, therefore, I need not use many words about it, that the way to escape from wrath is to escape from the sin which causes the wrath. Remove the cause, you remove the effect. Now, when the sin of Gods people was moved from them to Christ, the wrath of God went where the sin went, and it fell upon Christ, until He said, My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?

When that bitter cup of wrath had been drained to its dregs, it was emptied forever, and not one drop was left for a believing soul to taste. The wrath of God towards the Believer has ceased to be, and at this moment there is no angry thought in Gods heart towards a justified person. Whosoever has believed in Christ, his sins were laid on Christ, and punished in Christ, and God is not, and cannot be angry with the man for whom Jesus was a Substitutefor he has no sins for God to be angry with.

Oh, you say, but does he not sin? He does, but it is not imputed to him, according to the saying of the Psalmist in the thirty-second Psalm Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputes not iniquity. He commits sin, but it is not imputed to him, and so the wrath never comes on him. He is free from guilt and wrath. God has love to him, unbounded love, and though He may chasten him, yet this is not in anger, but with purposes of love to him for his spiritual and everlasting good. So you see, Christ is the way out of Divine wrath as well as out of our sin.

And listen. There comes upon us in consequence of sin, when the Lord deals with us and makes us see sin, a deep and terrible depression of spirit. It is in some more and in some less, but in every case, when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. Sin, as soon as it is really felt in the soul to be sin, kills us, blasts our former hopes, crushes our pride, lays us like bruised and mangled things before the burning Throne of Justice. Oftentimes souls have been heard to cry, There is no soundness in my flesh because of Your anger! Neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin. For my iniquities are gone over my head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me. My wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness.

Many such expressions, it may be, you, my awakened Hearer, have been made to utter, but, oh, if you come to see that all this sin of yours is not yours, that in Christ Jesus God has put away your sins by your Saviors bearing them and enduring their punishment, I say, if you see this, you will speedily rejoice! In a moment those waves of wrath will pass away from you, and your spirit will sing, Hope in God: for I shall yet praise Him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God. I know a truly awakened conscience never will believe in the pardon of sin without Atonement first made.

But when you hear that Atonement has been made, that Christ suffered instead of you, that His death has glorified the Justice of God more than your lying in Hell could have glorified Himthat His Atonement is to Gods injured Law a better vindication than even your eternal destructiondo you not see it, do you not lay hold on it, and does not your heart

leap at the sound of this glorious Gospel of the blessed God? Christ is the way, then, out of the guilt of your sin, out of the wrath of God for your sin, and out of your sense of that wrath.

But more, Christ is the way to escape from the power of sin. The great object of a penitent soul is to get away from the tyranny and slavery of evil habits and of corrupt desires. A man may break off some of his sins by his own unaided efforts. For instance, no man need be a drunkard, common determination may have done with those intoxicating cups. No man need be a swearer. Let him understand what a wantonness of iniquity there is in that sin, and he may surely give it up. Still, sin dwells in fallen creatures, and the imagination of the thoughts of their hearts is evil, and that continually. Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?

Man, your sinfulness is such that you can not cease from sin. But Man, there is a power above and beyond you which can deliver you from the power of sin and make you holy. It is found in Christ Jesus, in Christ Jesus as I have preached Him to you this day. Let me tell you my own experience. Whenever I feel that I have sinned and desire to overcome that sin for the future, the devil at the same time comes to me and whispers, How can you be a pardoned person and accepted with God while you sin in this way? If I listen to this I drop into despondency, and if I continued in that state I should fall into despair, and should commit sin more frequently than before.

But Gods Grace comes in and says to my soul, You have sinnedbut did not Jesus come to save sinners? You are not saved because you are righteous. For Christ died for the ungodly. And my faith says, Though I have sinned, I have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and though I am guilty, yet by Grace I am saved, and I am a child of God, still. And what then? Why, then the tears begin to flow, and I say, How could I ever sin against my God who is so good to me? Now I will overcome that sin, and, by His Grace, I get strong to fight with sin through the conviction that I am Gods child.

Doubts and fears, and the thought that God is angry only drive you further into sin. But the faith, which in the teeth of sin still believes in Gods love, and still believes in the perfect pardon Christ has given, which God Himself can never take back againthat holy faith which still clings to the Cross with, If I perish I perish, but to this atoning Sacrifice I cling. That faith, I say, makes you strong against sin. The saints in Glory overcame through the blood of the Lamb, and there is no other way of overcoming.

The precious blood of Atonement, wherever sprinkled, kills sin, and he that lives in the full belief of it will be purified from sinful habits, as says that precious textIf we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. It is walking under a sense of Divine love as manifest in Christ. It is walking with the full conviction of pardon through the blood that brings to us freedom from the reigning power of sin. So, Soul, Jesus Christ is the way to escape from sin, its guilt, its wrath, its fear, its power.

Now we must have a word or two upon the other end of the way. I said it was from sin, to what? To the Father. Now the way to the Father is alone by Jesus Christ. We have for this the express saying of ChristNo man comes unto the Father, but by Me. We hear talk of getting to God the Father by Nature, but it is a ladder too short to reach the Infinite. God is somewhat seen in His works, but I believe those who have seen the grandest works of God, and have also seen God in Christ, will tell you that God is no more mirrored in His works than is the whole universe in a dewdrop.

Earth is not broad enough to reflect the image of God. He does not mirror Himself in the seait is a glass too small to show the Deity. He cannot reveal His whole Glory in the materialism of this poor world of oursits axles would groan and crack beneath the weight of Deity. It is in Christ that Jehovah reveals Himself more fully than in all Nature, though you summon sun, moon, and stars, and read all their hieroglyphs. God is revealed in Christ in a way in which He cannot be in anything of time or of space.

Learn, then, that we get our best apprehensions of the Father through the Son. He that has seen Me has seen the Father. It is only by Christ that we realize the Fatherhood of God. I do not believe any man has any idea of what the Fatherhood of God is till he knows Jesus Christ as the First-Born among many Brethren, and knows the power of His Atonement to bring us near to God. The common Fatherhood doctrine that God is the Father of us all because He made us all, is not true in the most real and tender sense of Fatherhood. A potter makes ten thousand vessels, but he is not the father of one of them.

It is not everything that a man makes that he is the father of, or if he is so called, it is only in a modified sense. We are Gods children when we are created anew in Christ Jesuswhen regeneration has made us partakers of the Divine Nature. Sonship is no ordinary privilege common to all mankindit is the high prerogative of the chosen. For what says the ScriptureBehold, what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knows us not, because it knew Him not. When we are adopted into the Divine family, then, and not till then, do we know God as the Father.

As for unbelievers, they have not known the Father, for our Lord says, O righteous Father, the world has not known You. He that has seen Christ has seen the Father, and only he. But the very Essence of Christ is seen in His expiatory death, and therefore we can never grasp the Fatherhood of God till we have believed in the Atonement of His Son. Whosoever denies the Son, the same has not the Father, but He that acknowledges the Son has the Father, also. May we, then, realize the Father through knowing in very deed the Lord, for to a knowledge of the Father He is the only way.

Again, Jesus is the way to conscious acceptance with the Father. I know, my dear troubled Friend, you feel this morning that you would give anything and everything if you could know that God had accepted you, and loved you, and that you were His dear child. Now, you can never know this until first you come to the Cross and see Jesus Christ dying there as a Substitute for you and for all who trust Him. You trust Him your sins are on Himyou are clear.

The very next feeling of your soul will be, I am not only pardoned in Christ, but I am accepted before God in Christ Jesus. For Christs sake, and as one with Christ I am now dear to God. And what is very marvelous, I am as dear to God as Jesus Christ Himself is! I am brought as near as

Christ is! I am what Christ is, for He who was once my Representative in my sin, and bore the wrath for me, is now my Representative in His Glory, and has obtained favor and innumerable blessings for me.

This is a blessed thing. The Father Himself loves you. Made near by the blood of Christ. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like He. For we shall see Him as He is. The gift of Christ to us is a full proof of Divine love, and wherever it is received it is the proof of Gods love to the receiver.

So, too, the way to have communion with the Father is the same. Oh how I long to talk with God, says one. He seems to be a long way off, and the thick darkness shuts Him out from me. O that I could speak with Him, even though the only word I said were that of the returning prodigal: Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before You. Beloved, when you see Jesus Christ who bore your sins in His own body on the tree. When you see Him ascending up to Heaven you have access with boldness unto God, because Christ has entered within the veil and stands in the Presence of God for you.

You talk with God when you draw near in Jesus Christ. Your conviction that all your sin is put away through Him, that you are accepted through Him, that you live in Him as the member lives in the body, that He is your Covenant Head, and that His honors and glories are all reflected upon youthis assured belief brings you so near to God that as a man speaks with his friend, even so do you commune with Him. Truly, our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.

Again, we, by Jesus, come to resemble the Father. There is no way to get the likeness of the Father except by learning Gods love in the Person of His dear Son. Here, too, Christ is the way. You imitate Christ, and so become like the Father. You commune with Jesus Christ, and as you talk with Him, His Character sacredly operates upon yourself, and you are changed from glory to glory, as by the image of the Lord. I do believe, dear Brethren, that the moment we forget Christ, and then seek after personal sanctification, we are trying to get to our journeys end by declining to tread the road to it.

It is, at least I find it so, impossible to grow in Grace except by abiding evermore at the foot of the Cross. When I know by faithnot by any other evidence than by faiththat Jesus loved me, and gave Himself for me. When I see Grace, magnified in sin, laid on Him rather than on me. And when I see Justice magnified, in that sin being put away by Himand when I see Grace and Justice togetherclasping hands in solemn covenant to secure my soul against all fear of risk, then I feel that I am master over sin! Then I feel my soul loves God, yearns after God, mounts up to Godand then it is she becomes more like God than she was before. So Christ is the way from sin, with all we can say of it, to the Father, with all the blessed things that flow from His Throne.

II. WHAT SORT OF WAY IS CHRIST, AND FOR WHAT SORT OF PEOPLE? First, let me say He is the Kings highway, which means that He is the Divinely-appointed way from sin to the Father. If we came to you, dear Friends, who are seeking salvation, and told you of a way of mercy, you would naturally enquire, Who said it was the way? Who appointed it? And if we replied that it was appointed by the last council at Rome, I should not wonder if you felt serious doubts about the matter, and questioned whether a council of men could infallibly determine the way of Grace.

But I have to tell you this day that Jesus Christ is the way of Gods appointment. Thus says the wordBeing justified freely by His Grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God has set forth to be a Propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time His righteousness: that He might be just, and the Justifier of him which believes in Jesus. God the Father devised this plan of salvation by the transference of sin to Christ, and by the punishment of Christ the Substitute, instead of us.

It is clear to me that if God is satisfied with the way, I ought to be. If He, the aggrieved party, feels that Christ has finished the work and that He can now justly forgive us, why need we raise questions? O God, if You can look at Jesus and be well-pleased in Him, surely I can. If You are perfectly content with the sufferings and death of Your dear Son, surely I may be. Now, then, because it is the Kings highway, (I recommend you, my Hearers, to be very clear here), if you are trusting in Christ who is the way of Divine appointment, if He were to fail you, which He cannot do, the blame would not lie with

you, but with Him who appointed Him. I speak reverently. But He has appointed a way which cannot fail, for He is Infinite Wisdom and Infinite Power.

Then, as the Kings highway it is an open way, I can come to it and need ask no mans leave. If I am treading the Kings highway I cannot be a trespasser there. Poor Sinner, Christ is the way from your sin to God, and you need ask nobodys leave to come to God through Jesus Christ. He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him. Him that comes to Me, He said, I will in no wise cast out. Come and welcome! God appoints the way, and when He appoints the way, He puts it thus in 1 John 2:21, And He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole worldin order that any sinner in the whole world who wills to come to the Father by Christ may pluck up courage and perceive that his sins have been laid on Jesus.

Again, it is a perfect way. I am the way. The way from sin to the Father by Christ is complete. It would not be complete unless it came down where you are, but it does. Where are you? Up to your throat in drunkenness? Where are you? Defiled by evil living? Soul, there is a road from where you are right up to the immaculate perfection of the Blessed Savior at Gods right hand, and that road is CHRIST.

You have not to make a road to get to ChristChrist comes to you where you are. The good Samaritan did not ask the wounded man to come to him and promise that then he would pour in the oil and wine. No, he came where he was and poured it in. Christ will come where you are. Saul of Tarsus did not go far to meet Christ. He was riding to the devil as fast as he could, but he was suddenly struck down, then and there where he wasand as he wasand Jesus spoke life to him.

He can do just the same with you. You think you have some preparations to make, some feelings to pass through, something or other to perform before you may believe that Christ has taken your sins. But all you can do to make yourself fit for Christ is to make yourself unfit. All your

preparations are but foul lumberput them all away. You must come as you are, as a sinner, for Jesus came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentancethe whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick.

And if, as you are, you will come and take Gods way, and trust Jesus with all your heart to save you, you will find He will prove to be the very Savior you need, for He is so perfect a road that there is nothing needed at the beginning. And nothing will be needed at the end. Some have supposed that faith in the atoning sacrifice may carry us a certain way, and after that we must stand on another footing. God forbid I should say a single word against good works. Did I not the other Sunday morning address you from these words, Without holiness no man shall see the Lord?

But good works are not the way to Heaven, in whole or in part. They are fruits of salvation. They are the sure products of those who are saved, but they do not save a man. A faith that produces no works will never save anybody. But that which saves men is not the work which comes from the faith, but the faith itself, the faith in Jesus Christ. The top and bottom, the beginning and end of salvation, lies in the Redeemer, and not in us. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, says the Lord.

If you think that you are to patch up Christs robe of righteousness, or that Jesus is to begin and you are to complete, you know nothing of Christ, and need to be taught something of yourself. It must be all Christ or no Christ, all mercy or no mercy. Grace must lay the foundation, and Grace must put on the topstone, or else there can be no salvation. I am the way, then, means that Christ is the way from where the sinner now is right up to where God is, and he that gets Christ shall come to the Father.

Christ is a free way. There is not a toll-bar at the entrance, nor anywhere along the road. Many are afraid to come into this road to Heaven because they cannot pay the chargesbut there are no charges whatever! Whoever wills to have Christ may have Him for the taking. He that will pay for Christ cannot have Him at all. You may have Him for the asking. He is freely given. The way in which to have Christ is the way in which you have water, that is, by drinking. Receive Christ, for unto as many has received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to as many as believed on His name.

There are no legal conditions of salvation laid down anywhere. I know it is sometimes said that repentance and faith are conditionsfrom one point of view, and in one aspect, I might tolerate the termbut truly and really there is no bargain made between God and a sinner. It is never you do this and I will do that. It is always, I will do this for you, and then you shall believe and repent as the result. If faith, is, in one respect a condition, it is in another respect a gift of God, and though we are commanded to repent, yet Jesus is exalted on High to give repentance.

So you poor sinners who have no repentance, or anything of your own, I bid you come to Jesus Christ for everything. He is the way, and the whole way. This is a free waynothing to pay, nothing to do, nothing to be, nothing to bring, no meritsno deserving, no preparations. It is all of Grace. All the gift of God to the very vilest of the vile. Oh, it does sometimes seem too good to be true, that all for nothing I, a great sinner, shall be saved! But when I think of what the Savior isthat He is Godthat He came from Heaven. That He became a Man for my sake. That He, the GodMan, Immanuel, was born and died, and bore the wrath of Godby His Grace I can believe it.

And, O my Lord, I dare no more add any of my driveling merits to the worth of Your dear Son than of stitching some foul, infected rags from a dunghill to a garment made of worked gold! How could I put any nothingness of mine, that only my folly calls anything, side by side with the everprecious merits of Your dear Son?

Again, let me add, it is a permanent way. Jesus says, I am the way not a way for Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, only, but for you. Not for the Apostles, and martyrs, and early saints, only, but for YOU

*His precious blood shall never lose its power, Till all the ransomed Church of God   
Are saved to sin no more.*

It is a way that never has been broken up, and never will be. All the floods of all His peoples sins have never made a swamp or bog-hole in this blessed way.

All the earthquakes and upheavals of our rebellious natures have never made a gap or chasm in this glorious way. Straight from the very gates of Hell, where the sinner is by nature, right up to the hilltops of Heaven, this glorious causeway runs in one unbroken line, and will, forever and forever, till every elect one shall be gathered safe into the eternal Home!

Let me add it is a joyful way. You noted in the chapter we read that the redeemed are to return with songs, and everlasting joy is to be upon their heads. All Believers in Christ as such are a happy and rejoicing people. But, says one, I have seen Believers mourn! That is because they wander from the way. If they continued simply trusting in the Substitution of Christ, if they kept their eye on Him, and on Him only, they would know no sorrow. Where there is no sin there is no sorrow. And when the Believer knows that he has no sinthat it is put away in Christthen he also has no sorrow. Then his peace is like a river, because his righteousness is as the waves of the sea. Dear Heart, if you would be happy, come unto Christ, and abide with Him!

Lastly, on this point, He is the only way. So is He the only way that you cannot be saved if you trust anywhere else. This way which God has planned of laying sin upon the Substitute, is such that it is the only possible way, and therefore God will not have you insult His wisdom and His Grace by trying to patch up another. Do not try to find a way by your own feelings or your own works. There is no such way. All these supposed ways will end in disappointment and in ruin. Jesus Christ is the one foundation, build on Him. God help you to say, I will now cast myself flat upon Christ, having no confidence in myself. I will make Him my confidence, He shall be my All in All. If you have done that, you are a saved soul! Go your way and rejoice with joy unspeakable.

Thus we see what kind of way it is, but for what sort of people is it made? Hurriedly in these two or three words, I reply, for all sorts of people. Christ is the way to Heaven for anybody and everybody who is led to walk there. Christ is the way to Heaven for you, poor Wanderer, though you have sought the theater and music hall, and worse places, to drive away your melancholy. Come to Jesus, for He is the way to peace, the

very way for a wanderer like you. Christ is the way for exiles, for banished ones, for those who have not seen the face of God for many a day, though once they rejoiced in Him. Backslider, if you would get back to your God, Christ is the way.

Christ is the way for captives. You, who bear your chains clanking about you today, who feel as if you never would be freetake heart, take heartthere is a way of escape yet, and Christ is that way! Make a desperate push for it, and say, I will throw myself into His arms. If He reject me I shall be the first one. But I will go and rest on the bloody sacrifice of that dear Son of God who sweat great drops of blood because of my heavy sins, my heavy, heavy sins.

Christ is the way, let me add, for the poorest of the poor. Our Master, when He makes a feast, sends us out to bring in men from the highways and hedges, highwaymen and hedge birdsthose who have not a house or a friend of their own. You who are lowest of the low and vilest of the vile! You who are all but in Hell, and are condemned already, you who lie at Hells dark door bound in affliction and iron, shut out from mercy, as you thinkChrist is the way for you!

For all who long to escape from sin. For all who would come to God. For all who have a desire after mercy or eternal life. The great trumpet is blown, and may they come that are ready to perish, may the most needy and abject, and lost, and self-condemned, say, I will come now and trust in Jesus who died the Just for the unjust to bring us to God.

III. The last point is, HOW WE MAKE CHRIST OUR WAY, AND WHETHER HE IS OUR WAY NOW. How do we make Christ our way? Why, as we make any other way our way. We hear a man say, This is my way. How does he make that his way? Has he got the title-deeds of it? Has he a charter from his Majesty? No, nothing of the sort. The way in which I shall make the Clapham Road my way after I have done preaching is by getting into it.

And the way in which Christ becomes a sinners way is simply by going to Christ. That is all. You have no legal rights, no forms or ceremonies to go throughyou have but to come to the Kings highway by trusting Christ, and Christ is yours. But may I, says one, without any warrant, come and trust Christ? What warrant do you want? The only warrant is Gods permission, and you have a great deal more than thatyou have Gods commandwhich is more than permission. He has said, Go you into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believes and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believes not shall be damned.

In believing you do what that Gospel warrants by its command. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved, is Gods Word! You certainly have a right to do what God commands you to do, so that your right to trust Christ lies in Gods command. He says He will save you through what Christ has done. Will you believe Him? Will you believe Him so as to trust today in what Christ has done? If you do not, you make God a liar. If you do, you glorify God by believing His testimony, and you glorify His Son by trusting in His workand you are saved.

Now, in order to keep the way your own, all you do is to continue in it. How do you keep any other way as your own? By any charter, by any fresh right that you had not at first? No, not at all. This is my way, say I, as long as I still keep to that way. If I turn the other way I cannot say that it is my way, at least nobody would believe a way to be my way if I went in a contrary direction. If I leap over the hedge and go off in another direction and say, This is my way, I lie. Man alivethat is your way which you goyour possession of the way lies in your keeping the way.

So now, Christian, Christ continues yours by the same way in which He became yours. That is by your still trusting Him, not by anything you do, or are by yourself, or in yourself. Because Jesus lives, you live also, not because of anything you do. The just shall live by faith, not by any other means. You are not to begin in the Spirit and then be made perfect in the flesh. You are not to begin to walk by confidence in Christ and afterwards go on to walk by confidence in your own evidences and graces. Your evidences and graces will always shine best when you think the least of them, and always will be brightest with God when you look most at His dear Son, and not at them.

If you ever take your best virtues and sanctifications and make them a ground of hope, you are building on that which will crumble beneath you in the time of trial. But as long as you keep to this, Still a sinner, but still washed in the blood. Still in myself guilty, but no guilt of mine imputed to me, all laid on my Substitute. Still my best prayers, my best hymns, my almsgivings, my preaching, my allall defiledbut yet I am clean through Him that washes my feet and makes me clean in His most precious blood.

This is the way to live, the way to live evermore, not only as a beginner, but when you are advanced in Divine Gracethe way to live when you are becoming a mature matron or veteran soldier, and the way when you come to die. It is especially, then, in those last moments, that we fling everything away but just what Christ has done. We might have been troubling ourselves a great deal before about marks, evidences, and so on, But when it comes to the last, we are like the good man who, on his dying bed, tried to pick out what was good and what was bad of his own doings. He said he was a long while judging them, but they were so much of a burden that he at last tied them all up in one bundle and flung them over, and rested on Christ alone. That is the very best thing for us all to do even now

*None but Jesus, none but Jesus,   
Can do helpless sinners good.*

This will not make you unholy but holy. If you believe this, you will seek to honor and glorify God with all your might, and when you have done all, you will feel that you are unprofitable servants. And into His dear arms you will cast yourselves, and pray that the hands that were pierced may still embrace you and keep you safe in death and in eternity.

Now, the question to finish with is this, Is Christ my way today? Oh, I know many of you could rise up and say, Yes, He is, He is all my salvation and all my desire

*Nothing in my hands I bring,   
Simply to the Cross I cling.*   
My God, You know all things. You know my souls only reliance is on Your dying, Your risen, Your ever-living Son, who is my hope, my All. But, perhaps there are some here who are not in this way, because they do not even know it. I believe there is no doctrine so little known in England as the Gospel. While a great many doctrines are preached, and very

properly so, and the precepts are preached, yet there are hearers who have heard for years, and yet do not know this fundamental, essential doctrine of the Gospelthat God laid sin on Christ that He might take sin off from us, and punished Him that He might be Just and yet the justifier of the ungodly. If you have never heard it before you have heard it now. You will not perish, therefore, with that excuse. If you put aside that way of salvation, it will not be because you have never heard it. If you perish, there will be no excuse for you.

But there are some who do not believe this plan to be Divine. When they hear it and understand it, they scrap it. Some will say it is inconsistent with the pursuit of morality. Others will say it is fantastic or unjust. One will say this and another that. But though the Cross of Christ is to them that perish foolishness, to us who are saved it is the wisdom of God and the power of Godand God forbid we should preach any other Gospel to you. Some there are who even hate it. They will gnash their teeth at the idea of being pardoned through the merit of Another, their righteous self feels indignant at being insulted by being put right out of the market.

Ah, cast not your soul away out of mere hate to God, but kiss Him whom God has made King this day, and trust in Him who is Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec, to put away the sin of man by His own great sacrifice. Come now to Him and take the Atonement and the peace which He brings. Some are not saved because they are too fearful to come this way, but to such I would speak very gently. The bruised reed He will not break, the smoking flax He will not quench. Let not your sense of sin make you think little of my Master.

You are a great sinner, but He is a greater Savior. Do not say that you have matched Christ, or overmatched Him. Come, Goliath Sinner, the Son of David can conquer you or save you yetThough your sins are as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool. Think of David, how foully he had transgressed, yet with all the lust stains, and the murder spots upon him, he had faith enough to say, Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

And so shall you be whiter than snow, when once the bloody sacrifice of Christ in all its merit has become yours, as it may this very morning if you simply trust in Him. May my God the Eternal Spirit, may my God the blessed Father, may my God, even Jesus the Son, draw many reluctant hearts now, and His shall be the praise. Amen.

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CHIDING AND CHEERING   
NO. 3430

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29, 1914. DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.   
Have I been with you so long, and yet have you not known Me, Philip? John 14:9.

THIS Chapter gives us a very delightful picture of the companionship and kindly conversation which were kept up between our Savior and His 12 disciples when He dwelt with them in this world. Though they looked up to Him as if they felt there was none upon earth beside Him, yet they were as simple and free in speaking to Him as if they merely talked to one another. And did not He behave to them like a true friend, always mindful of their childishness, but gentle, tender, and patient? Warning without wounding, correcting without much censure, and comforting them without concealing the dangers to which they were exposed? Thus we notice how they speak to Him with a natural, easy familiarity. And He talks to them in full sympathy with their weakness, teaching them little by little as they are able to learn. They ask just such questions as a boy might ask of his father. Often they show their ignorance, but never do they seem timid in His Presence, or ashamed to let Him see how shallow and hard of understanding they are. Yet He is never petulant with them. Even though He would chide them for their dullness, His rebukes are not harsh. Thus, when Philip says to Him, Lord, show us the Father and it suffices us, Jesus answers him with a question which quietly rebukes his simplicityHave I been with you so long, and yet have you not known Me, Philip? What lenience, what compassion! Like as a father pities his children, so the Lord pities them that fear Him. Oh, how should the children of such a Father cling to His knees, sit at His feet, hang on His lips and pour out their hearts before Him! Such, Beloved, was the demeanor that Jesus loved to exhibit towards His disciples! And such was the behavior that He liked to encourage on their part towards Himself. As there were no chills in that friendliness of His, so there could hardly be much shyness or backwardness in those conversations of theirs. I linger on the picture. He, on whose brow majestic sweetness reigns, is all generous, condescending and, I might almost say, He is affable, while they, poor in spirit, weak in faith, grow open and ingenuous, confidential and confiding in His society. Language fails me to describe to you what I see in the text and its surroundings. Here is the Man, Christ Jesus, Divine in His Person, in His Character and in His conduct, unveiling the Father to babes in Grace who do not and cannot understand the charm that first drew them and then bound them to Him! But He who once sojourned here below, now sits exalted high at the right hand of God. In bodily Presence He is not among us. He is not to be seen by mortal eyes, yet in spirit He abides with us and His Presence is known and felt by gracious hearts. Believe me, then, He is the same Jesus! He is by no means changed. The terms on which He would have us live with Him and walk with Him are far above mere service. He calls us friends. Why, do you think He does that? Is it because we have done so much for Him? No, it is because He has done so much for us, and told us so much, and kept nothing back from us! In truth, He is our Friend and Counselor, and He would have us come to Him and ask His advice in the most frank and simple manner. When we feel that we lack wisdom, He never upbraids us, but He always gives liberally to those who ask Him. We may play the child with HimHe deigns to be pleased with our childish prattle. Our prayers may be full of inquiries. Our supplications may be laden with difficulties that we cannot unravel. Yet He will condescend to explain them all, and by His Spirit He will continue to teach and lead us further into the Truth of God. Oh, how I wish we always cultivated this childlike spirit towards Jesus, for He always has a compassionate spirit towards us!

What dull scholars we all are! Have I been with you so long, and yet have you not known Me? These words suggest two redactions, on each of which I shall have a few remarks to offer. First, notwithstanding the highest privileges that can be enjoyed in obtaining instruction, we may yet remain ignorant of Jesus Christ. And secondly, when we do know Him, the most favored disciples have still much to learn. So far as our religious training is concerned

I. THE BEST OF MEN CANNOT IMPART TO US A KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST.  
Here were Apostles who had been with Jesus, Himself, for three years in His public labors and in His private retirement. They had been, as it were, students in His collegeHe Himself had been their Tutor. They could not have been placed in more advantageous circumstances! No better tutor could have been found. He taught them both by His works and by His words. He was constantly doing miracles and performing wondrous actions, by which He showed His Glory and revealed His Nature. But there were some of them that, after all this teaching, did not knowdid not know what? Why, they did not know Him! They did not know the main point of all His teaching. They did not know the Teacher, Himself! He had been so long with them, and yet they did not know Him! I am not now, in this first part of our discourse, alluding so much to Philip, whose knowledge was imperfect, his light but a glimmer and his thoughts, therefore, often perplexed, as I am to Judas Iscariot. The career of that unhappy manhis calling, his course, his character, his conduct, his crime and the consequences of his crimeall conspire to produce a picture on which we gaze with wild amazement! And as we ponder it, we feel a sinking at the inmost heart. It shows us how near a man may be to Christ in the daily walks of life. How much he may see of Christ in His works of mercy toward the children of men, and how often he may hear of Christ the words of counsel and comfort, of wisdom and warning and yet be totally ignorant of Christ, deriving no virtue from Him, entering into no sympathy with Himtill at length he falls away to perish with an awful, terrible destruction! Or, to make the peril more thoroughly our own, it would appear that we might associate with the followers of Christ in our homes, have constantly before our eyes the charities which are dispensed in the name of Christ, and be privileged to listen to the most enlightened and eloquent preachers of Christand yet never discern Him as the Son of God, sent of the Father, the very essence and quintessence of the Covenant of Grace! His name may be most familiar to our ears, while, alas, our hearts are alien to Him! Had Judas known his Master more truly, could he have dealt Him so treacherously? Had He known Christ to be One with the Father, would he have sold Him for 30 pieces of silver? Had he known Him to be God over all, blessed forever, would he have betrayed Him to the chief priests? Oh, no! Though he had seen Him tread the sea and heard the voice that called back Lazarus from the tomb, yet Judas saw only the man, the Nazarene, whom he could sell and give over traitorously to His foes! Certainly he did not so know Jesus as to trust Himhe had never yielded up his soul to rely upon the Messiah, the Christ, the Appointed, the Anointed Savior. Judas was pre-eminently one who, though he had been a long time with Christ, yet knew Him not in the matter of saving faith. And I am sure he did not know Him so as to love Him. If he had loved Him, he would not have deceived Him, or given Him the traitorous kiss. Learn, then, from Judas example, rather than from Philips, just now, that you and I may have been hearers of the Word for years and yet may not know Jesus!  
Oh, but if we do know Him, let us be very grateful that the Holy Spirit has taught us something of His sacred mission! How much more, if you have been made acquainted with the dignity and excellence of His Person, and confessed Him to be the Son of God! What thanks will you then render unto the Father? Remember what Christ said to Simon Peter when he proved that he knew Him beyond all the rumors that were floating about, beyond all the opinions that were entertained, beyond all the prejudices that were nursed among the rulers or the people of those days. He said, Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood have not revealed this unto you, but My Father who is in Heaven. No minister can make us know Christ! No book, no, not even the Bible, itself, apart from this celestial teaching! So Paul prays that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, may give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened. This will make Jesus Christ in the Deity of His Person, in the excellence of His work, in the love of His heart, in the faithfulness of His Character, to be truly known by us, so that we shall trust Him implicitly and love Him undividedly! I do beg to press this very earnestly upon many of you here present. The question of our text has a strong admonition, when set in this light, for some of you. Has not Jesus been, as it were, a long time with you, you who are regular attendants at this place of worship? Ah, you have discerned His Presence by the words spoken and the signs worked in your midst. When we have preached the Gospel earnestly and faithfully, with the Holy Spirit sent down from Heaven, as at least we sometimes have preached it, then Jesus has come very near to youoften and often has He pleaded with youyou have felt a Presence greater than that of man while His Truth has been declared. Has He been with you so long, and yet have you not known Him? That He has been with you is certain, for His saints bear witness of Him. While you have been sitting on these seats, there have been all around you gracious hearts that have rejoiced because they have seen the Savior! Sorrowing hearts have been relieved of many cares, and weeping eyes whose tears have been wiped away. The presence of Jesus has made the heartstrings of many here to sound like harps of joy! Has He been with you so long, near unto you, seen by your neighbors and yet have you not known Him? Oh, poor souls! Poor Philip! Poor John! Poor Mary who could sit in such an assembly where others saw the Savior, and yet not to have known Him! Moreover, Jesus has been here, for many like you have seen Him. Perhaps your own wife has been converted. Your brother has seen the Lord. Your sister has come to know Christ as her Savior. And so long has He been with you that now you could count some dozen or more of your companions that have come to know Jesus, yet you have not known Him! Oh, it is hard to live where Divine Grace is freely distributed, and yet have none of it yourself! Where there is a general famine, as there lately was in the city of Paris, each man bears the stress with some patience, the more so because others are in a same plight. But oh, to starve in this city, when you see others feasting on plenty! Oh, this is sad, sad work! And some of you are being lost, while others are being savedthe very Sabbaths when others find Jesus, you go away without a thought of Him! The sermon which pierces others hearts glides past you! The exhortation which points others to Calvary, you hear, but never heed! You are still a stranger to Him, though He has come so very rear you! And has it been so long that He has been with you, and yet, and yet, have you not known Him? Oh, this is grievous!  
So long, the Savior says, have I been with you so longso long? I must linger just one minute on that word. To be an unbeliever a day or even an hour after you have heard the Gospel is a very long time. A day! What does it mean? Only a day, you will sometimes say. At another time you say, a whole day, with a prolonged emphasis. You know time must often be measured by the condition in which a man is placed. To be beneath a lions claw, or with ones arm in a lions mouth five minutes is a great deal too long! It is a dreadful condition to have life in jeopardy and to be so long in fear. I have heard of one who fell down a deep crevice upon a glacierbetween the deep blue ice. If you look down and throw a stone, it is long before you hear the sound, showing that the stone has reached the bottom. A traveler once slid down one by accident, and there he lay, wedged in by the ice. I think it was fully an hour before the ropes were brought. Why, that must have seemed a dreadful while to wait! An hour, you know, in good society, cheerfully spent, seems short, but an hour between the jaws of death, how dreadful! Now, an unbeliever is in as great a danger as that, and even in greater danger! He is under Gods anger every minute that he is an unbeliever! It is a long time to be in jeopardy of your soul. A long time to be under the sentence of death. A very long time to be without hope. Ah, but did I speak of hours? Did I speak of months? Years, rather must I come to, for it has been many years with some of you! You remember your mothers pleadings, the Sunday school teachers entreaties and now the gray hairs begin to appear here and there upon you, and you are still unsaved! Have I been with you so long? Perhaps you dont think it long, but it is long to God! You know if you have a child that has been very, very disobedient, and you say to him, Now do as I tell you, he waits in stubborn silence. Some minutes afterwards you say, My child, I must be obeyed. Do it. Still he looks angry and sullen, and bites his lips. It is a long time for you to waityou feel you must soon chastise him. Oh, what a long time it has been for God to be waiting! There are some men whom you cannot provoke for a minute without rousing their temper and exciting their resentment. Who among us could stand such provocation, say, for an hour? I am afraid the best tempered man here, if incessantly provoked from morning to night for a week, would find that it needed much more Grace than he had in stock to keep him from anger. But for 40 years to provoke the Lord to anger? Marvel not that He was grieved, yes, and aggrieved with that generation. Have I been so long time with you? Has Christ been so long in your midst? Have His words sounded in your ears? Have you seen His deeds of mercy in blessing others? And yet all this while, with you so long and you do not know Him? You have not desired to trust Him, but you have bid Him go His way to wait your convenienceyou intend to send for Him. Take care lest that convenient season comes not until the harvest is past and the summer is ended, and the day of Grace is over with you! Oh, may the question ring an alarm in your conscience! I commend it to your earnest attention, all of you who are unsaved!

And now I propose to address a few thoughts to the people of God. Beloved Friends, by the teaching of Gods Spirit, we do know the Savior! Of a truth we know the Son of Man to be One with the Father. We have been taught to discern in the face of Jesus of Nazareth the express image of God. We love Him. We reverence Him, we adore Him as our God, the Redeemer of our souls. We have much joy and much peace in believing and worshipping. Now, with all this knowledge, it is very possibleno, I think it is quite certainthat   
II. ALL OF US HAVE A GREAT DEAL MORE TO LEARN.  
Here and there, at many a turn, our vision is so clouded, our faith so weak, our memory so treacherous, Jesus might say to each of us, as He said to Philip, Have I been with you so long, and yet have you not known Me? We are slow to acquaint ourselves with our Lord and Master, though He is with us. This is all the more strange, because, if a man lives with you, you pretty soon think you know him. You who have long held communion and kept company, as it were, with Jesus, ought to have known Him better than you do. Some men you cannot know because they are so changeable. You think you know them today, yet they are very different tomorrow. But Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. I remember some 12 or 15 years ago I was askedvery earnestly asked by a painter to sit for my portrait. I did sit some 10 or 12 times, and at the end of each sitting, when I looked at what he had done, I thought the picture less like me than it had been before! He seemed to be much of the same opinion, though he was an eminent and skilled artist. At last he dashed his brush across the canvas and gave up his task in despair. When I asked him why, he said, I never see your face twice alikeit is quite impossible for me to paint you. No such complaint can be made of our Lords Character! Or, at least, though a thousand fresh beauties rise to our view as we gaze on His lovely face, and though the majesty and the meekness that blend in Him surpass all power of delineation, yet He is evermore Jesusthe same, ever lovely, ever kind and true, ever gracioustherefore, by resorting to Him and communing with Him, we ought more and more to know Him! Some people, it is true, you cannot knowthey are so retiring and reserved. However long you live with them, you cannot make their acquaintance. They practice so much restraint curbing their feelings, hiding their thoughts, and sparing their words that you see not themselves. They show you not what they are, but what they would appear. Whether it is because they are proud, or because they are timid, from self-esteem or from diffidence, they veil the features of their mind, and it is only on some remarkable occasion, through a sudden grief or an unexpected joy, that they look, and act, and speak with perfect freedom and natural simplicity! Not so our SaviorHe reveals Himself with open face. He wears His heart upon His sleeve. He is frank and ingenuous with His people. If it were not so, I would have told you, He said to His disciples, as if He could appeal to them, and their conscience could witness that He had kept back no secrets from them that between Him and them there was no reticencethat all He had they should have and all He left they should be privy to. How ought we, then, to know Christ, since He is neither changeable nor reserved? And yet, Brothers and Sisters, to how limited an extent do we really know Him!   
In various particulars our ignorance, or rather our lack of perception, is palpable. Some of the true servants of our Lordperhaps there are such here presentdo not know the very alphabet of His teaching! They discern not the great Doctrines of the Gospel so as to rejoice in them. Does Jesus say, As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you? And again, I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit? They start back frightened at the Doctrine of Election, and shudder at the very sound of a predestinating purpose! Or does He say, I give unto My sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish? They are shocked at the Doctrine of Final Perseverance and bleat out their cries of distress as though they thought that nothing could be more unsafe than securitytimorous creatures! I do not think this lack of wisdom is as much their fault as their misfortune. They were taught, when they were young, to be afraid of these Doctrinesthey then turned a deaf ear to themand now they have gotten old, they are rather perplexed than comforted by them!   
Understand me, my dear Brothers and Sisters, Jesus Christ loved you, and He tells you the Father Himself loved you before the foundation of the world! He did not begin to love you after you loved Him. Is that a new Truth of God to you? That is the Doctrine of Election! You have been denying it! You thought it was a horrible and dangerous presumption. Have you known Christ so long and not found that out yet? Now, here is another Doctrine. Jesus Christ will always love you. Whom once He loves, He never leaves, but loves them to the end. That is the Doctrine of Final Perseverance. You have been afraid of that, have you not? Well, but have you known Christ and not found that out? Do you think He can change? Do you believe that He will make you a member of His body and cut you off? Do you imagine that He will die for you and then let you perish? If, when you were an enemy, you were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, you shall be saved through His life. My dear Brothers and Sisters, I will not argue that point with you, but I do believe that if you knew Jesus Christ better, you would think differently, for any man who supposes that Christ did not love His people before the world began, or that He will not love them when the world has ceased to be, may well hear Jesus say, Have I been so long with you, and yet have you not known Me, My friend Arminius? Have you not found Me out yet, so as to know that I am God, that I change not and, therefore, the sons of Jacob are not consumed?   
But some of His saints do not know their Lord in the tenderness of His heart, and the richness of His forgiving mercy! Perhaps there is a Believer here who has fallen into some great sin. My Brother, my Sister, I am grieved enough to hear it, and I trust your grief is more than you can express. If like David, you have gone astray and done evil in the sight of Heaven, then I hope, like David, you will feel broken bones and have Davids penitence to go to God again for fresh forgiveness. After making a profession by faith, you have fallen into sin and sunk into despondency. Jesus Christ appears to you and He says, Soul, have you sinned after coming to Me? Have you sinned and brought My name into dishonor? I am still ready to forgive you. Come and put your trust again in Me, and your transgression shall be blotted out. Doubt whispers, Lord, I cannot see how You can forgive this. Why, He would say, have I been so long with you, and yet you do not know Me? When did I ever refuse to forgive one of My servants? Did not Peter deny Me? Yes, with oaths and cursing? And what did I do to Peter? Did I say, Peter shall never be My servant again? No. I did but look at him and that broke his heart. And afterwards I said to him, Simon, son of Jonas, do you love Me? That is all I said that looked like chastisement, and I forgave him, and made him My disciple. Oh, child of God, stained with sin, if you say, Christ cannot wash me again, then you have been a long time with Him and you have not known Him! Or, again, into what a morbid state our minds will sometimes sink. The other day I was in this plight, and perhaps you may be in the same, full of wandering thoughts. I could not read a Chapter with any sort of understanding. After going through two or three verses, I felt that I might as well have been reading Virgil. I tried to pray. Oh, such prayers!a few words and then it was as if I was not praying at all! So I thought within myself, Can the Lord accept me, a poor, weak, worthless soul as I am? I cannot control my thoughts. Then came headache and pain, till I was worse, still, and I began to question how I could be accepted of God in my devotion when it was all dull and languid, without fire or fervor. But afterwards I thought to myself thusIf my dear child had been told to do a thing, and he was sick and ill, and did his best, I know I would not blame himI would say, Poor soul, I see he would do it better if he could. And can I imagine that my Lord, when He has known me so long, will judge me by the distraction of my mind or the weakness of my body? Ah, but sometimes I have feared He would! If any of you are harboring such a thought, you may see Him standing by you and hear Him addressing you in these tender accents, Have I been with you so long, and yet have you not known Me? Do not you know Me well enough to understand that I can interpret your feeblest prayer? Do you think Me a harsh tyrant, or a hard taskmaster? Why, I love you! I pity you from my very soul! Do not misjudge MeI do not misjudge you, I take the will for the deed. I read your groans and I bottle up your tears.   
The question may sometimes be driven home to us in another kind of experience, When called to suffer in mind, in body, or in estate, it is easy for those who would comfort us to quote that sweet assuring passage of Scripture, We know that all things work together for good to them that love God. But it is not half as easy for those who smart under adversity to encourage themselves in the Lord. When racked with many pains from which you seek in vain for relief, or when you are very poor and straitened in your circumstanceswhen your cupboard is bare and you have no work to dowhen the children are crying for bread and you have no wages to receive, then have you not felt, amidst your weighty griefs, how black thoughts will haunt your mind, dark surmises will hover about your imagination and, oh, it might happen in some unguarded moment, that rebellious murmurings would come upon your sins? Can this be right? Can God be kind? Has He forgotten to be gracious? Where now is that all-bountiful Providence we were known to look to? Is this in any way consistent with love? But hush, my Soul, nor dare repine! It is the voice of Jesus which says to you, Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me? The last time I afflicted you, did not it turn out for your good? You have had sore trials by the waywere they not means of great blessing to you? Dont you know Me yet? Cannot you trust Me? Here is the bitter medicineyou have taken some before, and your health has been restored. You took a draught the other day when the fever was upon you, and it drove it away. Dont you know enough of the skill of your physician to put yourself in his hands and take whatever he prescribes, cheerfully and without objections? Surely, Brothers and Sisters, we would not wince so much at our afflictions if we did but know the Master better! From the hand of the Lord we would accept them, and we would bow to the will of the Lord in bearing them.

The same may be said to us when we are called to some new labor. Preacher, teacher, visitormay any of them find their labor of love and irksome toil, when beset with difficulties and consumed with sorrows? The young minister encountering tastes and tempers that vex his soul. The superintendent of a class striving to instruct children who will not listen, much less learn. The visitor who is repulsed by those she courts and upbraided by those she strives to befriendall of these are apt to complain, Lord, why have You called me to this particular work? In other departments I might have succeededthis I cannot do. I have neither the ability nor the strength. Then, again, might Jesus lay His dear pierced hand on your shoulder and say, Have I been with you so long, and yet have you not known Me? Did I ever send you to a warfare at your own charges? Did I ever give you work to perform and leave you unsupported? Have I not always proved that, as your day, so shall your strength be? Go in this, your might, for I will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not doubt Me, for if you do, you have not known Me.   
The scruple that sometimes comes over Gods children about praying for little things is another instance of their not knowing Christ. Oh, says one, if my child were dying, I could pray about that, but when he is only fretful and hard to manage, though it does worry me a good deal, and sorely grieves my spirit, yet I cannot go and lay such a trivial matter before my great Lord! Then you dont know Him. Have I been so long with you, and have you not known Me, Philip? Has not the Lord said that He counts the hairs of our head, and that not a sparrow falls to the ground without His decree? Your Savior is as great in His attention to tiny needs as in His administration of grand affairs! Take the thorn in your finger to Christ! Take the stone in your shoe to Christ! I mean, Pilgrim, if you get a little care that may fester and breed great pain, take that to Christ! I mean, Pilgrim, if you have a little trial on your way to Heaven, take that to Christ, or else you shall do amiss! You know Him not if you cannot trust Him with anything and everything, whatever it may be that relates to your welfare!   
Now I shall give you two more instances which show how we may be with Christ and yet may not have known Him as we should. One shall be this. Every now and then I hear Christians saying(I am glad to hear it)I offered prayer on such-and-such an account, and God has graciously heard me. I am pleased to hear them make the confession of answered prayer for it tends to cheer and encourage others. But when they go on to exclaim, Is it not surprising? Does not it seem almost incredible? Is it not marvelous? I think they betray a weakness! Have I not heard many speak of Mr. Mullers orphan houses at Bristol, and the honor put on him as extraordinary? It seems as though they thought it unbelievable that God would hear that dear mans prayers! More than two thousand children supported by prayer and faith, they saidHow amazing! as if our Lord, in this, had exceeded His own promise! Well, but has Christ been so long with us that we think these things strange? Were I to hear it reported that such a man, after having been married 20 years, had taken a present home to his wife, which he had handed to her very kindly and very generously, but which she had accepted with a look of surprise and an exclamation of, Who would have thought it? I would say, Ah, then, they have lived a rather sorry life together, or else, though she might have been delighted, she certainly would not have been astounded at her husbands generosity to her! Or, again, if I heard that a certain individual had paid his debts, and if it was talked of down Cheapside and all over London, I should naturally infer that it was a great wonder he did so, that on his part it was a thing uncommon and on the part of his creditors a thing unexpected! So, too, when I hear it spoken of as passing strange, a prodigy, that God should be gracious to His people, I blush for those who are amazed at what they might have expected! Am I to understand it to be really surprising that the Faithful Promiser keeps His promise? That our heavenly Father bestows good things on His children? That He who encouraged us to ask and engaged Himself to give, should answer our petitions? I dare not think thus! It seems to me that your sudden surprises tell of evil surmises! I would rather say, with that good old Christian lady who, when she was told of Gods hearing prayer, and asked if it was not surprising, replied, No, it is just like Him! It is His way. He is always doing it! Ah, truly, when we express surprise at His answering prayer and delivering His servants according to His promise, He might well say, What? Have I been with you so long, and have you not known Me?  
With one more instance I conclude. Full many a time I have heard the Masters voice in the inner chambers of my heart, expostulating with me thusHave I been with you so long, and have you not known Me? And then I have said, Alas, Lord, I have not known You as I should and I feel that I cannot know You as I would. Come, Beloved, let us talk it over together. Sometimes, in deep quietude of spirit, our heart has been giving itself to devotionit may have been a time of suffering. The world was all shut out, and sweetly did our soul begin to perceive the love and the loveliness of Christ, till the vision of the Savior grew clearer and brighter and more brilliant. We saw His Godhead, admired His condescension that He should stoop to redeem. We saw His Manhood, grateful that He would come so near to us as to be bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh. We saw Him at Gethsemaneseemed to count the bloody drops as they fell in a sweat from His brow. We saw Him on the Cross, marked His hands and feet. Our soul could follow Him up to Heaven, there view Him on the right hand of the Throne of God, pleading. We drew near unto Him. He wrapped us in His crimson vest and told us all His name.  
Then we felt we knew more in that hour than we had ever known before, so that all we had known seemed nothing! We said to our soul, Have we been so long time with Him, and yet have we not known Him till this hour, as we know Him now? Now, between here and Heaven, unless we go Home very shortly, there will come a good many of these openings of the golden gatestimes in which the King will bring us to His banqueting house. Doubtless, each time will He reveal Himself more intimately when we look more fully at Him and discover more of His blessed features and His sacred mindeach time we shall rise up from the sacred festival and say, Long time as I have been with Him, I have not known Him until now. On every fresh occasion we shall be ready to exclaim, like the Queen of Sheba when she saw the glory of Solomon, The half has not been told me. And when you get face to face with Him, your admiration will become so intense that though you will have a grateful remembrance of all you did know of Him on earth, you will say, I was a long time with Himtwenty, 30, forty years, but I did not then know Him as I know Him now! I had a little fellowship with Him in the valley of tears below, but oh, I did but paint a bleary-eyed picture of the lovely King. Mine was but a poor dreamy, smoky imagination of this bright Sun, this Sun of Righteousness in His Glory, my King, the Chief among ten thousand, the altogether lovely. I pray, Brothers and Sisters, that, gathering round His Table, you may have just such a season as shall make you ashamed of what you have known before in comparison with what you see now of His beauty! And then may you go on further and further learning of Christ, making discoveries of His Glory till you shall be with Him where He is, to behold that Glory, and to be participators in it!   
God bless you at this feast of His love. May He be present with us to make glad our hearts! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **REVELATION 19:11-16.**

11-13. And I saw Heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He who sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He does judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns; and He had a name written, that no man knew, but He, Himself. And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and His name is called The Word of God. That same Logos of whom John wrote in the Gospel now stands before him and he beholds Him in His Glory. What a delight it must have been to the seer of Patmos to see his Lord and Master once again in different array from that in which he had beheld Him when, in humiliation, He tabernacled here among the sons of men! His name is still the sameThe LogosThe Word of God.

14-16. And the armies which were in Heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations: and He shall rule them with a rod of iron: and He treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He has on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. And this is the Man of Nazareth. This is the crucified, despised, and rejected One. Servus servorum once.Servant of servants but now King of kings and Lord of lords! And what will the end be of the battle that He wages? Will any of His adversaries escape? Will they hold their own? No, they shall utterly be destroyed before Him! All the powers of evil, of false doctrine everything contrary to His mindshall be destroyed. And this is set forth in symbolic imagery by the dreadful battle feast which usually succeeds a battle, when the vultures smell the carrion from afar and come to rend the spoil. It shall not be thus with the bodies of men, but thus with evil thus with the powers of darkness.

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #1932 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

**LOVES LAW AND LIFE**

NO. 1932

**A SERMON INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, DECEMBER 5, 1886,   
DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON THURSDAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 30, 1886.

**If you love Me, keep My commandments.   
John 14:15.**

THIS is a chapter singularly full of certainties and remarkably studded with ifs. Concerning most of the great things in it there never can be an, if, and yet, if, comes up, I think, no less than seven times in the chapter and, if, too, not about trifles, but about the most solemn subjects. It is, perhaps, worthy of mention that with each of these, ifs, there is something connected, as following out of it, or appearing to be involved in it, or connected with it.

Look at the second verse . In my Fathers house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. If there had been no place for us in the Glory Land, Jesus would have told us. If any Truth of God which had not been revealed would have made our hope a folly, our Lord Jesus would have warned us of it, for He has not come to lure us into a fools paradise and, at the last, deceive us. He will tell us all that it is necessary for us to know in order to a wise faith and a sure hope. The Lord has not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earthHe has not spoken in contradiction of His revealed Word. Nothing in His secret decrees or hidden designs can shake our confidence, or darken our expectation. If it were not so, I would have told you. Had there been a secret thing which would have injured your prospects, it should have been dragged to light that you might not be deceived, for the Lord Jesus has no desire to win disciples by the suppression of distasteful Truths. If there were anything yet to be revealed which would render your hope a delusion at the end, you would have been made acquainted with itJesus, Himself, would break the sad news to youHe would not leave you to be horrified by finding it out for yourselves! He kindly declares, I would have told you.

Notice the third verse . Again we meet with, if, and its consequence. If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto Myself. If the Lord Jesus should go away (and this is a supposition no longer, for He has gone), then He would return, again, in due time. Since He has gone, He will come again, for He has made the one to depend on the other. We make no question that He went up into Heaven, for He rose from out the circle of His followers and they saw Him as He went up into Heaven. They had no sort of doubt as to the fact that the cloud received Him out of their sight and, moreover, they received assurance out of Heaven, by an angelic messenger, that, He shall so come in like manner as you have seen Him go into Heaven. If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto Myself. His going Home pledges Him to come and compels us to look for Him!

The next, if, comes at the beginning of the seventh verseIf you had known Me, you should have known My Father, also. If we really know the Lord Christ, we know God. In fact, there is no knowing God aright except through His Son Jesus! It is evidently true that men do not long hold to theism pure and simple. If our scientific men get away from the Christ, the Incarnate God, before long they drift away from God altogether. They begin to slide down the mountain when they quit the Incarnate Deity and there is no more foothold to stop them. No man comes to the Father but by the Sonand no man long keeps to the Father who does not keep to his faith in the Son. Those who know Christ know God, but those who are ignorant of the Savior are ignorant of God, however much they may pride themselves upon their religion! They may know another god, but the only living and true God is unknown except by those who receive Jesus. The Divine Fatherhood, of which we hear so much in certain quarters, is only to be seen through the window of Incarnation and Sacrifice. We must see Jesus before we can gain even so much as a glimpse at the Infinite, the Incomprehensible and the Invisible! God comes not within finite perception till He enters human fleshand there we behold His Glory, full of Grace and truth.

The next variety of, if, you will find a little farther down in the chapter, namely, in the 14th verseIf you shall ask anything in My name, I will do it. The, if, in this case involves an uncertainty about our prayers, if an uncertainty at all. Taking it for granted that we ask mercies in the name of Jesus, a glorious certainty is linked to them. Jesus says, I will do it. Here our Lord speaks after a Sovereign style. We may not say, I will, but the, I wills, pertain to Christ. He can answer and He has the right to answerand, therefore. He says without reservation, I will. If you shall ask anything in My name, I will do it. Oh that we might put the first, if, out of court by continually petitioning the Lord and signing our petitions with the name of Jesus! May we be importunate only in prayers to which we are warranted to set that august name and then, boldly using His name and authority, we need be under no apprehension of failure! The great Father in Heaven never denies the power of His Sons name, neither does the Son Himself draw back from the keeping of His own pledges! True prayer operates with the same certainty as the laws of Nature. Delight yourself, also, in the Lord and He shall give you the desires of your heart. Oh that we did delight more in the Divine name and Character and then our prayers would always speed to the Throne!

Now comes the, if, of our text , of which I will say nothing for the moment. If you love Me, keep My commandments. Something, you see, is to come out of this, if, as out of all the others. If something, then somethingIf you love me, then carry it out to the legitimate resultkeep My commandments.

You have the next, if, in verse 23Jesus answered and said to him, If a man loves Me, he will keep My words. Respect to His wisdom and obedience to His authority will grow out of love. The love of Christ constrains us. We hear that passage often misquoted, The love of Christ ought to constrain us, but that is a corruption of the text. The Apostle tells us that it does constrain us and, if it really enters the heart, it will do so. It is an active, moving power, influencing the inner life and then the external conduct

*Tis love that makes our willing feet*

*In swift obedience move.*  
If a man loves Me, he will keep my words. He will believe in the verbal inspiration of His Lord. He will regard His teaching as Infallible. He will attend to it and remember it. More than this, he will, by his conduct, carry out the words of his Lord and so keep them in the best possible manner by enshrining them in his daily life.

The chapter almost closes at the 28th verse by saying, If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, I go unto My Father, for My Father is greater than I. Where there is an intelligent love to Christ, we rejoice in His gains even though we, ourselves, appear to be losers thereby. The corporeal absence of our Lord from our midst might seem to be a great loss to us, but we rejoice in it because it is for His own greater Glory. If He is enthroned in Glory, we dare not lament His absence. Our love agrees to His departure, yes, rejoices in it, for anything which conduces to His exaltation is sweet to us. Let us at this moment, because we love Him, rejoice that He has gone to the Father!

So you see the chapter, if you read it, though enriched with heavenly certainties, is yet besprinkled with, ifs. Like little pools of sparkling water among the ever abiding rocks, these, ifs, gleam in the light of Heaven and refresh us even to look upon them.

Let us now think of our own text and may the Holy Spirit lead us into the secret chambers of it! If you love Me, keep My commandments.   
The present, if is a serious one. Let that stand as our first head. Secondly, the test which is added concerning it is a very judicious oneIf you love Me, keep My commandments. In the third place, I will give you the reading of the Revised Version, and say, that test will be endured by love, for the words may be interpretedIf you love Me, you will keep my commandments. Obedience will follow upon love as a matter of certainty.   
I. To begin, then, THE IF IN OUR TEXT IS A VERY SERIOUS ONE. It goes to the very root of the matter. Love belongs to the heart and every surgeon will tell you that a disease of the heart may not be trifled with. A clever doctor said to me, I feel at my ease with any matter if it does not touch the head or the heart. Solomon bids us keep the heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life. If the mainspring fails, all the works of a watch refuse to act. We cannot, therefore, think little of a question which concerns our love, for it deals with a vital part. O Friends, I hope there is no question about our love for Jesus!   
Observe how our Savior puts this, if, concerning love in such a way as to teach us that love must be prior to obedience. The text is not, Keep My commandments and then love Me. No, we do not expect pure streams till the fountain is cleansed. Nor does He sayKeep My commandments and love Me at the same time, as two separate things, although that might, in a measure, correspond with truth. But love is put first because it is first in importance and first in experience. If you love Mewe must begin with lovethen, keep My commandments. Obedience must have love for its mother, nurse and food. The essence of obedience lies in the hearty love which prompts the deed rather than in the deed itself. I can conceive it possible that a man might, in his outward life, keep Christs commandments and yet might never keep them at all so as to be accepted before God. If he became obedient by compulsion, but would have disobeyed if he dared, then his heart was not right before God and his actions were of little worth. The commandments are to be kept out of love to Him who gave them. In obedience, to love is to liveif we love Christ we

live Christ. Love to the Person of our Lord is the very salt of our sacrifices. To put it most practicallyI often say to myself, Today I have performed all the duties of my office, but have I been careful to abide in my Lords love? I have not failed as to doing all that was possibleI have gone from early morning till late at night, packing as much work as possible into every hour and trying to do it with all my heart. But have I, after all, done this as unto the Lord and for His sake?   
I tremble lest I should serve God merely because I happen to be a minister and am called to preach His Word, or because the natural routine of the day carries me through it. I am concerned that I may be impelled by no force but the love of Jesus! This fear often humbles me in the dust and prevents all glorying in what I have done. Only as we love our Lord can our obedience be true and acceptable. The main care of our lives should be to do right and to do it because we love the Lord. We must walk before the Lord as Abraham did and with the Lord as Enoch did. Unless we are under the constant constraint of love to the Lord Jesus Christ we shall fail terribly   
*Knowledge, alas! is all in vain,   
And all in vain our fear,   
In vain our labor and our pain   
If love is absent there.*   
See, dear Friends, how inward true religion ishow far it exceeds all external formalism? How deep is the seat of true Grace! You cannot hope to do that which Christ can smile upon until your heart is renewed. A heart at enmity with God cannot be made acceptable by mere acts of piety. It is not what your hands are doing, nor even what your lips are saying. The main thing is what your heart is meaning and intending. Which way are your affections tending? The great flywheel which moves the whole machinery of life is fixed in the hearttherefore this is the most important of all suggestionsIf you love Me.   
If you love Me is a searching sound. I start as I hear it! He that believes in the Lord Jesus Christ for his salvation produces, as the first fruit of his faith, love to Christthis must be in us and abound, or nothing is right. Packed away within that box of sweets called, love, you shall find every holy thing, but if you have no love, what have you? Though you wear your fingers to the bone with service, weep your eyes out with repentance, make your knees hard with kneeling and dry your throat with shouting, yet if the heart does not beat with love, your religion falls to the ground like a withered leaf in autumn! Love is the chief jewel in the bracelet of obedience! Hear the text, and mark it wellIf you love Me, keep My commandments.   
O Sirs, what a mass of religion is cast out as worthless by this text! Men may keep on going to Church and going to Chapel and they may be religious, yes, throughout a whole life and, apparently, they may be blameless in their moral conductand yet there may be nothing in them because there is no love to the ever-blessed Christ at the bottom of the profession! When the heathen killed their sacrifices in order to prophesy future events from the entrails, the worst sign they ever got was when the priest, after searching into the victim, could not find a heartor if that heart was small and shriveled. The soothsayers always declared that this omen was the sure sign of calamity. All the signs were evil if the heart of the offering was absent or deficient. It is so in very deed with religion and with each religious person. He that searches us searches principally our hearts! He who tries mankind tries chiefly the reins of the children of men. The Master is in our midst, tonight, walking down these aisles with noiseless tread, girt about the paps with a golden girdle and robed in snow-white garments down to His feet. Look! He stops before each one of us and gently asks, Do you love Me? Three times He repeats the question! He waits for an answer. It is a vital questiondo not refuse a reply. Oh that the Spirit of the Lord may enable you to answer in sincerity and truth and say, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You!   
This matter of love to Jesus is put prior to every other because it is the best reason for our obedience to Him. NoticeIf you love Me, keep My commandments. Personal affection will produce personal obedience. Do you not see the drift of the words? The blessed Jesus says, If you love Me, keep My commandments because, truly, operative love is mainly love to a person and love to our Lords Person begets obedience to His precepts! There are some men for whom you would do anythingyou will to yield to their will. If such a person were to say to you, Do this, you would do it without question. Perhaps he stands to you in the relation of master and you are his willing servant. Perhaps he is a venerated friend and because you esteem and love him, his word is law to you. The Savior may much more safely than any other be installed in such a position! From the throne of your affections He says, If you love Meif your heart really goes out to Methen let My word be a commandment. Let My commandment be kept in your memory and then further kept by being observed in your life. So you see the reason why the Master begins with the heart because there is no hope of obedience to Him in our actions unless He is enshrined in our affections! This is the spring and source of all holy livinglove to the Holy One. Dear friends, have you been captured by the beauties of Jesus and are you held in a Divine captivity to the adorable Person of your redeeming Lord? Then you have within you the impulse which constrains you to keep His commandments!   
It was greatly necessary for our Lord thus to address His disciples. Yes, it was necessary to speak, thus, even to the Apostles. He says to the chosen 12, If you love Me. We should never have doubted one of them. We now know by the result that one of them was a traitor to his Lord and sold Him for pieces of silver, but no one suspected him, for he seemed as loyal as any one of them. Ah, if that question, If you love Me, needed to be raised in the sacred college of the 12, much more must it be allowed to sift our Churches and to test ourselves! Brothers and Sisters, this word is exceedingly necessary in the present assembly! Hear its voiceIf you love Me. The mixed multitude here gathered together may be compared to the heap on the threshing floor and there is need of the winnowing fan. Perhaps you have almost taken it for granted that you love Jesusbut it must not be taken for granted! Some of you have been born in a religious atmosphere, you have lived in the midst of godly people and you have never been out into the wicked world to be tempted by its follies therefore you come to an immediate conclusion that you must assuredly love the Lord! This is unwise and perilous! Never glory in armor which you have not tested, nor rejoice in love to Christ which has not sustained trial!   
What an awful thing if you should be deceived and mistaken! It is most kind of the Savior to raise a question about your love and thus give you an opportunity of examining yourself and seeing whether you are right at heart. It will be far better for you to err upon the side of too great anxiety than on that of carnal security. To be afraid that you are wrong and so to make sure of being right, will bring you to a far better end than being sure that you are right and, therefore, refusing to look into the ground of your hope! I would have you fully assured of your love for Jesus, but I would not have you deceived by a belief that you love Him if you do not. Lord, search us and try us!   
Remember, if any man loves not the Lord Jesus Christ he will be anathema maranathacursed at His coming! This applies to every man, even though he is most eminent. An Apostle turned out to be a son of perditionmay not you? Every man, even though he is a learned bishop, or a popular pastor, or a renowned evangelist, or a venerable elder, or an active deacon, or the most ancient member of the most orthodox assembly, may yet turn out to be no lover of the Lord! Though he has gathered to break bread in the sacred name with a select company, yet if he does not truly love the Lord Jesus Christ, the curse rests upon him, whoever he may me. So let us take from the Masters lips the heart-searching words at this time, If you love Me, keep My commandments. Let us take them personally home, as if addressed to each one of us personally and alone.   
While considering the text, let each one view himself apart. What have you to do in this matter with keeping the vineyards of others? See to your own hearts. The text does not say, If the Church loves Me, or, If suchand-such a minister loves Me, or, If your brothers love Me. No, but it is, If you love Me, keep My commandments. The most important question for each one to answer is that which concerns his personal attachment to his Redeemer and the personal obedience which comes out of it. I press this enquiry upon each one. It may seem a trite and commonplace question, but it needs to be put again and again before all in our congregations. The preacher needs to be thus questionedhe gets into the habit of reading his Bible for other people. The Sunday school teacher needs this enquiryhe, also, is apt to study the Scriptures for his class rather than for himself. We all need the Truth of God to come home to us with personal and forcible application, for we are always inclined to shift unpleasant enquiries upon others. In the case of very deaf people, when they hold up their horns, we speak right down into themand I wish to speak home pointedly to each one of you at this time. Let the text sound into your individual ear and heartIf you love Me, keep My commandments.   
The question is answerable, however. It was put to the Apostles and they could answer it. Peter spoke as all the 11 would have done when he said, You know that I love You. It is not a question concerning mysteries out of range and beyond judgementit deals with a plain matter of fact. A man may know whether he loves the Lord or not and he ought to know. He who is jealous of himself and is, therefore, half afraid to speak positively, may all the more truly be a lover of the Lord. Holy caution may raise a question where the answer is far more certain than in the breasts of those who never even make the enquiry because they are carnally secure. Do not be content with merely longing to love Jesus or with longing to know whether you love Him. Not to know whether you love the Lord Jesus is a state of mind so dangerous that I exhort you never to go to sleep until you have escaped from it! A man has no right to smileI had almost said, he has no right, either to eat bread or drink water so long as that question hangs in the balances! It ought to be decided. It can be decided! It can be decided at once. Not love Jesus? It were better for me not to live than not to love Him! Not love Christ? May the terrible fact never be hidden from my weeping eyes! Perhaps the dread discovery may drive me to better things. If I do love my Lord, I can never rest with the shadow of a doubt darkening the life of my love. A question on such a matter is unbearable

*Do not I love You from my soul? Then let me nothing love.   
Dead be my heart to every joy,   
When Jesus cannot move.   
Would not my heart pour forth its blood In honor of Your name   
And challenge the cold hand of death*

*To dampen the immortal flame?   
You know I love You, dearest Lord,   
But oh, I long to soar   
Far from the sphere of mortal joys,   
And learn to love You more.*

Brothers and Sisters, hear the question suggested by this little word, if! Consider it well and rest not until you can say, I love the Lord because He has heard my voice and my supplication. So much, then, concerning the serious nature of this, if.

II. In the second place, let me observe that THE TEST WHICH IS PROPOSED IN THE TEXT IS A VERY JUDICIOUS ONE. If you love Me, keep My commandments. This is the best proof of love.

The test indicated does not suggest a lawless liberty . It is true we are not under the Law, but under Grace, but yet we are under Law to Christ and if we love Him we are to keep His commandments. Let us never enter into the counsel of those who do not believe that there are any commandments for Believers to keep. Those who do away with duty, do away with sin and, consequently, with the Savior! It is not writtenIf you love Me, do whatever you please. Jesus does not saySo long as you love Me in your hearts, I care nothing about your lives. There is no such doctrine as that between the covers of this Holy Book! He that loves Christ is the freest man out of Heaven, but he is also the most under bonds. He is free, for Christ has loosed his bonds, but he is put under bonds to Christ by grateful love! The love of Christ constrains him from this day on to live to the Lord who loved him, lived for him, died for him and rose again. No, dear Friends, we do not desire a lawless life. He that is not under the law as a power for condemnation, yet can say that with his heart he delights in the Law of God! He longs after perfect holiness and in his soul yields hearty homage to the precepts of the Lord Jesus. Love is Lawthe Law of love is the strongest of all Laws! Christ has become our Master and King and His commandments are not grievous!

The text also contains no fanatical challenge . We do not read, If you love Me, perform some extraordinary act. The test required is not an outburst of extravagance, or an attempt to realize the ambitious project of a fevered brain. Nothing of the kind! Hermits, nuns and religious mad-caps find no example or precept here! Some persons think that if they love Jesus they must enter a convent, retire to a cell, dress themselves oddly, or shave their heads. It has been the thought of some men, If we love Christ we must strip ourselves of everything we possess, put on sackcloth, tie ropes round our waists and pine in the desert. Others have thought it wise to make light of themselves by oddity of dress and behavior. The Savior does not say anything of the kindIf you love Me, keep My commandments. Every now and then we find members of our Churches who must leave their trades and their callings to show their love for Jesus children may starve and wives may pine but their mad whimsies must be carried out for love of Jesus! Under this influence, they rush into all sorts of foolery and soon ruin their characters because they will not take the advice of sobriety and cannot be satisfied with the grand test of love which our Lord, Himself, herein lays down! The text does not condemn these light-headed projects in detail, but it does so in the gross by proposing a far more reasonable testIf you love Me, keep My commandments. Do not spin theories in your excited brains and vow that you will do this desperate thing and the other. The probability is that you are not seeking the Glory of the Lord, but you are wanting notoriety for yourself! You are aiming at supreme devotion so that you may become a distinguished person and that people may talk about your superior saintship. You may even go so far as to court persecution from selfish motives. The Savior, who was wise and knew what was in men and knew, also, what would be the most sure test of true love to Himself, says, If you love Me, keep My commandments. This is a much more difficult thing than to follow out the dictates of a crazy brain.

Why does the Savior give us this as a test? I think that one reason is because it is one which tests whether you are loving Christ in His true position, or whether your love is to a Christ of your own making and your own placing. It is easy to crave a half Christ and refuse a whole Christ. It is easy, also, to follow a Christ of your own construction who is merely an antichrist. The real Christ is so great and glorious that He has a right to give commandments! Moses never used an expression such as our Savior here employs. He might say, Keep Gods commandments, but he would never have said, Keep my commandments. That dear and Divine Person whom we call Master and Lord here says, Keep My commandments. What a commanding person He must be! What lordship He has over His people! How great He is among His saints! If you keep His commandments, you are putting Him into the position which He claims. By obedience you acknowledge His sovereignty and Godhead and say with Thomas, My Lord and my God.

I am afraid that a great many people know a Christ who is meek and lowly, their servant and Savior, but they do not know the Lord Jesus Christ. Alas, my Friends, such people set up a false Christ! We do not love Jesus at all if He is not our Lord and God. It is all cant and hypocrisy, this love to Christ which robs Him of His Deity! I abhor that love to Christ which does not make Him King of kings and Lord of lords. Love Him and belittle Him? It is absurd! Follow your own will in preference to His will and then talk of love to Him? Ridiculous! This is but the devils counterfeit of loveit is a contradiction of all true love. Love is loyal! Love crowns its Lord with obedience. If you love Jesus aright, you view His every precept as a Divine Commandment. You love the true Christ if you love a commanding Christ as well as a saving Christ and look to Him for the guidance of your life as well as for the pardon of your sin.

This test, again, is very judicious, because it proves the living presence of the object of your love. Love always desires to have its object near and it has a faculty of bringing its object near. If you love anybody, that person may be far away and yet to your thoughts, he is close at hand. Love brings the beloved one so near that the thought of him acts upon its life. A gentleman has faithful servants. He goes away and leaves his house in their chargehe has gone abroad and yet he is at home to his servants, for every day their work is done as if he were there to see! He is coming home soonthey hardly know when, but they keep all things in readiness for his return, let it happen when it may. They are not eye-servants and so they work none the less because he is absent. If he does not see them, yet the eyes of their love always see him and, therefore, they work as if he were at home. Their affection keeps him always near.

A dear father is dead and he has left his property to a son who honors his memory. What does the son do? He is generous, like his father, and when he is asked why, he replies, I do exactly what I believe my dear father would have done if he had been here. Why? Because I love him. When a man is dead, he lives to those who love him! So the living Christ, who is not dead, but has gone away, is made present to us by our realizing loveand the proof of our love is that Jesus is so present that He constrains our actions, influences our motives and is the cause of our obedience! Jesus seems to sayIf you love Me, now that I am gone, you will do as you would have done if I were still with you and looking at you. You will continue to keep My commandments, as in My Presence.

It is a most judicious test, again, because, by keeping our Lords commandments, we are doing that which is most pleasing to Him and will most glorify Him! Some enthusiastic Methodist cries

*Oh, what shall I do my Savior to praise?* Listen, my Brotherif you love your Savior, keep His commandments! This is all you have to do and a great all, too. Among the rest, you may come and be baptized while you are thus earnest to praise your Lord. If you love Me, keep My commandments. There is the answer to every rapturous enquiry! Jesus is more glorified by a consistent obedience to His commands than by the most extravagant zeal that we can possibly display in what is only will-worship because He has never commanded it. If you wish to break the alabaster box and fill the house with sweet perfume. If you wish to crown His head with rarest gems, the method is before you Keep My commandments. You cannot do your Lord so great a favor, or, in the long run, bring to Him so real an honor, as by a complete, continual, hearty obedience to every one of His commandments!

Moreover, the Savior knew, when He bade us try this test, If you love Me, keep My commandments, that it would prepare us for honoring and glorifying Him in many other ways. Read the contextIf you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever. You can greatly glorify Christ if you are filled with the Holy Spirit. But you cannot be filled with the Holy Spirit if you do not keep Christs commandments! The Spirit of God as a Comforter will come only to those to whom He comes as a Sanctifier. By making us holy, He will qualify us for being useful. The Savior says, If you love Me, keep My commandments, because we shall then obtain that Divine Gift by which we can glorify His name! If there is any service which your love would aspire to, obedience to your Lord is the way to it!

But, indeed, I need not stand here and argue. When a friend is dying and he asks you to prove your love by such-and-such a deed, he may ask what he willsyou give him carte blanche. It may be the simplest thing or the hardest thing, but if he will prescribe it as a test of love, you will not tell him no. If your wife should say to you, You are going to journey far from me and I shall not see you again for many days. I beg you, therefore, to carry my portrait within your watch-case, you would not fail to do so. It would be a simple thing, but it would be sacred to you. Baptism and the Lords Supper will never be slighted by those whose hearts are fully possessed with love to Jesus! They may seem trifles, but if the Lord Jesus commands them, they cannot be neglected! To leave off your wedding ring might be no great crime and yet no loving wife would do it. Even so, none who regard outward ordinances as love tokens will think of neglecting them. Ours is not to ask for reasons. Ours is not to dispute about whether the deed is essential or non-essential. Ours is to obey right lovingly! Bridegroom of our hearts, say what You will and we will obey You! If only You will smile and strengthen us, nothing shall be impossible if great, nothing trifling if small!

III. Time has well-near gone, or we would dwell upon the third head, which we must now leave, only praying God to prove the truth of it. The third head is thisTRUE LOVE WILL ENDURE THIS TEST. If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. This is the Revised Version and I hope it will be written out in capitals upon our revised lives! We will obey, we must obey since we love Him by whom the command is given!

Come then, Brothers and Sisters, as the time has gone, let me say this much to you. If you love Christ, set to work to find out what His commandments are. Study the Scriptures upon every point upon which you have the slightest question. This sacred oracle must guide you.

Next, be always true to your convictions about what Christs commandments are. Carry them out at all hazards and carry them out at once. It will be wicked to say, Until now I have obeyed, but I shall stop here. We are committed to implicit obedience to the whole of the Masters will, involve what it may. Will you not agree to this at the outset? If you love Him, you will not object.

Take note of every commandment as it concerns you . Let me mention one or two, and beg you to obey them as you hear them. Go you into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. Is not this a call to you, my Brother, to be a missionary? Do you hear it? Will you not say, Here am I, send me? Another person has come into this house to-night full of enmitysomebody has treated him very badly and he cannot forget it, I pray him to hear the Lords commandTherefore if you bring your gift to the altar and there remember that your brother has anything against you; leave there your gift before the altar and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother and then come and offer your gift. And again, Little children, love one another. If any of you are in debt, obey this commandmentOwe no man anything, but to love one another. If you neglect the poor and live in a stingy way, hear this commandmentGive to him that asks you and from him that would borrow of you turn not away. At the back of all comes this isIf you love Me, keep My commandments. I might stay here all night, and mention, one after another, the commandments which would be specially applicable to each one of my hearers, but I pray the Holy Spirit to bring all things to your remembrance.

If there is a commandment which you do not relish, it ought to be a warning to you that there is something wrong in your heart that needs setting right. If you ever quarrel with one of Christs commands, end that quarrel by especially attending to it beyond every other! Do as the miserly man did when he conquered his avarice, once and for all. He was a Christian and he promised he would give a pound to the Church, but the devil whispered, You need your money, do not pay. The man stamped his foot and said, I will give two! Then the devil said, Surely you are going mad! Save your money. The man replied that he would not be conquered, he would give four pounds. Now, said Satan, you must be insane. Then said the man, I will give eight and if you dont stop your tempting, I will give 16 for I will not be the slave of covetousness. The point is to throw your whole soul into that very duty wherein you are most tempted to be slack. Jesus does not say, If you love Me, keep this commandment or that. Out of love obey every command!

Many of you do not love my Lord Jesus Christ. I have not preached to you, but that very fact should make you thoughtful. Go home and consider that the preacher said nothing to you because you do not love the Lord Jesus Christ and, therefore, cannot keep His commandments. Write down in black and whiteI do not love the Lord Jesus Christ. If it is really so, be honest enough to make a note of it and think it over. If you love Jesus, you may joyfully write out, I love the Lord Jesus. Oh for Grace to love Him more! But if you do not love Him, it will be honest to put it upon record. Write it boldlyI do not love the Lord Jesus Christ. Look at it and look againand oh, may God the Holy Spirit lead you to repent of not loving Jesus who is the Altogether Lovely One and the great lover of mens souls! Oh that you may begin to love Him at once! Amen and Amen.

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THE PARACLETE   
NO. 1074

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, OCTOBER 6, 1872, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever.   
John 14:16.**

THE unspeakable gift of the Son of God was followed up by the equally priceless gift of the Holy Spirit. Must it not be confessed by us that we think far less of the Holy Spirit than we should? I am sure we do not exalt the Savior too much, nor is He too often the subject of our meditations, but at the same time we give to the Holy Spirit a very disproportionate place compared with the Redeemer. I fear that we even grieve the Spirit by our neglect of Him. Let me invite your devout contemplations to the special work of the Holy Spirit. Such an invitation is necessary. The subject has not grown stale, for it too seldom occupies our thoughts.

We have not been unduly engrossed with honoring the Spirit of God for this is a fault seldom or never committed. We have met with uninstructed persons who have glorified the love of Jesus beyond that of the Father, and there are others so occupied with the decrees of the Father as to cast the work of the Son into the backgroundbut very few and far between are those Believers who have dwelt upon the doctrine of the Holy Spirit beyond its proper measure and degree. The mistake has almost invariably been made in the opposite direction.

The personal name of the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity is, the Spirit, or the, Holy Spirit, which words describe His Nature as being a pure, spiritual, immaterial existence and His Character as being in Himself and in His workings pre-eminently holy. We commonly also speak of Him as the, Holy Ghost, but the name is now an erroneous one. The word ghost was the same as spirit in years gone by, when the present translation of the Bible was made, but it does not popularly signify spirit now. Superstition has degraded the word from its elevated meaning and it might be as well, perhaps, if the word were dropped altogether and we confined ourselves to the more accurate word, Holy Spirit.

The term, Holy Spirit, is His personal title and we have in this verse His official titleHe is in the English version called, the Comforter, but the word used in the original, upon which we will meditate this morning, has a much wider range of meaning. The word is Parakletoswe used it just now in our hymn, translating it into the English as, Paraclete

*Cheer our desponding hearts,   
You heavenly Paraclete!   
Give us to lie, with humble hope,   
At our Redeemers feet.*

Now, it is true that the name, Comforter, is a fair translation from some points of view, but it rather translates a corner of the word than the whole of it. It is a light which really streams from the text, but it is one of the seven prismatic colors rather than the combined light of the very instructive and wonderful word, Paraclete. Understand, then, that we have now to consider, this morning, the official title of the Holy Spirit. May we be filled with loving reverence while we study His gracious work and His official name.

I. First, this morning, I shall try to EXPLAIN HOW THE SPIRIT OF GOD IS THE PARACLETE. The word, Paraclete, is so full that it is extremely difficult to convey to you all its meaning. It is like those Hebrew words which contain so much in a small compass. It is sternly and even primitively sublime in its simplicity, yet it comprehends great things. Literally, it signifies, called to, or, called beside another to aid him. It is synonymous verbally, though not in sense, with the Latin word, advocatus, a person called in to speak for us by pleading our cause. Yet, as we have come to use the word, advocate, in a different sense, that word, although it would, like that of, comforter, convey a part of the meaning, it could not contain it all.

Paraclete is wider than advocate and wider than comforter. I think the meaning of the word, Paraclete, might be put under the two headings of one called to, and one calling to. One called to, that is, to come to our aid, to help our infirmities, to suggest, to advocate, to guide and so onand one who, in consequence thereof, for our benefit, calls to usfor some see in it the idea of monitor, and certainly the blessed Paraclete is our Teacher, Remembrancer, Incentive and Comforter. His work as One called in to help us, consists very largely in His strengthening us by admonition, by instruction, by encouragement and by those works which would come under the head of a Teacher or a Comforter.

Paraclete is a word too extensive in meaning to be exchanged for any one word in any language. It is most comprehensive and we shall hope not so much to interpret as to paraphrase it in the first head of our sermon this morning. Let us take all the passages in John 14:15-16 which refer to this title and study them with care. From the first, which is our text, we learn that the Holy Spirit, as the Paraclete, is to be to us all that Jesus was to His disciples. Read the text, I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, plainly teaching that the Lord Jesus Christ is the first Paraclete and that the Holy Spirit is a second Paraclete occupying the same position as the living Jesus did.

It would not be easy to describe all that Jesus was to His disciples when He dwelt among them. If we called Him their Guide, and Counselor, and Friend, we should but have begun to catalogue His kindnesses. What a valiant leader is to an army when his very presence inspires them with valor, when his wisdom and tact conduct them to certain victory and when his influence over them nerves and strengthens them in the day of battleall that, and more, was Jesus Christ to His disciples! What the shepherd is to the sheep, the sheep being foolish and the shepherd, alone, wisethe sheep being defenseless and the shepherd strong to protect themthe sheep being without power to provide for themselves in any degree, and the shepherd able to give them all they requireall that was Jesus Christ to His people!

You see Socrates in the midst of his pupils and you observe at once that the great philosopher is the factotum of his school. But still, some follower of Socrates may improve upon what he teaches. Now, when you see Jesus, you observe at once that all His disciples are but as little children compared with their Master and that the school would cease at once if the great Teacher were gone. He is not only the Founder but the Finisher of our system. Jesus is to us not only the doctor but the doctrine He is the Way, and the Truth, and the Life.

The disciple of Christ feels Jesus to be inexpressibly precious. He does not know how many uses Christ can be put to, but this he knowsChrist is All in All to him. As the Orientals say of the palm tree, that every fragment of it is of useand there is scarcely any domestic arrangement into which the palm tree, in some form or other, does not entereven so Jesus Christ is good for everything to His people and there is nothing that they have to do, or feel, or know that is good or excellent, but Jesus Christ enters into it. What would that little company of disciples have been as they went through the streets of Jerusalem without their Lord? Conceive Him absent and no other Paraclete to fill His place and you see no longer a powerful band of teachers equipped to revolutionize the world, but a company of fishermen without intelligence and without influencea band which in a short time will melt under the influence of unbelief and cowardice! Christ was All in All to His people while He was here.

Now, all that Jesus was, the Spirit of God is now to the Church. He is another Paraclete to abide with us forever. If there is this day any power in the Church of God, it is because the Holy Spirit is in the midst of her. If she is able to work any spiritual miracles, it is through the might of His indwelling. If there is any light in her instruction; if there is any life in her ministry; if there is any glory gotten to God; if there is any good worked among the sons of men, it is entirely because the Holy Spirit is still with her! The entire weight of influence of the Church as a whole, and every Christian in particular, comes from the abiding Presence of the sacred Paraclete!

And Brothers and Sisters, we shall do well to treat the Holy Spirit as we would have treated Christ had He been yet among us. Our Lords disciples told Him their troubles. We must trust the Comforter with ours. Whenever they felt that they were barbed by the adversary, they fell back upon their Leaders powerso must we call in the aid of the Holy Spirit. When they needed guidance they sought direction from Jesuswe, also, must seek and abide by the Spirits leadings. When, knowing what to do, they felt themselves weak for the accomplishment of it, they waited upon their Master for strengthand so must we upon the Spirit of all Grace. Treat the Holy Spirit with the love and tender respect which are due to the Savior, and the Spirit of God will deal with you as the Son of God did with His disciples.

Now, Beloved, we must pass on in our review of the passages of Scripture which relate to the Paraclete and remember there are only five. We know that the Holy Spirit comforts the people of God by the mere fact of His Presence and indwelling. I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Paraclete that He may abide with you forever. For, says the 17th verse, He dwells with you, and shall be in you. Beloved, I have said that the mere fact of the Presence of the Holy Spirit is comfort to the saints, and is it not? Jesus has not left you orphans, O you His chosen friends! He has gone, but He has left an equally Divine Substitute, the Holy Spirit!

And if at this moment you do not feel His power, if you are even crying out under a sense of your own natural deadness, yet is it not a comfort to you that there is a Holy Spirit and that the Holy Spirit dwells in you at this present time? You are not required to bring down the Holy Spirit from Heaven by praying

*Come Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove,   
With all Your quickening powers.*   
He has come down from Heaven and has never gone back again! He dwells in His Church perpetually and is not to be brought from on high. He is lawfully to be called upon to work in us, and He is always here! Oh, you say, then I must have hope, for if the Spirit of God is in me, I know that He will expel my sin. If I were alone and had to fight my spiritual battles alone, I might despair. But if it is true that the eternal God Himself, in the majesty of His Omnipotence, dwells within my bosom, then, my Heart, be of good comfort and be encouraged! The Lord who is in you is mightier

than all they that are against you.

Satan may roar, the lusts of the flesh may rebel and the temptations of the world may assail, but if the Holy Spirit is really resident within the Believers heart, then perfection will one day be attained and the last enemy will be trod down! It is consolation to us to know that the Holy Spirit dwells in us and He deserves His name of Comforter from the mere fact of His Presence and indwelling. But we pass on to notice that according to the 26th verse, the Spirit of God exercises His office as a Paraclete and comforts us by His teachingThe Comforter, who is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatever I have said unto you.

It is a part of the Spirits work to make us understand what Jesus taught. If He were merely to bring to remembrance the words of Jesus it would do us little goodeven as when a child learns his Catechism and does not understand it, it is not of much service to him to bring to remembrance the words of the questions and answers. But if you first teach him their meaning and then bring the words to remembrance, you have conferred upon him a double and an inestimable gift. Now, we can, so far as the letter goes, learn from the Scriptures the words of Jesus for ourselvesbut to understand these teachings is the gift of the Spirit of God and of none else! After He takes the key and lets us into the inner meaning of the Lords wordsafter He makes us experimentally and inwardly to know the force and the power of the Truth of God which Christ revealed then it is very profitable to us to have brought up before our minds the very words of Jesus and they come to us full of power and sweetness.

Now, Beloved, you perceive that while the word, Comforter, does not take in all the meaning of the word Paraclete, yet every work of His assists our consolation and the Holy Spirit as a teacher teaches us Truths which comfort us. What comfort is there in the world equal to the words of Jesus when they are really understood? Is not Jesus Christ Himself, the consolation of Israel? And, therefore, everything that is of Him is full of consolation to Israel. If the Spirit of God makes us understand the doctrines of Christ, as, for instance His teaching concerning the pardon of sin by faith, and the love of God towards the contriteand His teaching in His own Person of the need of a Substitute and of the provision of a Substituteif those things are really taught to our souls, the Paraclete becomes, indeed, a Comforter to us! I can, as God may help me, teach you the letter of Gods Word, but there is One who teaches you to profit effectually and savingly. May He exercise His office upon each one of you!

Furthermore, we note that in this manner, through the Holy Spirit, we obtain peace. Observe the verse which follows: Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world gives, give I unto you. He who is taught of God naturally enjoys peace for if I am taught that my sins were laid on Jesus and the chastisement of my peace was upon Him, how can I help having peace? If I am taught that Jesus intercedes for me before the Eternal Throne and has taken His blood as my Atonement into the Holy Place, how can I help having peace? And if I am taught the promises of God and made to know that they are, yes and amen in Christ Jesus, how can I be prevented from enjoying peace? Can I not sing

*The Gospel bears my spirit up   
A faithful and unchanging God   
Lays the foundation for my hope,   
In oaths, and promises, and blood?*

Let the Spirit of God reveal God to you as the everlasting God who loved you before the world was! As the unchanging God who never can turn away His heart from you and can you do otherwise than rejoice with exceedingly great joy? Let the Spirit of God reveal to you the pierced hands and feet of Jesus. Let Him enable you to put your finger into the prints of the nails and touch the wounds of His feet, and lay your heart to His heartwhy, if you have not peace you would be a melancholy miracle of perverse despondency! But you must have rest when you have Jesus Christ, yes, and such a rest that Jesus calls it, My peace, the very peace that is in the heart of Christ, the unruffled serenity of the conquering Savior who has finished forever the work which God gave Him to do. What rich comfort is this which the Paraclete brings to us!

But we have not brought out all the meanings yet, for, as we have already said, the word, Paraclete, signifies Advocate. You remember in Johns first Epistle he uses this expression, If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous? Now in the Greek the passage stands, If any man sin, we have a Paraclete with the Fatherit is the same word which is here rendered Comforter and you see clearly that it would not do to render it Comforter in that place, else it would read, If any man sin, we have a Comforter with the Father, which would be absurd! The word means, Advocate, there, and so it must here. The Spirit of God exercises for us the office of an Advocatebut He is not an Advocate or Intercessor in Heavenour Lord Jesus Christ fills that office. The Holy Spirit does not intercede for the saints, but He makes intercession in the saints according to the will of God. God the Son makes intercession

for the saints. God the Holy Spirit makes intercession in the saints.

Let me show you how that is, by bringing you back to the chapters which we are studying. In the 15th chapter we find the Savior describing His saints in the world as hated and persecuted for His sake, and He bids them expect this. But He consoles them in the 26th and 27th verses When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceeds from the Father, He shall testify of Me: and you also shall bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning.

Now the passage means just thiswhile Jesus Christ was here, if anyone had anything to say against Him or His disciples, forward to the front came the Master and He soon baffled His foes so that they confessed, Never man spoke like this Man. At this present time our Master and Head is gone from ushow are we to answer the attacks of the world? Why, we have another Paraclete to come to the front and speak for us, and if we had but confidence in Him, Beloved, He would have spoken for us much more loudly than sometimes He has done! And whenever we learn to leave the business in His hands He will do two things for us first, He will speak for us Himselfand next, He will enable us also to bear witness. At this present time many questions of doctrine are mooted, many objections to the Truth of God are started and there are many who would lay the axe at the very root of Christianity and cut it down as a rotten tree.

What is our answer? I will tell you. Nearly all the books that have been written to answer modern philosophies are a waste of time and a waste of paper. The only way in which the Church can hold her own and answer her detractors is by real power from God! Has she done anything for the world? Can she produce results? For by her fruits shall she be proved to be a tree of life to the nations! Now the Spirit of God, if we would but trust Him and give up all this idolatry of human learning, cleverness, genius, eloquence, and rhetoric and I know not what beside, would soon answer our adversaries! He would silence some of them by converting them as He answered Saul of Tarsus by turning him from a persecutor to an Apostle.

He would silence others by confounding them, by making them see their own children and relations brought to know the Truth of God! If there is not a miraculous spiritual power in the Church of God at this day, she is an impostor! At this moment the only vindication of our existence is the Presence and work of the Paraclete among us. Is He still working and witnessing for Christ? I fear He is not in some Churches, but here we behold Him. Look at His workings in this place. Nearly 20 years ago our ministry commenced in this city under much opposition and hostile criticismthe preacher being condemned on all hands as vulgar, unlearned, and, in fact, a nine days wonder! Jesus Christ was preached by us in simpler language than men had been accustomed to hear, and every one of our sermons was full of the old-fashioned Gospel.

Many other pulpits were intellectual, but we were Puritanical. Rhetorical essays were the wares retailed by most of the preachers, but we gave the people the Gospelwe brought out before the world the old Reformers doctrines, Calvinistic truth, Augustinian teaching and Pauline dogma. We were not ashamed to be the echo of an exploded evangelism, as some wiseacre called us. We preached Christ and Him Crucified, and by the space of these 20 years have we ever lacked a congregation? When has not this vast hall been thronged? Have we ever lacked conversions? Has a Sunday passed over us without them? Has not the history of this Church, from its littleness in Park Street until now, been a march of triumph with the hearts and souls of men as the spoil of the war of which the standard has been Christ Crucified?

And it is so everywhere! Only let men come back to the Gospel and preach it ardently, not with comeliness of words and affectation of polished speech, but as a burning heart compels them and as the Spirit of God teaches them to speak it! Then will great signs and wonders be seen! We must have signs followingelse we cannot answer the world. Let them sneer; let them rave; let them curse; let them lieGod will answer them! It is ours in the power of the Spirit of God to keep on preaching Christ and glorifying the Savior. Just as Jesus always met the adversary in a moment and the disciples had no need of any other Defender, so we have another Paraclete, who in answer to prayer will vindicate His own cause and gloriously avenge His own elect.

And, then, Brothers and Sisters, we are promised that this same Spirit will make us witnesses, too. It shall be given us in the same hour what we shall speak. The Christians who were brought before the Roman tribunals often nonplussed their enemies, not by excellency of words and human wisdom, but by their holy simplicity and zeal. Christ, by His Spirit, was manifest in the midst of the primitive saints and they were victorious through this other Paraclete who was with them. Moreover, Brethren, the advocacy of the Holy Spirit does not merely relate to the ungodly, but it has to do with ourselves. The Spirit of God is an Advocate with us, or within us. He leads us into comfort and advocates our cause before the judgment seat of our conscience. This work He does in a manner strange to flesh and blood. Beloved, if the Holy Spirit is an advocate within you, speaking peace within you by Jesus Christ, I will tell you how He will plead with you.

First, He will convict you of sin. He will show you to be altogether lost and ruined, and undonefor till your self-righteousness is swept out of you there will be no solid consolation. He will convict you of the master sin of having been an unbeliever in Christ and He will lay you low at the foot of the Cross as well as at the foot of Sinai to make you feel that you are a sinner against Love as well as Lawa rebel against the five wounds of Jesus as well as against the Ten Commandments of God. And when He has done this He will convict you of righteousness, (John 16:10) that is to say, He will show you that the righteousness of Christ renders you perfectly acceptable with God. He will show you, in fact, that Jesus is made of God unto you righteousness.

Then the Spirit of God will comfort you again by bringing home to you a sense of judgment. He will show you that you and your sins were both judged and condemned on Calvary. He will show you that the evil which now seeks to get the mastery over you was then and there judged and condemned to die, so that you are fighting with a convicted adversary who only lingers for a little while and then shall be entirely dead, even as he now is crucified with Christ. When the Spirit of God has brought these three things home to you, what an Advocate He will be with you! He will say, Heart, can you now despair? What will you despair about? Your sin was laid on Jesus! What do you fear? Oh Heart, do you lament your lack of righteousness? You have it all in Jesus! Why do you tremble? Do you fear the coming judgment? You have been judged and condemned in Christtherefore the sin that is in you shall dieand your inner life shall live eternally.

It is blessed when the Spirit of God argues thus in our conscience. Memory will say, You did such-and-such that will condemn you. But the Spirit of God replies, That has been already acknowledged. I have already condemned this sin, but it was laid upon the great Scapegoats head and carried away. Then Fear will come up and say, The Lord will visit this mans sin upon him. The Spirit of God will plead again, and ask, Who shall lay anything to the charge of Gods elect? Is God unrighteous to forget the work and labor of His dear Son? So with blessed debating power the Holy Comforter within our soul will plead and intercede in us and we shall obtain consolation!

Once again, the Holy Spirit is a Paraclete according to the 16th chapter, at the 13th verse, by His guiding us into all Truth, which is, I think, more than was meant by His teaching us all Truth. There are a number of caverns, full of sparkling stalactites, in some parts of the world. Now, it is a good thing when you are traveling, to be taught where each of these caverns isthat is teaching you truth. But it is a better thing when the guide comes forward with his flaming torch and conducts you down through the winding passages into the great subterranean chambers and holds his flambeau aloft while 10,000 crystals, like stars, vying in color with the rainbow, flash their beams upon you!

So the Spirit of God will convince you that such-and-such a teaching is the Truth of God and that is very much to know. But when He leads you into it so that you experimentally know it, taste it, and feel itoh, then you are admitted to the innermost cave of jewels where the diamond lights up the secret mine! It is a blessed thing when the Spirit of God guides us into all Truth! A great many Christians never get into the Truth. They sit on the outside of it, but do not enter in. It is like a great nut to themthey polish the shell and prize itbut if they could once pierce the kernel and taste the interior flavor of the nut, how greatly would they be comforted!

John Bunyan used to say he never knew a Truth of God until it was burned into him as with a hot iron. I sympathize in that expression. There are some Truths in the Bible which nobody could make me doubt at all because they are interwoven with my vitality. And others are so profitable to my inmost soul that I could not give them upthey are the very life and joy of my being. There is an old story of a bishop making £10,000 a year who had an argument with a young man upon the correctness of Episcopacy, and at the end replied to his antagonistDoes this young man imagine that he can reason me out of £10,000 a year?

Self-interest in the bishops case sustained his reasoning! The same is true with me, only in an infinitely higher degree and in a far more spiritual sense. If the doctrines I preach to you are not true, I am a lost man my life becomes an agonizing disappointment and my death a horrible calamity. I know the Gospel is true because I have tried and proved its power! I know its inside as well as its outside! I do not merely believe its creed, but its Truth is to me real and practical. Hence I say, Does the fool think he can argue me out of my peace of heart, my joy in the Lord, my hope of Heaven? It cannot be! The experienced Believer is invulnerable from head to foot against anything and everything that can be hurled against him by skepticism. We are as sure of the Truth of the Gospel as we are of our own existence!

The old philosopher heard a man assert that we do not exist, and his only reply was to get up and walk! So when we hear arguments against our holy faith, all we have to do is just live on in the power of the Spirit and silence gainsayers. May the Holy Spirit thus lead you into all Truth into the secret of the Lord may He conduct youand there may you feast upon fat things, full of marrow and upon wines on the lees well-refined.

Once more, in the 16th chapter and 14th verse, we are told that the Paraclete glorifies Christ by, taking of the things of Christ and showing them to us. Could infinite Wisdom select a sweeter topic for a disconsolate heart than, the things of Christ? Ah, Man, when you speak of the things of Christ to a broken heart you have laid your fingers on the right string! You may bring me the things of Moses and of David, of Solomon and of Danielbut what are they to me compared with the things of Christ? Bring me the things of Christ! These are the balm of Gilead! These are the plasters which heal the sores! These are the true medicines of diseased souls!

Therefore the Holy Spirit, in His infinite wisdom, lifts Jesus up before us, makes Him great in our esteem, glorifies Him in our hearts and straightway our souls are full of consolation! How could it be otherwise? I am sorry that my subject is much too long for my time this morning, and therefore I must pass away from this first head to glance at the second point which I had hoped to have dwelt upon at length.

II. We shall now, secondly, REMARK UPON THE NATURE OF THE HOLY SPIRITS COMFORT, and will speak very briefly. It is evident from the passages we have read to you this morning that the Spirit of God never dissociates His comfort from His Character. John 14:15If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter. The Spirit of God never comforts a man in his sin! Disobedient Christians must not expect consolation. The Holy Spirit sanctifies and then consoles. Search and look, you who hang your heads like bulrushes! See what it is that makes you sorrowobey, and you shall be comforted!

Next, the Spirit of God does not aim at working mere comfort by itself and alone, but He produces peace in the heart as the result of other divinely useful processes. He does not comfort us as a fond mother may please her wayward child by yielding to its foolish wishes. The mother does not teach the child anything, nor does she cleanse its body or purify its heart in order to comfort itperhaps she even neglects these to please the little one. But the Holy Spirit never acts so unwisely. He blesses by purity and then by peace. When a man is feeling pain he is very desirous that the surgeon should administer some drug which will stop the unpleasant sensation immediatelyyet the surgeon refuses to do anything of the kind but endeavors to remove the cause of the evilwhich lies far deeper than the pain. Is not the doctor right?

So the Spirit of God comforts us by taking away our ignorance and giving us knowledge, by removing our misapprehensions and giving us clear understanding and by taking away our insensibility and convicting us of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. Do not expect to get comfort by merely running to sweet texts, or listening to pleasing preachers who give you nothing but cups of sugared doctrine! Expect to find comfort through the holy, reproving, humbling, strengthening, sanctifying processes which are the operation of the Divine Paraclete!

Note next, the comfort of the Holy Spirit is not a comfort founded upon concealment. Some have obtained consolation by conveniently forgetting troublesome Truths of God. Now the Holy Spirit lays the whole Truth of God open before us. He brings all Truth to our recollection and hides nothing from us. Therefore, the comfort we obtain from Him is worth havingthe consolation, not of fools but of wise menpeace, not for blind bats but for bright-eyed eagles! A peace which age and experience will not invalidate, but which both these will deepen, causing it to grow with our growth and strengthen with our strength. Such is the consolation which the Holy Spirit gives.

And mark, and be glad of it, it is a comfort always in connection with Jesus. If you get near to Jesus in your contemplations, you feel you are approaching those comforts which the Spirit intends you to enjoy. Oh, Beloved, do not run for consolation to mere prophecies of the future, or soft reflections about the past. Hard by the Cross is the deep well of undefiled consolation from which the Eternal Spirit draws full buckets for His thirsty people! Be afraid of that comfort which is not based upon the Truth of God! Hate the comfort which does not come from Christ! Water from the well of Bethlehem is what you need.

It is comfort, too, which is always available. The comforts of the Holy Spirit do not depend upon health, strength, wealth, position or friendship. The Holy Spirit comforts us through the Truth, and the Truth does not change. He comforts us through Jesus, and He is, yes, and amen. Therefore our comforts may be quite as lively when we are dying as when we are in vigorous health. And our consolations may be even more abounding when the purse is empty and the cruse of oil low than when all worldly store and cheer abound to us. This is the comfort, Beloved, which in all ages has been the mainstay of Believers.

It was the comfort of the Spirit which brought the martyrs to stand before their accusers and to face death without fear. It was the comfort of the Holy Spirit which led the Waldenses to count not their lives dear to them. It made Luther so brave in the face of death and Latimer so merry even upon the blazing stake! Many a man has died in ecstasy under the power of this consolation and many a woman has pined away slowly, rejoicing to do so, because when heart and flesh have failed her, this consolation has been the strength of her soul! If you can know the Holy Spirit as your Paraclete you need not desire any other consolation!

III. And now, finally, let us utter SOME OBSERVATIONS UPON THE WHOLE SUBJECT. First, to the BelieverDear Brothers and Sisters, honor the Spirit of God as you would honor Jesus Christ if He were present! If Jesus Christ were dwelling in your house you would not ignore Him, you would not go about your business as if He were not there! Do not ignore the Presence of the Holy Spirit in your soul! I beseech you, do not live as if you had not heard whether there were a Holy Spirit. To Him pay your constant adorations. Reverence the august Guest who has been pleased to make your body His sacred abode. Love Him, obey Him, worship Him!

Take care never to impute the vain imaginings of your fancy to Him. I have seen the Spirit of God shamefully dishonored by personsI hope they were insanewho have said that they have had this and that revealed to them. There has not, for some years, passed over my head a single week in which I have not been pestered with the revelations of hypocrites or maniacs. Semi-lunatics are very fond of coming with messages from the Lord to me and it may save them some trouble if I tell them once and for all that I will have none of their stupid messages. When my Lord and Master has any message to me He knows where I am and He will send it to me direct, and not by mad-caps!

Never dream that events are revealed to you by Heaven, or you may come to be like those idiots who dare impute their blatant follies to the Holy Spirit. If you feel your tongue itch to talk nonsense, trace it to the devil, not to the Spirit of God! Whatever is to be revealed by the Spirit to any of us is in the Word of God alreadyHe adds nothing to the Bible, and never will. Let persons who have revelations of this, that, and the other, go to bed and wake up in their senses. I only wish they would follow the advice and no longer insult the Holy Spirit by laying their nonsense at His door.

At the same time, since the Holy Spirit is with you, Beloved, in all your learning ask Him to teach you. In all your suffering ask Him to sustain you. In all your teaching ask Him to give you the right words. In all your witness-bearing ask Him to give you constant wisdom and in all service depend upon Him for His help. Believingly reckon upon the Holy Spirit. We do not continually take Him into our calculations as we should. We reckon up so many missionaries, so much money and so many schools and so conclude the list of our forces. The Holy Spirit is our great need, not learning or culture! Little knowledge or great knowledge shall answer almost as well if the Spirit of God is therebut all your knowledge shall be worthless without Him.

Let but the Spirit of God come and all shall be right. I would we took the power of the Spirit into our calculations always. You have a class at school and do not feel fit to teach itask Him to help you and you do not know how well you will teach! You are called to preach, but you feel you cannotyou are dull and your talk will be flat, stale, unprofitable. Bring the Holy Spirit into it and if He fires you, you shall find even the slender materials you have collected will set the people on a blaze! We ought to reckon upon the SpiritHe is our main forcewhat if I say He is our only force and we grieve Him exceedingly when we do not reckon upon Him?

Love the Spirit. Worship the Spirit. Trust the Spirit. Obey the Spirit, and, as a Church, cry mightily to the Spirit! Beseech Him to let His mighty power be known and felt among you. The Lord fire your hearts with this sacred flame, for as this made Pentecost stand out from all other days, may it make the close of this year stand out in our history from all other years. Come, Holy Spirit, now! You are with us, but come with power and let us feel Your sacred might!

To the unconverted, these few wordsDear Friend, if you are ever to be saved, the Holy Spirit is essential to you. Except you are born-again from above, you can never see the kingdom of God, much less enter it. Without the Holy Spirit you are dead. You will never come to any life unless He quickens you and even the Savior Himself upon the Cross will never be a Savior to you till the Holy Spirit comes and gives you eyes with which to look upon Him and a heart with which to receive Him! Remember that.

Therefore I charge you take care that you honor the Spirit and never say a word against Him, lest you be found guilty of that sin against the Holy Spirit which shall never be forgiven, neither in this world nor in that which is to come. And let me ask you, has He ever convinced you of the sin in not believing in Jesus? Has He convinced you that there is no righteousness but in Christ? Has He convinced you that God will judge you and all the rest of mankind according to our Gospel by Christ Jesus? If so, since He has done that much for you, beseech Him now to take of the things of Christ and show them to you. There is hope for you there. All the salvation of a sinner lies in Jesusand when the Spirit of God brings Jesus to the heart, He brings salvation!

Oh, poor Heart, you will never get out of Doubting Castle, never cease to be a captive, till the Spirit brings the things of Jesus to you! And I pray that He may, and that He may do so at once. Submit yourself, now, to all that He teaches you! Believe the Truth of God as He reveals it. Above all, listen and be obedient to that great command, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved. Incline your ear, and come unto Me: hear, and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.

May the Spirit of God lead you in the way of humble confession of sin, of repentance of sin and of believing in Jesus, and then we will meet in Heaven to bless the Eternal Paraclete, with the Father and Son forever! Amen.

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THE PERSONALITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT   
NO. 4

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON SABBATH MORNING, JANUARY 21, 1855, BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT NEW PARK STREET CHAPEL, SOUTHWARK.

**And I will pray the Father and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever: even the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it sees Him not, neither knows Him: but you know Him for He dwells with you and shall be in you. John 14:16, 17.**

You will be surprised to hear me announce that I do not intend this morning to say anything about the Holy Spirit as the Comforter. I propose to reserve that for a special Sermon this evening. [See Sermon #5, Vol. 1THE COMFORTERRead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at www.spurgeongems.org] In this discourse I shall endeavor to explain and enforce certain other doctrines which I believe are plainly taught in this text and which I hope God the Holy Spirit may make profitable to our souls. Old John Newton once said that there were some books which he could not read, they were good and sound enough, but, he said, they are books of halfpenceyou have to take so much in quantity before you have any value. There are other books of silver and others of gold, but I have one book that is a book of bank notes. And every leaf is a bank note of immense value. So I found with this text that I had a bank note of so large a sum, that I could not preach on all of it this morning. I should have to keep you several hours before I could unfold to you the whole value of this precious promiseone of the last which Christ gave to His people.

I invite your attention to this passage because we shall find in it some instruction on four points, first, concerning the true and proper Personality of the Holy Spirit. Secondly, concerning the united agency of the glorious Three Persons in the work of our salvation. Thirdly, we shall find something to establish the Doctrine of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the souls of all Believers. And fourthly, we shall find out the reason why the carnal mind rejects the Holy Spirit.

I. First of all, we shall have some little instruction concerning the proper PERSONALITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. We are so much accustomed to talk about the influence of the Holy Spirit and His sacred operations and Graces that we are apt to forget that the Holy Spirit is truly and actually a Personthat He is a subsistencean existence. Or as we Trinitarians usually say, one Person in the essence of the Godhead. I am afraid that though we do not know it, we have acquired the habit of regarding the Holy Spirit as an emanation flowing from the Father and the Son, but not as being actually a Person, Himself. I know it is not easy to carry about in our mind the idea of the Holy Spirit as a Person. I can think of the Father as a Person, because His acts are such as I can understand. I see Him hang the world in ether. I behold Him swaddling a newborn sea in bands of darkness. I know it is He who formed the drops of hail, who leads forth the stars by their hosts and calls them by their name, I can conceive of Him as a Person because I behold His operations. I can realize Jesus, the Son of Man, as a real Person because He is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh. It takes no great stretch of my imagination to picture the Baby in Bethlehem, or to behold the, Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief. I can easily realize the King of Martyrs, as He was persecuted in Pilates hall, or nailed to the accursed tree for our sins. Nor do I find it difficult at times to realize the Person of my Jesus sitting on His Throne in Heaven. Or girt with clouds and wearing the diadem of all creation, calling the earth to judgment and summoning us to hear our final sentence. But when I come to deal with the Holy SpiritHis operations are so mysterious, His doings are so secret, His acts are so removed from everything that is of sense and of the bodythat I cannot so easily get the idea of His being a Person. But a Person He is. God the Holy Spirit is not an influence, an emanation, a stream of something flowing from the Father. He is as much an actual Person as either God the Son, or God the Father. I shall attempt, this morning, a little, to establish the Doctrine and to show you the truth of itthat God the Holy Spirit is actually a Person.

The first proof we shall gather from the pool of holy Baptism. Let me take you down, as I have taken others, into the pool. It is now concealed, but I wish it were always open to your view. Let me take you to the baptismal font, where Believers put on the name of the Lord Jesus and you shall hear me pronounce the solemn words, I baptize you in the name,markin the name, not namesof the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Everyone who is baptized according to the true form laid down in Scripture must be a Trinitarianotherwise his Baptism is a farce and a lie and he, himself, is found a deceiver and a hypocrite before God! As the Father is mentioned and as the Son is mentioned, so is the Holy Spirit and the whole is summed up as being a Trinity in unity, by its being said, not the names, but the namethe glorious namethe Jehovah name, of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Let me remind you that the same thing occurs each time you are dismissed from this House of Prayer. In pronouncing the solemn closing benediction, we invoke on your behalf the love of Jesus Christ, the grace of the Father and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. And thus, according to the Apostolic manner, we make a manifest distinction between the Persons showing that we believe the Father to be a Person, the Son to be a Person and the Holy Spirit to be a Person. Were there no other proofs in Scripture, I think these would be sufficient for every sensible man. He would see that if the Holy Spirit were a mere influence, He would not be mentioned in conjunction with Two whom we all confess to be actual and proper Persons.

A second argument arises from the fact that the Holy Spirit has actually made different appearances on earth. The Great Spirit has manifested Himself to man. He has put on a form so that while He has not been beheld by mortal men, He has been so veiled in appearance that He was seen, so far as that appearance was concerned, by the eyes of all beholders. Do you see Jesus Christ our Savior? There is the river Jordan, with its shelving banks and its willows weeping at its side. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, descends into the stream and the holy Baptist, John, plunges Him into the waves.The doors of Heaven are opened. A miraculous Appearance presents itselfa bright light shinning from the sky, brighter than the sun in all its grandeurand down in a flood of glory descends something which you recognize to be a dove. It rests on Jesusit sits upon His sacred head and as the old painters put a halo round the brow of Jesus, so did the Holy Spirit shed a resplendence around the face of Him who came to fulfill all Righteousness and therefore commenced with the ordinances of Baptism! The Holy Spirit was seen as a doveto mark His purity and His gentlenessand He came down like a dove from Heaven to show that it is from Heaven alone that He descends. Nor is this the only time when the Holy Spirit has been manifest in a visible shape. You notice that company of disciples gathered together in an upper roomthey are waiting for some promised blessingby-and-by it shall come. Hark, there is a sound as of a rushing mighty wind! It fills all the house where they are sitting. Astonished, they look around them, wondering what will come next. Soon a bright light appears, shining upon the heads of eachcloven tongues of fire sat upon them! What were these marvelous appearances of wind and flame but a display of the Holy Spirit in His proper Person? I say the fact of an appearance manifests that He must be a Person. An influence could not appearan attribute could not appearwe cannot see attributeswe cannot behold influences. The Holy Spirit must, then, be a Personsince He was beheld by mortal eyes and came under the cognizance of mortal sense.

Another proof is from the fact that personal qualities are, in Scripture, ascribed to the Holy Spirit. First, let me read to you a text in which the Holy Spirit is spoken of as having understanding. In the 1

st Epistle to the Corinthians, Chapter 2, you will read, But as it is written, eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither has it entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for them that love Him. But God has revealed them unto us by His Spiritfor the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. For what man knows the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knows no man, but the Spirit of God.

Here you see an understandinga power of knowledge is ascribed to the Holy Spirit. Now, if there are any persons here whose minds are of so preposterous a complexion that they would ascribe one attribute to another and would speak of a mere influence having understanding then I give up! But I believe every rational man will admit that when anything is spoken of as having an understanding it must be an existence it must, in fact, be a Person. In the 12th Chapter, 11th verse of the same Epistle, you will find a will ascribed to the Holy Spirit. But all these work that one and the self same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He wills. So it is plain the Spirit has a will. He does not come from God simply at Gods will, but He has a will of His own, which is always in keeping with the will of the infinite Jehovah, but is, nevertheless, distinct and separate. Therefore I say He is a Person. In another text power is ascribed to the Holy Spirit and power is a thing which can only be ascribed to an existence. In Romans 15:13, it is written, Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Spirit. I need not insist upon it, because it is self-evident, that wherever you find understanding, will and power you must also find an existence. It cannot be a mere attribute. It cannot be a metaphor. It cannot be a personified influence. It must be a Person!

But I have a proof which, perhaps, will be more telling upon you than any other. Acts and deeds are ascribed to the Holy Spirittherefore He must be a Person. You read in the first Chapter of the Book of Genesis, that the Spirit brooded over the surface of the earth, when it was as yet all disorder and confusion. This world was once a mass of chaotic matter. There was no order. It was like the valley of darkness and of the shadow of death. God the Holy Spirit spread His wings over it. He sowed the seeds of life in itthe germs from which all beings sprang were implanted by Him. He impregnated the earth so that it became capable of life. Now it must have been a Person who brought order out of confusion! It must have been an existence who hovered over this world and made it what it now is. But do we not read in Scripture something more of the Holy Spirit? Yes, we are told that holy men of old spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. When Moses penned the Pentateuch, the Holy Spirit moved his hand. When David wrote the Psalms and discoursed sweet music on his harp, it was the Holy Spirit that gave his fingers their Seraphic motion. When Solomon dropped from his lips the words of the Proverbs of wisdom, or when he hymned the Canticles of love it was the HOLY SPIRIT who gave him words of knowledge and hymns of rapture! Ah, and what fire was that which touched the lips of the eloquent Isaiah? What hand was that which came upon Daniel? What might was that which made Jeremiah so plaintive in his grief? Or what was that which winged Ezekiel and made him, like an eagle, soar into mysteries aloft and see the mighty unknown beyond our reach? Who was it that made Amos, the herdsman, a Prophet? Who taught the rough Haggai to pronounce his thundering sentences? Who showed Habakkuk the horses of Jehovah marching through the waters? Or who kindled the burning eloquence of Nahum? Who caused Malachi to close up the book with the muttering of the word curse? Who was in each of these, save the Holy Spirit? And must it not have been a Person who spoke in and through these ancient witnesses? We must believe it. We cannot avoid believing it, when we recall that, holy men of old spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

And when has the Holy Spirit ceased to have an influence upon men? We find that still He deals with His ministers and with all His saints. Turn to the Acts and you will find that the Holy Spirit said, Separate me Paul and Barnabas for the work. I never heard of an attribute saying such a thing! The Holy Spirit said to Peter, Go to the centurion and what I have cleansed, that call not you common. The Holy Spirit caught away Philip after he had baptized yon eunuch and carried him to another place. And the Holy Spirit said to Paul, you shall not go into that city, but shall turn into another. And we know that the Holy Spirit was lied unto by Ananias and Sapphira, when it was said, you have not lied unto man, but unto God. Again, that power which we feel every day who are called to preachthat wondrous spell which makes our lips so potent that power which gives us thoughts which are like birds from a far-off region, not the natives of our soul. That influence which I sometimes strangely feel, which, if it does not give me poetry and eloquence, gives me a might I never felt before and lifts me above my fellow man. That majesty with which He clothes His ministers, till in the midst of the battle they cry, aha! like the war-horse of Job and move themselves like leviathans in the water. That power which gives us might over men and causes them to sit and listen as if their ears were chained, as if they were entranced by the power of some magicians wandthat power must come from a Personit must come from the Holy Spirit!

But is it not said in Scripture and do we not feel it, dear Brothers and Sisters, that it is the Holy Spirit who regenerates the soul? It is the Holy Spirit who quickens us! You has He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins. It is the Holy Spirit who imparts the first germ of life, convicting us of sin, of righteousness and of judgment to come. And is it not the Holy Spirit who after that flame is kindled, still fans it with the breath of His mouth and keeps it alive? Its Author is its Preserver! Oh, can it be said that it is the Holy Spirit who strives in mens souls, that it is the Holy Spirit who brings them to the foot of Sinai and then guides them into the sweet place that is called Calvarycan it be said that He does all these things and yet is not a Person? It may be said, but it must be said by fools! For he never can be a wise man who can consider that these things can be done by any other than a glorious Persona Divine Person.

Allow me to give you one more proof and I shall have done. Certain feelings are ascribed to the Holy Spirit which can only be understood upon the supposition that He is actually a Person. In the 4th Chapter of Ephesians, verse 30, it is said that the Holy Spirit can be grieved Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby you are sealed unto the day of redemption. In Isaiah 63:10 it is said that the Holy Spirit can be vexedBut they rebelled and vexed His Holy Spirit, therefore He was turned to be their enemy and He fought against them. In Acts 7:51 you read that the Holy Spirit can be resistedyou stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, you do always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do you. And in the 5th Chapter, 9th verse of the same book, you will find that the Holy Spirit may be tempted. We are there informed that Peter said to Ananias and Sapphira, How is it that you have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? Now, these things could not be emotions which might be ascribed to a quality or an emanation they must be understood to relate to a Person. An influence could not be grieved. It must be a Person who can be grieved, vexed, or resisted.

And now, dear Brethren, I think I have fully established the point of the Personality of the Holy Spirit. Allow me now, most earnestly, to impress upon you the absolute necessity of being sound unto the Doctrine of the Trinity. I knew a man, a good minister of Jesus Christ he wasI believe he was before he turned aside unto heresyhe began to doubt the glorious Divinity of our blessed Lord and for years he preached the heterodox Doctrine. Then one day he happened to hear a very eccentric old minister preaching from the text, But there the glorious Lord shall be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams, wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. Your tackle is loosed they could not well strengthen their mast, they could not spread the sail. Now, said the old minister, you give up the Trinity and your tackle is loosed, you cannot strengthen your masts. Once give up the Doctrine of three Persons and your tackle is all gone. Your mast, which ought to be a support to your vessel, is a rickety one and shakes. A Gospel without a Trinity? It is a pyramid built upon its apex! A Gospel without the Trinity? It is a rope of sand that cannot hold together! A Gospel without the Trinity? Then, indeed, Satan can overturn it. But, give me a Gospel with the Trinity and the might of Hell cannot prevail against it. No man can any more overthrow it than a bubble could split a rock, or a feather break in halves a mountain! Get the thought of the three Persons and you have the marrow of all Divinity. Only know the Father and know the Son and know the Holy Spirit to be One and all things will appear clear. This is the golden key to the secrets of nature. This is the silken clue of the labyrinths of mystery and he who understands this, will soon understand as much as mortals ever can know.

II. Now for the second pointthe UNITED AGENCY of the Three Persons in the work of our salvation. Look at the text and you will find all the three Persons mentioned. I,that is the Sonwill pray the Father and He shall give you another Comforter. There are the three Persons mentionedall of them doing something for our salvation. I will pray, says the Son. I will send, says the Father. I will comfort, says the Holy Spirit. Now, let us, for a few moments, discourse upon this wondrous themethe unity of the Three Persons with regard to the great purpose of the salvation of the elect. When God first made man, He said, Let

Us make man, not let Me, but Let Us make man in Our own image. The Covenant Elohim said to each other, Let Us unitedly become the Creator of man. So, when in ages far gone by in eternity, they said, Let Us save man, it was not the Father who said, Let Me save man, but the Three Persons conjointly said with One consent, Let Us save man. It is to me a source of sweet comfort to think that it is not one Person of the Trinity that is engaged for my salvation. It is not simply one Person of the Godhead who vows that He will redeem me, but it is a glorious Trio of Godlike Ones and the Three declare, unitedly, We will save man.

Now, observe here that each Person is spoken of as performing a separate office. I will pray, says the Sonthat is intercession. I will send, says the Fatherthat is donation. I will comfort, says the Holy Spirit that is supernatural influence. Oh, if it were possible for us to see the three Persons of the Godhead, we should behold one of them standing before the Throne with outstretched hands crying day and night, O Lord, how long? We should see one girt with Urim and Thummim, precious stones, on which are written the twelve names of the tribes of Israel. We should behold Him crying unto His Father, Forget not Your promises, forget not Your Covenant. We should hear Him make mention of our sorrows and tell forth our griefs on our behalf, for He is our Intercessor. And could we behold the Father, we should not see Him a listless and idle spectator of the intercession of the Son. We would see Him with attentive ears listening to every word of Jesus and granting every petition. Where is the Holy Spirit all the while? Is He lying idle? Oh no, He is floating over the earth and when He sees a weary soul, He says, Come to Jesus, He will give you rest. When He beholds an eye filled with tears, He wipes away the tears and bids the mourner look for comfort on the Cross. When He sees the tempest-tossed Believer, He takes the helm of his soul and speaks the word of consolation. He helps the broken in heart and binds up their wounds! And always on His mission of mercy, He flies around the world, being everywhere present. Behold how the Three Persons work together. Do not say, then, I am grateful to the Sonyou ought to be, but God the Son no more saves you than God the Father. Do not imagine that God the Father is a great tyrant and that God the Son had to die to make Him merciful. It was not to make the Fathers love flow towards His people! Oh, no. One loves as much as the other. The Three are conjoined in the great purpose of rescuing the elect from damnation!

But you must notice another thing in my text which will show the blessed unity of the Threethe one Person promises to the Other. The Son says, I will pray the Father. Very well, the disciples may have said, We can trust You for that. And He will send you. You see, here is the Son signing a bond on behalf of the Father. He will send you another Comforter. There is a bond on behalf of the Holy Spirit, too. And He will abide with you forever. One person speaks for the other and how could they if there were any disagreement between them? If one wished to save and the other not, they could not promise on one Anothers behalf. But whatever the Son says, the Father listens to. Whatever the Father promises, the Holy Spirit works. And whatever the Holy Spirit injects into the soulGod the Father fulfills. So the Three together mutually promise on one Anothers behalf. There is a bond with three names appended Father, Son and Holy Spirit. By three immutable things, as well as by two, the Christian is secured beyond the reach of death and Hell. A Trinity of Securities, because there is a Trinity of God!

III. Our third point is the INDWELLING of the Holy Spirit in Believers. Now Beloved, these first two things have been matters of pure Doctrine this is the subject of experience. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is a subject so profound and so having to do with the inner man, that no soul will be able truly and really to comprehend what I say, unless it has been taught of God. I have heard of an old minister, who told a Fellow of one of the Cambridge Colleges that he understood a language that he never learnt in all his life. I have not, he said, even a smattering of Greek and I know no Latin, but thank God I can talk the language of Canaan and that is more than you can! So, Beloved, I shall now have to talk a little of the language of Canaan. If you cannot comprehend me, I am much afraid it is because you are not of Israelite extractionyou are not a child of God nor an inheritor of the kingdom of Heaven.

We are told in the text, that Jesus would send the Comforter, who would abide in the saints foreverwho would dwell with them and be in them. Old Ignatius, the martyr, used to call himself Theophorus, or the God-bearer, because, said he, I bear about with me the Holy Spirit. And truly every Christian is a God-bearer. Know you not that you are temples of the Holy Spirit? For He dwells in you! That man is no Christian who is not the subject of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. He may talk well, he may understand theology and be a sound Calvinist. He will be the child of nature finely dressed, but not the living child. He may be a man of so profound an intellect, so gigantic a soul, so comprehensive a mind and so lofty an imagination that he may dive into all the secrets of Nature. He may know the path which the eagles eye has not seen and go into depths where mortals reach not. But he shall not be a Christian with all his knowledge. He shall not be a son of God with all his researches, unless he understands what it is to have the Holy Spirit dwelling in him and abiding in him yes and that forever.

Some people call this fanaticism and they say, you are a Quaker, why not follow George Fox? Well we would not mind that muchwe would follow anyone who followed the Holy Spirit. Even he, with all his eccentricities, I doubt not, was, in many cases, actually inspired by the Holy Spirit. And whenever I find a man in whom there rests the Spirit of God, the Spirit within me leaps to hear the Spirit within him and he feels that we are one. The Spirit of God in one Christian soul recognizes the Spirit in another. I recollect talking with a good man, as I believe he was, who was insisting that it was impossible for us to know whether we had the Holy Spirit within us or not. I would like him to be here this morning, because I would read this verse to himBut you know Him, for He dwells with you and shall be in you. Ah, you think you cannot tell whether you have the Holy Spirit or not? Can I tell whether I am alive or not? If I were touched by electricity, could I tell whether I was or not? I suppose I should. The shock would be strong enough to make me know where I stood. So, if I have God within meif I have Deity tabernacling in my breastif I have God the Holy Spirit resting in my heart and making a temple of my bodydo you think I shall not know it? Call it fanaticism if you will. But I trust that there are some of us who know what it is to be always, or generally, under the influence of the Holy Spiritalways in one sensegenerally in another! When we have difficulties, we ask the direction of the Holy Spirit. When we do not understand a portion of Holy Scripture, we ask God the Holy Spirit to shine upon us. When we are depressed, the Holy Spirit comforts us. You cannot tell what the wondrous power of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit ishow it pulls back the hand of the saint when he would touch the forbidden thing. How it prompts him to make a covenant with his eyes. How it binds his feet, lest they should fall in a slippery way, how it restrains his heart and keeps him from temptation. O you who know nothing of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, despise it not! O despise not the Holy Spirit, for it is the unpardonable sin! He that speaks a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him, but he that speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall never be forgiven him, either in this life, or that which is to come. So says the Word of God. Therefore, tremble, lest in anything you despise the influences of the Holy Spirit!

But before closing this point, there is one little word which pleases me very much. That is, forever. You knew I would not miss that! You were certain I could not let it go without observation. Abide with you forever. I wish I could get an Arminian here to finish my sermon. I fancy I see him taking that word, forever. He would say, forforever. He would have to stammer and stutter! For he never could get it out all at once. He might stand and pull it about and at last he would have to say, the translation is wrong. And then I suppose the poor man would have to prove that the original was wrong, too. Ah, but blessed be God, we can read itHe shall abide with you forever. Once give me the Holy Spirit and I shall never lose Him till forever has run outtill eternity has spun its everlasting rounds!

IV. Now we have to close up with a brief remark on the reason why the world rejects the Holy Spirit. It is said, Whom the world cannot receive, because it sees Him not, neither knows Him. You know what is sometimes meant by the worldthose whom God, in His wondrous Sovereignty, passed over when He chose His peoplethe preterite ones. Those passed over in Gods wondrous preteritionnot the reprobates who were condemned to damnation by some awful decree, but those passed over by God, when He chose out His elect. These cannot receive the Spirit. Again, it means all in a carnal state are not able to procure themselves this Divine influence. And thus it is true, Whom the world cannot receive.

The unregenerate world of sinners despises the Holy Spirit, because it sees Him not. Yes, I believe this is the great secret why many laugh at the idea of the existence of the Holy Spiritbecause they see Him not. You tell the worldling, I have the Holy Spirit within me. He says, I cannot see it. He wants it to be something tangiblea thing he can recognize with his senses. Have you ever heard the argument used by a good old Christian against an infidel doctor? The doctor said there was no soul and he asked, Did you ever see a soul? No, said the Christian. Did you ever hear a soul? No. Did you ever smell a soul? No. Did you ever taste a soul? No. Did you ever feel a soul? Yes, said the man I feel I have one within me. Well, said the doctor, there are four senses against oneyou have only one on your side. Very well, said the Christian, Did you ever see a pain? No. Did you ever hear a pain? No. Did you ever smell a pain? No. Did you ever taste a pain? No. Did you ever feel a pain? Yes, And that is quite enough, I suppose, to prove there is a pain? Yes. So the worldling says there is no Holy Spirit because he cannot see Him. Well, but we feel Him. You say that is fanaticism and that we never felt Him. Suppose you tell me that honey is bitter, I reply No, I am sure you cannot have tasted it. Taste it and try. So with the Holy Spirit. If you did but feel His influence, you would no longer say there is no Holy Spirit because you cannot see it. Are there not many things, even in nature, which we cannot see? Did you ever see the wind? No. But you know there is wind when you behold the hurricane tossing the waves about and rending down the habitations of men. Or when in the soft evening zephyr it kisses the flowers and makes dewdrops hang in pearly coronets around the rose. Did you ever see electricity? No, but you know there is such a thing, for it travels along the wires for thousands of miles and carries our messages. Though you cannot see the thing, itself, you know there is such a thing. So you must believe there is a Holy Spirit working in us, both to will and to do, even though it is beyond our senses.

But the last reason why worldly men laugh at the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit is because they do not know it. If they knew it by heart-felt experience and if they recognized its agency in the soulif they had ever been touched by it. If they had been made to tremble under a sense of sinif they had had their hearts meltedthey would never have doubted the existence of the Holy Spirit!

And now, Beloved, it says, He dwells with you and shall be in you. We will close up with that sweet recollectionthe Holy Spirit dwells in all Believers and shall be with them!

One word of comment and advice to the saints of God and to sinners and I have done. Saints of the Lord! You have, this morning, heard that God the Holy Spirit is a Person. You have had it proved to your souls. What follows from this? Why, it follows how earnest you should bein prayer to the Holy Spirit, as well as for the Holy Spirit. Let me say that this is an inference that you should lift up your prayers to the Holy Spirit, that you should cry earnestly unto Him, for He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all you can ask or think. See this mass of people? What is to convert it? See this crowdwho is to make my influence permeate through the mass? You know this place has now a mighty influenceand God blessing us, it will continue to have an influencenot only upon this city but upon England at large. We now enjoy the press as well as the pulpit and certainly, I should say before the close of the year, more than two hundred thousand of my productions will be scattered through the landwords uttered by my lips, or written by my pen. But how can this influence be rendered for good? How shall Gods glory be promoted by it? Only by incessant prayer for the Holy Spiritby constantly calling down the influence of the Holy Spirit upon us! We want Him to rest upon every page that is printed and upon every word that is uttered. Let us then be doubly earnest in pleading with the Holy Spirit, that He would come and acknowledge our labors, that the whole Church at large may be revived thereby and not ourselves only, but the whole world share in the benefit!

Then to the ungodly I have this one closing word to say. Always be careful how you speak of the Holy Spirit. I do not know what the unpardonable sin is and I do not think any man understands it. But it is something like thisHe that speaks a word against the Holy Spirit, it shall never be forgiven him. I do not know what that meansbut tread carefully! There is danger. There is a pit which our ignorance has covered by sandtread carefullyyou may be in it before the next hour. If there is any strife in your heart today, perhaps you will go to the ale-house and forget it. Perhaps there is some voice speaking in your soul and you will put it away. I do not tell you you will be resisting the Holy Spirit and committing the unpardonable sin. But it is somewhere there. Be very careful. Oh, there is no crime on earth so black as the crime against the Holy Spirit. You may blaspheme the Father and you shall be damned for it unless you repent. You may blaspheme the Sonand Hell shall be your portion, unless you are forgiven. But blaspheme the Holy Spirit and thus says the Lord, There is no forgiveness, neither in this world, nor in the world which is to come. I cannot tell you what it is. I do not profess to understand it. But there it is. It is the danger signal. Stop, Man, stop! If you have despised the Holy Spirit, if you have laughed at His revelations and scorned what Christians call His influence, I beseech you, stop! This morning seriously deliberateperhaps some of you have actually committed the unpardonable sin. Stop! Let fear stop you. Sit down. Do not drive on so rashly as you have done. You who are such a profligate in sin, you who have uttered such hard words against the Trinity, stop!

Ah, it makes us all stop. It makes us all draw up and say, Have I not perhaps done so? Let us think of this and let us not at any time trifle either with the words, or the acts of God the Holy Spirit.

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #2074 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

INTIMATE KNOWLEDGE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT   
NO. 2074

**DELIVERED ON LORDS DAY MORNING, MARCH 10, 1889, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**The Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it sees Him not, neither knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and shall be in you.   
John 14:17.**

THE part of the text on which we shall meditate is thisThe Spirit of Truth, you know Him, for He dwells with you and shall be in you. Observe that the Holy Spirit is here called the Spirit of Truth. There is much meaning in this expression. He is the Teacher of the Truth of God, unalloyed Truth, practical, divinely effective Truth of God. He never teaches anything but the Truth of God. If it comes from the Spirit of God, we may receive it from Him without any hesitation. It is He that takes of the things of Christ and shows them unto us. And these things are true and He thus proves Himself to be the Spirit of Truth.

He is the very Spirit and soul of Truth, the essence, the life and power of it. Divine Truth, when merely heard, takes no effect upon the mind until the Spirit of God enlivens it, and then it becomes a quickening force. He makes the Truth of God itself, in its reality and substance, to enter the soul and affect the heart. He is the Teacher of Truth and He is Himself the active power that makes Truth to be Truth to us in the assurance of our inmost souls. He is the Spirit of Truth in this sense, too, that He works truthfulness in His people. In those with whom the Holy Spirit works effectually there is no deceit.

They are open-hearted, honest, sincere and true. They have an intense affection for the Truth of God and a zeal for it. They are by His truthful influence preserved from deadly error. If it were possible, false teachers would deceive even the elect. But where the Spirit of God dwells, He detects for us the false from the true and He gives us the spirit of a sound mind by which we reject that which is false and cleave only to that which is revealed of God. In this sense He is the Spirit of Truth. And as He works truthfulness in His people, so the work that He does is always true and real work.

You may get up an animal excitement and your converts will, in due time failbut the Spirit of God works true conversion, sincere repentance and saving faith such as no sun of persecution can dry up and wither. He works deep conviction of sin and simple faith in the Lord Jesus. And these things abide in the heart. The new birth, as He works it, is not after the fancied manner of baptismal regeneration but after an effective spiritual manner so that a Divine life is imparted and the man becomes a child of

God. He produces real sanctificationnot the pretense of perfection but the reality of holiness. Everything the Spirit of God does is substance and not shadow. The baseless fabric of a vision is the work of man. But the eternal, abiding, everlasting work of Divine Grace is wrought by the Spirit of Truth alone.

As He is the Spirit of Truth, we may be sure that whatever He sets His seal upon, is true. He will only bear witness to the Truth of God. He will not assist in maintaining error. Mark this wordcareful observation will show that in proportion as the nominal Church of the present day has departed from the truth of God, the Spirit of God has departed from her. He can never set His seal to a lie. The testimony of His sacred operation in signs following, is borne only to the Truth of God. If I preach to you that which is not the Word of the Lord, it will not be followed by the work of the Spirit of Truth. There will be no conversions among sinners and there will be no edification for the people of God.

It is by the Truth of God as His instrument that the Spirit of God works. And we must be very careful that we do not bring forth any other instrument. Let us not talk, as some do, as if Scriptural doctrine were of little or no consequence. For where the doctrine is not of God, the Spirit of Truth is grieved and He will depart from such a ministry. Except we keep close to the Words of the Lord Jesus and the Revelation of the inspired Book, the Spirit of Truth will show His displeasure by refusing to use our utterances. In vain your music, your architecture, your learning and your bright services if the Truth of God is given up. Farewell to the witness of the Spirit in the hearts of men when men are taught the inventions of men in the place of the Revelation of God.

If the Holy Spirit is bearing witness in your spirit that you are the children of God, then you are truly born of God. The presence of the Divine Paraclete is the seal of your adoption. If He dwells in you, this is the token of your sonship. For He does not dwell in the unregenerate. If He helps, strengthens, comforts, guides, illuminates and sanctifies you, you have a seal which you need not questionthe seal of God upon youthat you are His chosen and shall be His in the day when He makes up His jewels.

This brings me to the doctrine upon which I shall enlarge this morning. This is the distinction between the men of the world and the disciples of Christ. The world knows nothing of the Holy Spirit. But the disciples of Christ know Him. For the Lord Jesus says, He dwells with you and shall be in you. There are a great many distinctions in the world of a religious kindone man wears his phylacteries, another is girt with camels hair. One man comes with multiplied ceremonies, another with none at all. You cannot judge who are the people of God by these external things.

Forms of Church government and modes of worship may be important in their own placebut before the Lord the infallible test is thisdo you bear the fruit of the Spirit of God in you? Does He indwell you? If any man has not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. But he that has the Spirit dwelling within his soul, he it is that is a true born heir of Heaven.

We have raised a solemn question to begin with, have we not? But, dear Friends, I do not desire it to remain a question. I pray that it may be no question with anyone of you but that you may know that it is so and may go on to enjoy the blessed privilege of being on intimate terms with the Holy SpiritBut you know Him, for He dwells with you and shall be in you.

I. To come close up to my subject, the first head will be BELIEVERS IN JESUS CHRIST KNOW THE HOLY SPIRIT. They know Him, to begin with, by believing what has been taught them concerning the Comforter by the Lord Jesus Christ. When Jesus Christ had taught His people concerning the Holy Spirit and they had received His teaching, He said, You know Him. For He dwells with you and shall be in you. If they had refused the sayings of Christ, if they had possessed no love, if they had not kept His Commandments, if they had arrogantly resolved to find out this mystery for themselves by their own thinking, apart from the instruction of their Master, they would not have known the Spirit of God. We must begin our acquaintance with the Spirit by sitting at the feet of Jesus and accepting His testimony as sure.

But more than thiswe know the Holy Spirit by knowing our Lord Jesus and by Him knowing the Father. There is such an intimate union between the Holy Spirit, the Father, and the Son, that to know the Holy Spirit we must know the Son of God, and know the Father. If we know the Lord Jesus, we have the Spirit of God. For by no one else could the things of Christ be revealed to us. Beginning then, at the very beginningdo you know the Lord Jesus Christ? You know something about Himbut do you know Him? Is He your friend, your acquaintance? Are you on personal terms of fellowship with Him?

If so, then you see the Father in His face. Jesus says, He that has seen Me has seen the Father. And He tells His people, From henceforth you know Him and have seen Him. You are, therefore, acquainted with God the Father through Jesus Christ the Son. And you have seen the glory of His Grace beaming in your Saviors face. In this way you have become acquainted with the Holy Spirit who is not divided from the Father and the Son. As you know the Son you know the Father, and in this way you come to know the Holy Spirit. No man comes to the Father but by the Son, and he that comes to the Father receives the Spirit.

We know the Holy Spirit, next, by His operations upon us. We not only know about His operations but we have been the subjects of them. All those who are true disciples of Christ have felt a divinely supernatural power working upon them. First, the Holy Spirit operates to our spiritual quickening. There was a time when we were dead in trespasses and in sinsholy feeling was unknown to us and the life of faith was far from us. At that time we did not desire nor even know spiritual thingswe were carnally minded and the carnal mind knows not the things which are of God.

The Spirit of God came upon us and we were awakened and made to live. Do you remember that? Many of us can distinctly remember when we passed from death unto life. With others, the visible life may have been

made manifest more gradually, but even in them there was a moment when the vital force entered the soul and they can now rejoice that they have been quickened who were once spiritually dead. You know the Spirit in measure when He breathes upon your dead heart and it begins to throb with the heavenly life. In connection with that quickening there was conviction of sin. In what a powerful light does the Holy Spirit set our sin!

In my discourses to you about sin I try to show you how heinous it is and how terrible are its consequences. But when a single beam from the Spirit of Truth shines upon sin, it makes it appear exceeding sinful. I remember how Mr. Bunyan said, when under conviction, I thought none but the devil himself could equal me for inward wickedness and pollution of mind. When the Spirit of God revealed him to himself he would have willingly changed places with toads and serpents for he esteemed the most loathsome objects to be better than himself. This revelation of darkness is the effect of lightthe light of the Spirit of God. And when He convicts us of sin we begin to know Him.

After having convicted us of sin, He leads us to repentance and to faith in Jesus Christthen we know Him! How many a promise did some of you hear but you could not receive it! How many a comforting discourse did you listen to and yet it did not comfort you! But when the Spirit of God camein a moment you saw Jesus as the Consolation of Israel, the Friend of sinners, the atoning Sacrifice, the Surety of the Covenant of Graceand sweet peace came streaming into your soul! At that time you did not only know that the Holy Spirit leads to Jesus Christ but you knew that He was leading you. In that respect you knew Him by an experimental acquaintance which is the best of knowledge.

Since that time, beloved Brethren, we have known the Holy Spirit in many waysrestraining from evil, stimulating to good, instructing, consoling, directing and enlivening. He has been to us the Spirit of reviving we have grown dull and cold and sleepy, till that verse of the hymn has been verified

*In vain we tune our formal songs,   
In vain we strive to rise,   
Hosannas languish on our tongues,   
And our devotion dies.*

But no sooner has the Spirit visited us than we have felt all alivebright, cheerful and intense. Then our whole heart has run in the ways of Gods commands and we have rejoiced in His name. How true is that word, He restores my soul! Thus have we known the Holy Spirit by His operations within us.

Oftentimes He has acted as an illuminator. A difficult Scripture or mysterious doctrine has been before meI have looked at the original and I have examined what the best Biblical students have written upon it. And yet, when I have thus used all the helps within reach, the point has remained in the dark. My best aid has ever been to resort to the great Author of the sacred Wordeven the Holy Spirit Himself. He can, by blessing the means which we are using, or by directly leading the mind in the right track put an end to all difficulty. He has the clue of every maze, the solution of every riddle. And to whom He wills, He can reveal the secret of the Lord.

Dear young Believers, you who wish to understand the Scriptures, seek this light from above for this is the true light. Other lights may mislead but this is clear and sure. To have the Spirit of God lighting up the inner chambers of truth is a great gift. Truth of the deeper sort is comparable to a cavern into which we cannot find our way except by a guide and a light. When the Spirit of Truth is come He pours daylight into the darkness and leads us into all Truth of God. He does not merely show the Truth but He leads us into it so that we stand within it and rejoice in the hidden treasure which it contains. Then we know Him as our sacred Illuminator.

I especially note that we also know Him as the Comforter. Alas for the disturbance of heart which we receive in the worldperhaps even in the family! Few things, it may be, are as we could wish and therefore we are sorely troubled. But when the Spirit of God comes, peace flows to us like a river and Jesus breathes on us and says, Peace be unto you. Do you know that peace? Many saints of God have enjoyed a heavenly calm upon their sick bedswhen pain should have distracted them. The Spirit of God has rested them in Jesus. I have heard of one saint, near his end, who asked, Is this dying? Then I should like to keep on dying forever.

He felt so much comfortsuch a flood of joy which the Holy Spirit createsthat death itself had not only lost its sting but had even become a joy to him! The comforts of the Holy Spirit take bitterness out of wormwood and gall and the sting out of the last enemy. May God give us His Grace to know the Holy Spirit as our Comforter! Happy knowledge! I trust that we have oftentimes known the Holy Spirit as guiding us in various ways. I will not speak largely on this for some might not understand it. But I know for sure that the Holy Spirit does give to His favored people hints as to things to come. I say not that any man is inspired to tell the future. But I do say that choice saints have received preparations for the future and foreshadowing of their coming experiences.

When Believers come into difficult circumstances they bow the knee and cry for guidance, even as David said, Bring here the ephod. The oracle is not dumb, but in some way, not always to be explained, the Spirit of God guides our steps through life if we are willing to obey His monitions. Is it not written, Your ears shall hear a word behind you saying, This is the way, walk you in it? The Divine communications of the Holy Spirit are the precious heritage of true saints. But they are a peculiar voice to their own souls and are not to be repeated in words.

If you know these Divine workings, as I am sure many of you do, then through His operations you are made to know the Holy Spiritthat deep calmthat peace which only He can give. That exhilaration, that superlative joy as of Heaven begun below which only the Lord can work. That steadfast courage, that holy patience, that fixedness of heart, that gentleness of manner and firmness of purpose which come only from above these all introduce you to the wonder-working Spirit who takes pleasure

thus to operate upon the minds of the heirs of eternal glory. Thus we know the Holy Spirit by His works and gifts and revelations.

But I do not think we have entered the center of the text even yet. You know Him, says the textyou know not only His work but Himself. I may know the great achievements of an artist in marble but I may not know the sculptor himself. I may know a mans paintings and therefore I may guess somewhat of his character but yet I may not know the man himself. You know Him, says our Lord. And truly we know the Holy Spirit as to His personality. If the Holy Spirit were a mere influence, we should read, You know

it. Let us always shun the mistake of calling the Holy Spirit it. It cannot do anything. It is a dead thingthe Holy Spirit is a living, blessed Person and I hope we can say that we know Him as such. Others may doubt His personality. But we believe in the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ and behold, in the names given to Him, the emotions ascribed to Him and the acts performed by Him, abundant proofs of His sacred personality. In our hearts we know HIM.

As we know His personality so we know also His Divinity because the Holy Spirit work in us effects which none but God could work. Who can give life to the spiritually dead? Who but the Lord and Giver of life? Who can instruct and illuminate as the Holy Spirit does? Only because He is Divine can He guide us into all Truth and purify us unto perfect holiness. There have been things worked in usin our experiencein which we have beheld not only the finger of God but God Himself working in our hearts to will and to do of His own good pleasure. Oh, worship the Holy Spirit! The greatest crime of sinners is to blaspheme the Holy Spiritand the greatest fault of saints is to neglect the Holy Spirit. Let us adore Him, yield to Him, confide in Himand pray that we may know Him to the fullest.

So it comes to thisthat as we know the Holy Spirits personality and Godhead we come to know Him. I mean thisthat there is now a personal relationship between the Believer and the Holy Spirit, a conscious and clear fellowship and communion. The communion of the Holy Spirit is one of the three choice blessings of the great Benediction. Do we not enjoy it? We speak with Him and He speaks with us. We trust Him and He puts us in trust with many a precious Truth of God. We are not strangers now. We do not talk of Him as a personage a long way off of whom we have heard a Divine mystery with which Prophets and Apostles were acquainted in remote agesbut we know Him.

Come, let me look into your faces, my Beloved in the Lord, and let me ask you, Is this true or not? If you are obliged to say, We do not know whether there is any Holy Spirit, for we are utter strangers to Him, then I pray the Lord to deal graciously with you and manifest His Son Jesus Christ to you by the power of that same Holy Spirit of whom we speak. The Spirit of Truth is to those of us who trust in the Lord Jesus our present help. He is more familiar with us than any other Person. For He enters within, where none else find admission. You know Him. For He dwells with you and shall be in you. Thus much upon our first head. Now I will take you to another exceedingly important and interesting. May the Holy Spirit help me.

II. The second head is thisBELIEVERS KNOW THE HOLY SPIRIT THROUGH HIMSELF. Let us read the text againYou know Him, for He dwells with you and shall be in you. It is not, You know Him for you have heard gracious preaching. Nor, You know Him for you have read about Him in the Scriptures. NoYou know Him, for He dwells with you and shall be in you. The moon cannot help us to see the sun nor can man reveal God. God can only be seen in His own light. No one can reveal the Holy Spirit but the Holy Spirit.

I thought this morning, coming alongI have to preach about the Holy Spirit. But what can I do without the Holy Spirit Himself? I can only preach aright concerning Him by His own Presence with me. And if He is not there, I shall only darken counsel by words without knowledge. Why is it that we know the Holy Spirit only by the Holy Spirit? I answer first, on account of the inadequacy of all means. By what methods can you make a man know the Holy Spirit? He is not to be discerned by the senses, nor perceived by eyes or ears. What if the preacher should be as eloquent as an angelin what way would that make you know the Holy Spirit? You would probably remember more of the man than of his Subject. Nothing is more to be deplored than a hungering after mere oratory.

It would be infinitely better to speak with a stammer the Truth of God than to pour forth a flood of words in which the Truth is drowned. Words are nothing but air and wind and they cannot possibly reveal the Holy Spirit. No outward ordinances can reach the point any more than human speech. We greatly rejoice in the Baptism of Believers and in the breaking of bread in which the death of the Lord Jesus is set forth before us. But in what symbol could we fully see the Holy Spirit? If He were even to descend upon us as a dove we should see only the visible shapewe would not necessarily discern the Spirit. The Spirit Himself must reveal Himself.

Beloved, there is no chariot in which God can ride to usthe axles of creation itself would break beneath the enormous load of Deity. It is not possible for God to reveal Himself fully by His worksHe is seen only by Himself. Therefore the Son of God, Himself, has come to us as God with us. In Him we see God. The Holy Spirit must Himself come into the heart to which He would make Himself known.

This is even more clear from the inability of our nature to discover the Holy Spirit. We are dead by nature and how can we know anything until He makes us alive? Our eyes are spiritually blindedhow can we see Him until He opens our eyes? We are altogether without strength by nature how can we run after Him until He first comes to us and gives us the power to do so? We are unable to perceive the Holy Spiritthe carnal man knows not the things which are of God for they are spiritual and must be spiritually discerned. We must be endowed with a spirit before we can discern the great Spirit. Flesh cannot transform itself into spirit. No, it is the Lord Himself who must come and breathe into us the Spirit of life and

then we perceive Him who is the Spirit of Truth.

The Holy Spirit must reveal Himself to us if we are to know Himthis is clear from the nature of the case. How do I know a man but by the man himself appearing to me and speaking to me and manifesting himself to me? You cannot with accuracy judge of a man by his writings. It is a curious circumstance that Mr. Toplady, who wrote very bitterly on behalf of the Truth of God, was, in temper, the sweetest of men. On the other hand, Mr. Romaine, of Blackfriars, who in their writings seem to be the gentlest of beings were by no means free from harshness. You must see a man. No, moreyou must live with a man in order to know him. You must live with the Holy Spirit and He must dwell with you and be in you, before you can speak of knowing Him at all.

The facts of the case prove this. I shall put it to any Believer here who can humbly say, I know Him, for He dwells with me and is in me. How do you know the Holy Spirit but by the Holy Spirit? Did you learn your religion from me? Then you have it all to unlearn. Did you learn it out of a book? You have need to begin again. Did you inherit it from your parents or borrow it from your friends? Then you are still ignorant of the vital pointGod is only known through Himself. The Holy Spirit by the holy Spirit. Have you not found it so in your own case? Why, you have sat and heard a sermon which was in itself cheering, comforting and quickening, for your neighbor said, What a happy time we have enjoyed! Alas, you thought you had never felt more stupid and lifeless. Have you not gone down the Tabernacle steps and said to yourself, I am as hard as stone and as cold as a winters fog? What shall I do?

Thus are you without the Spirit of God. But when the Divine Spirit comes upon you, such complaints are at an end. Then does the lame man leap as an hart and the tongue of the dumb is made to sing. Then are you full of living joy in listening to the Gospelevery word you hear seems to be on wheels. And towards you the cherubim fly swiftly bringing live coals from off the altar.

III. My third head is BELIEVERS ENJOY A SACRED INTIMACY WITH THE SPIRIT OF GOD. I am not going to withdraw that word intimacy. It is warranted by the language of our Lord. For He says, You know Him, for He dwells with you and shall be in you.

First, He says, He dwells with you. Is not that a wonderful sentence? The Holy Spirit is God, and therefore the Heaven of heavens cannot contain Himand yet behold the condescending factHe dwells with you. The Holy Spirit is now upon earth, the vicar and representative of the Lord Jesus Christ who said, I will send you another Comforterthat is, another Helper and Advocate like Himself. Consider how our Lord dwelt with His disciples. After the same fashion, the Spirit of Truth dwells with us. Jesus permitted His disciples the most intimate communion with Himselfthey ran to Him with their troubles, they told Him their difficulties, they confessed their doubts.

He was their Master and Lord, and yet He washed their feet. He ate and drank with them and permitted the freest conversation. You never find our Lord repelling their approaches or resenting their familiarities. He did not draw a ring round Himself and say, Keep your distance. Now, in the same manner, the Spirit of Truth deals with Believers. He dwells with you. You may go to Him at any time, you may ask what you will of Him, you may speak to Him as a man speaks with his friend. You cannot see Him, but He sees you, which is much better. You cannot hear His voice, but He hears yours. No, He hears your thoughts. He is most near to those who are in Christ. He dwells with you.

Dwelling with us, He is in our assemblies. It is He who fulfils the promise of our Lord, Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. It is by the Holy Spirit that the Lord Jesus is with us. That we might enjoy that sacred Presence, it was expedient for our Lord to go away. Beloved, what a mercy it is when the Holy Spirit is in our assembly! What a dreary business it is when the Holy Spirit is gone from the congregation! The people come and go and perhaps there may be fine music, splendid millinery, admirable eloquence, a vast crowd, or a wealthy congregation. But what of these things? They are a bag of wind! If the Holy Spirit is not in the congregation, it is gathered together in vain. Behold, the people spend themselves for very vanity if the Lord is not among them. But the Comforter does come into our assemblies. For it is written, He dwells with you.

He also comes into our homesHe dwells with you. Where do you dwell, O true Believer? Is it in a very poor lodging?He dwells with you. It may be, dear Friend, you live on board ship and are tossed upon the seaHe dwells with you. Perhaps you go to work in a mine far beneath the surface of the earthHe dwells with you. Many choice saints are bed-ridden but the Spirit dwells with them. I commend to all of you who love the Lord these gracious wordsHe dwells with you. The first disciples said to the Lord Jesus, Master, where do you dwell? He answered, Come and see. So I bid you note where the Divine Spirit chooses to dwellbehold and wonderHe dwells with His people wherever they are! He does not leave them alone but He abides with them as a shepherd with his flock.

Well may we know Him for He takes up His abode with us. And He does this, not as a latent, inoperative influence but He works in the place where He dwells. He makes our members instruments of His working and sanctifies the faculties of our nature as vessels of a temple wherein He dwells. He perfumes every chamber of the house of manhood and consecrates every corner of our being. O Believer, He dwells with you in all the might of His Godhead and you are made strong in the inner man by His strengthening! Fall back upon the Holy Spirit in the moment of your weakness.

Alas, my Brethren, are there any moments when we are not weak? Fall back, therefore, upon the Holy Spirit at all times. Even in the prayer in which you seek strength, ask that the Spirit may help your infirmities. Even for the faith which brings you all Divine Grace ask for the Spirit of

God to work faith in you. He dwells with you, for you are unable to live without His constant presence and you need not attempt the perilous experiment.

The second sentence runs, He shall be in you. This is a greater marvel. Know you not that your bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit? Take care of them, never defile them. Let not the idea of drunkenness, gluttony, or lust come near you. For it is written, If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy. With what reverence should we look upon the body now that it has been redeemed by the Lord Jesus and is indwelt by the Holy Spirit! The Spirit also dwells within your minds. We possess Him and He possesses us. He shall be in you, as a king in his palace, or a soul in its body. I am afraid that many professors know nothing about this. I must be talking nonsense in the esteem of some of you if it seems nonsense, let that fact condemn you. You cannot be right before God unless the Spirit of God is in you, in your mind, your heart, your desires, your fears, your hopes, your inmost life.

The Spirit must permeate your entire being, filling it full with His floods, even as the waters cover the channels of the deep. He shall be in you. It is a wonderful fact. The Spirit shall be in you as the source of your life and the force of your life. What cannot a man do when the Holy Spirit is in him? His weakest endeavor will prosper when the Holy Spirit is pouring His life into him. For he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water that brings forth his fruit in his season. His leaf also shall not wither. And whatsoever he does, shall prosper. But without the Holy Spirit, what barren and withered trees we are! May we never know the awful drought which comes of the absence of the Spirit!

Brethren, when our Lord Jesus Christ came upon the earth and was beheld as God in human flesh, that was to us the pledge of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in usfor as God dwelt in the human Person of the Lord Jesus Christeven so does the Spirit abide in our humanity. Our Lords life on earth was the picture of the Spirits indwelling. As He was anointed of the Spirit, even so are we in our measure. He went about doing good. He lived consecrated to God, loving the sons of men. And thus will the Spirit of God within us cause us to livewe shall imitate the Christ of God through the Spirit of God. The death of Christ was the way by which the Spirit was enabled to come to sinful men. By His great sacrifice the stone is rolled away which once blocked the road

*It is through the purchase of His death,   
Who hung upon the tree,   
The Spirit is sent down to breathe   
On such dry bones as we.*

When our Lord rose from the dead, we had the guarantee that even so the Spirit of God would quicken our mortal bodies and renew us into newness of life. But it was when our Lord ascended up on high, leading captivity captive that the Holy Spirit was actually given. When our Redeemer returned to His Fathers Throne, He scattered the largess of HeavenHe gave the Holy Spirit to men of various offices and to His whole Church. Then were the days of refreshing by Divine visitation. Your ascended Lord gives you this token of His lovethe indwelling of the Holy Spirit in youprize it above all things. Do you know it? It seems like an impertinence for me to put this question to some of you who are grayheaded, and yet there is need. I trust you knew the Holy Spirit before I was born. But yet I cannot help pressing the enquiry, for you may not know Him even now.

I have urged the question upon myself and therefore I urge it upon you. Does the Spirit of Truth dwell in you? If not, what will you do?  
IV. I come to a conclusion with one more observation. BELIEVERS SHALL HAVE A CONTINUANCE AND AN INCREASE FOR THE SPIRITS INTIMACY. He dwells with you and shall be in you.   
Mark well the increase. Is it not a blessed step from with to in? He dwells with youthat is, a Friend in the same house. And shall be in you, that is, a Spirit within yourself. This is nearer, dearer, more mysterious and more effective by far. The bread yonder is with me. I eat it and now it is in me. It could not nourish me until it advanced from with to in. What a distinct advance it is for the child of God when he rises from the Spirit of God being with him to the Spirit of God being in him! When the Spirit of God helped the Apostles to work miracles, He was with them. But when they came to feel His spiritual work in their own souls and to rejoice in the comfort which He brought to them, then He was in them. Even if you could obtain miraculous gifts, you ought not to be satisfied to speak with tongues, nor to work miracles. But you should press on to know the Spirit with yourselfindwelling, communing, quickening you.   
He shall be in you. Notice that in consequence of this, we know Him. If a person dwells with us, we begin to know him. But if he dwells within us and has become intertwined with our being, then we know him, indeed. He shall be in you is a high degree of intimacy. As we have noticed the increase, so remark the continuanceHe shall be in you. There is no period in which the Holy Spirit will have finished His work so as to go away and leave the Believer to himself. Our Savior says of the Comforter, that He shall abide with you forever. Grieve not the Spirit of God, I pray youquench Him not, resist Him notbut carefully cherish in your hearts this Divine word, He shall be in you. What comfort is here!   
You dread the days of age and infirmity, but He shall be in you. You tremble before that trial which threatens you, but He shall be in you. You do not know how you will answer the gainsayertake no thought what you shall speakit shall be given you in the same hour what you shall speak, for He shall be in you. And when the last moment approaches, when you must breathe out your soul to Godthe living Spirit who dwells with you, even as the nurse sits at your bedsideshall then be in you and by His living power within shall transform death into the gate of endless life. He dwells with you and shall be in you. O child of God, your Comforter will not leave you! He will continue still to take up His residence within you until you shall be taken up to dwell where Jesus is forever and ever.  
This is our great reliance for the future upholding of the Church as a whole and of each individual Believerthe Spirit of God dwells with us and shall be in us. The Church of God will never be destroyed. The gates of Hell shall not prevail against her. For the Holy Spirit dwells with us and shall be in us to the end of the world. This is the reliance of the child of God personally for his perseverance in Divine Grace. He knows that Jesus lives and therefore he shall live. And the Holy Spirit is within him, as the life of Christ, which can never die. The Believer pushes on despite a thousand obstacles, knowing that God gives him the victory through the Lord Jesus Christout of whose hand none can pluck him.   
I have done. And yet I have done nothing unless the Spirit of God shall bless the word spoken. Oh, that some of you who have never known the Spirit of God may feel His power coming upon you at this moment! You may be sitting in the pew very careless, even now, and yet before you leave He may descend and soften your hard heart. The other day the ground was hard as iron and the water was turned to ice. But there came a breath from the south and soon a thaw set in, the snow vanished and the ice was goneeven so the Holy Spirit breathes on us and our inward frost disappears at once.   
Come, Holy Spirit. Come even now. Let us implore His Presence and power. Pray for a closer, clearer knowledge of Him, O Children of God! Pray that sinners may be met with by His Grace. The first token of the Spirits work will be that they will begin to feel their sin and cry for mercyand when that is done, the glad tidings of pardon are for them. To them we say, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved and your house. The Lord make the word effectual, for Jesus Christs sake. Amen.

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THE SAINT AND THE SPIRIT

NO. 754

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING JUNE 9, 1867, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**But you know Him; for He dwells with you, and shall be in you. John 14:17.**

THE Holy Spirit, although He is the most active, most potent, and most real Worker in the world, is not discerned by the mass of mankind. The great majority of men are affected only by what they see, or hear, or feel. Their life is confined to the narrow range of their senses. What shall we eat? Or, What shall we drink? Or, With what shall we be clothed? these are the trinity of questions which absorb the attention and effort of the worldly. If they can see a thing, they believe in it! If they can hear the sound of it, they recognize it. If they can discern its shape, they put it down as real. They know not that the things which are seen are temporal, and therefore shadowyand that the things which are not seen are the only substantial things, because they exist forever.

There they are, owlets fluttering in darkness, earthworms confined to their groveling sphere, mere moles borrowing in the dark earth. They have no eagle wing to bear them aloft, no eagle eyes with which to see afar off. Because the Holy Spirit is neither seen with the eye nor heard with the ear, therefore the world cannot receive Him because it sees Him not, neither knows Him. There are a few nobler spirits in the world whose souls are above mere dead matter, who mount into the spirit-world, in a certain sense. They recognize the existence of the soul and believe in its immortality and grandeur, but still, never having believed in the Spirit of God, their eye is blind to the first and chief of spiritual beings. Whatever else they see, they see not Him, and though they hear some voices from the land unknown, yet they hear not the Divine voice.

Celestial influences pass over them as sound through a forest which stirs not so much as a single leafno power or passion of their spirit being moved by the Holy One of Israel. They can think of things sublime, and philosophize upon spiritual topics. Their theories are plausible and sometimes they speak as though they were among the number of Gods enlightened, but still, having no faith, they are without the Holy Spirit. Feeling none of His Divine energy they have no life in Him, no love to Him, and the affections not being moved, none of the other powers yield to the mighty influence of the glorious Spirit of the living God.

Beloved Friends, the vital distinction between the man of God and the man of the world is this: the man of God knows the Holy Spirit, for He is with him and dwells in him. But the man of the world knows not the Holy Spirit. He may know His name, but he is not personally acquainted with that Glorious One, because he sees Him not, neither knows Him. Mere outward distinctions, such as may be caused by Baptism or the participation of the Lords Supper, are nothing at all apart from the Holy Spirit.

Mere nominal distinctions, caused by wearing the name of Christian, or the name of Mohammedan, are just superficial, surface works. But if you know the Holy Spirit you are a new creature in Christ Jesus! You have passed from death unto life! You shall never come into condemnation. If you know not the Spirit, then you are carnal and sensual, and not having the Spirit you are dead in sin.

You have not the Spirit which quickens and the flesh can profit you nothing. Whatever you may have attained in depth of knowledge or in excellence of morality, or in boldness of professionyou have foolishly begun to build your house at the top instead of at the bottom! And your house, lacking a foundation, will fall to piecesand all your building shall be but as the card house of little children, or the sand-built tower of the fool which falls in the day of the storm.

The great question which I want to raise in every heart this morning will be this: Do you know the Spirit of God? Does He dwell with you? Is He in you? If you have not the Spirit of Christ, you are none of His. But if the Spirit is in you, the body, indeed, is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. You are a living child of God if the Spirit of God dwells in youwithout Him you are dead while you live.

In trying to show this morning, so far as our poor powers can show, what it is the Believer knows of the Holy Spirit, I shall first say that the Believer knows the Holy Spirit by virtue of His operations. Secondly, and better still, he knows the Holy Spirit by virtue of His personal indwelling. And, thirdly, that the Believer shall know the Holy Spirit yet better, for the text says, He shall be in you.

I. First, the Holy Spirit is known to Believers, and is with Believers THROUGH HIS OPERATIONS IN THEM AND UPON THEM. My Brothers and Sisters, we have seen the operations of the Holy Spirit in the Church at large. It was the Holy Spirit who at the very first formed the Church. It is He who called out the chosen ones, quickened them, made them living stones fit to be built together for a habitation of God through the Spirit. It is He who binds these living stones together, for all Christian unity comes from Him as the Spirit of Peace, the Holy Dove proceeding from the Father.

The first manifest dedication and consecration of the Church of the Lord Jesus was at Pentecost, and here the Holy Spirit was the great active Agent. You have not forgotten those words, When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from Heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit.

On that day the ascended Savior, having obtained gifts for men, fulfilled that ancient promise pronounced by the mouth of the prophet Joel, I will pour out My Spirit upon flesh. There had been no Church of God composed of Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and dwellers in Mesopotamia if the Spirit of God had not then been poured out upon the first few hundred chosen souls that they might be messengers of mercy unto others, to bring in the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Since then, dear Friends, the Holy Spirit has been a gracious Agent in supplying the Church with her ministry.

There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which works all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom. To another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit. To another faith by the same Spirit. To another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit. To another the working of miracles. To another prophecy. To another discerning of spirits. To another many kinds of tongues. To another the interpretation of tongues. But all these works that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He wills.

Having, then, gifts differing according to the Grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith. Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering. Or he that teaches, on teaching. Or he that exhorts, on exhortation. He that gives, let him do it with simplicity. He that rules, with diligence. He that shows mercy, with cheerfulness. In all our efforts let us depend upon Divine power, for without it we are as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. The gentle dews of Barnabas are useless without the dew of the Spirit, and Boanerges thunder is all in vain unless the lightening of the Holy Spirit shall go with it.

Brethren, the more than golden treasure of the Church is the Holy Spirit! The treasury of the Church is not under the lock and key of the Stateher caskets of wealth are not to be opened by the power of the policeman or by an Act of Parliament. The true treasury of the Church is not even found in the gold and silver which may voluntarily be given to her in the power and energy of the Holy Spirit are the riches of the Church of God! That is a rich Church which shall meet in a barn or under the blue vault of Heaven if the Holy Spirit is there! But that is a poor Church with Ichabod legibly written across its wall, which, with all its wealth, its intelligence, and its respectability, is devoid of the Spirit of the living God.

This is the Churchs power, her energy, her life, the earnest of her future glory, the present power by which she is to resist and conquer her foes. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the Church is as manifest to many of us as any other great fact can possibly be. Even when we have doubted whether we, ourselves, possessed the Spirit, we have been charmed to see His work in others. We have seen conversions, which nothing but Omnipotence could have worked! We have seen Graces exemplified in Christians which unaided human nature could not have produced! We have seen virtues in our fellows which we have delighted to admire! We have coveted earnestly the good gifts God has given to them we have not envied them nor sought to make their excellencies to appear less beauteous than they areon the contrary, we have seen, to the honor and praise of God, such virtues and excellencies in Believers as have compelled us to feel that the Holy Spirit is still in the midst of His people!

Thus we know the Holy Spirit because we can distinctly recognize His action in the Church of God. We can discern it on every page of history. We see it in our own times. We have seen it graciously in revivalswe hope to see it yet more. And, as a Church, meeting in this place, I am sure we can bear our testimony, even thousands of us, that the Holy Spirit has been here, blessing us, indeed, and of a truth!

But, Beloved, no man knows the Holy Spirit to any great extent by mere observation of His work in the Church. Let me come closer to your souls and deal more personally with your inward experiences. The only way to know the Holy Spirit is by feeling Him at work in your own souls. Now, the works of the Holy Spirit within a regenerate man are very many. It is not possible for me to mention them all, but at the commencement let me say that the most of them find an illustration in the work of the Holy Spirit upon the Person of our Lord, who is our Covenant Head and Representative.

What the Spirit did for Jesus, the Mediator, the Head of the body, He repeats after the manner and the measure of each man in each member of the body of Christ. The same oil bedews the skirts of the garment as that which fell so copiously upon the Head. The same Spirit descends to the very meanest Christian as that which was upon Christ, the Anointed One of God. Now, you will remember that the Holy Spirit was concerned in the very birth of our Lord on earth. The angel said to Mary, The Holy Spirit shall come upon you, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow you. Therefore also that Holy Thing which shall be born of you shall be called the Son of God.

Our Lord was born into this world through the marvelous, mysterious, secret operation of the Divine Spirit. He was born of the Virgin Mary but He is the Son of the Highest. Our Lord might have addressed the Holy Spirit and said, A body have You prepared Me. Beloved, anything like a new birth in you and me is also of the Holy Spirit! Christ was not born at Bethlehem without the Spirit of God, and neither is He born in our hearts. The Christ in the manger is begotten by the Holy Spirit, and the Christ in every humble heart comes there by the same Divine agency.

In us Christ must be conceived. In us Christ must be formed. And this it is that Paul longed for when he said, I travail in birth till Christ be formed in you the hope of glory. It is the Spirits work, then, to bring Christ to any one of us, and to make us to know Christ and every good desire towards Jesus. Much less every real reception of Jesus into the soul is the work of the Spirit of Grace. When our Lord was grown up and had come to those years in which He exercised His public ministry, although He was baptized by man with water, He was also baptized with the Holy Spirit. In the midst of Jordan, you will remember, when He was fulfilling all righteousness, He saw the heavens opened, and lo, the Spirit of God descended upon Him like a dove and did rest upon Him.

That was His consecration to His work. That was the anointing which commissioned and qualified Him as the Servant of God. He was that day publicly and effectually set apart by the Holy Spirit to be distinctly the great Captain of our salvation, the Apostle and High Priest of our profession! Beloved, it is thus that you and I must be separated from the world by the Holy Spirit resting upon us! With all His dove-like influences He must descend into our souls, that from then on we may not serve sin but become the servants of God. It is only in the power of His Divine anointing that we can have power to minister in the Lords House as the sent servants of the Master of the household.

Then, in Jesus Christs three and a half years of ministry, the power by which He worked miracles, and the power by which He preached is ascribed to the Holy Spirit. Jesus Himself said that He cast out devils by the Spirit of Godit was His own declaration. So, albeit that as God He could work what miracles He willed, yet He chose to use the Divine power of the Holy Spirit of God in the working of many of His wonders.

Beloved, you have not forgotten the famous text of His sermon at Nazareth, which is appropriate to the point in hand, The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because the Lord has anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek. He has sent Me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

Did the Master work in the power of the Spirit of God, and shall not the servants do so? If you would work such works as Christ did, you must work them in the power which Christ bestowed so abundantly on His Church when He ascended to His Father. If you would be here on earth wonder-workers to arouse the dead, to open blind eyes, and to set at liberty the captivesand to this you are ordained in your measure even as He was, every one of youthen you must have the power of the Holy Spirit resting upon you, for only by that power can you lead the life of Christ on earth!

The resurrection of Christ from the dead is sometimes in Scripture ascribed to the Holy Spirit. You will recollect that passage in the eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, at the 11th verse: here you are promised that the same power which raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies. Our resurrection from the death of sin is worked in us by the Holy Spirit. There is no rising out of the grave of sin unless the voice shall say, Lazarus, come forth.

And with that voice, there must go that irresistible life-giving power without which the dead in sin will remain dead until they corrupt and are cast into Tophet where their worm dies not, and their fire is not quenched. See then, Beloved, from the birth of Christ to His resurrection, He was pleased to put honor upon the Holy Spirit by receiving abundantly of His power. He was anointed as Man with the oil of gladness above His fellows, and though able, as God, to have done as He pleased, independently, yet in order that the unity of the blessed Trinity might be manifest to us, Christ went not without His Fathers sending, and spoke not His own words, but His Fathers words. And so the power which rested upon Him, which He chose to use, was the power of the Holy Spirit.

Now, as the strength of the Head, so must the strength of the members be. As the Head was anointed of the Spirit, so must the members be anointed in like manner. As the Head rose from the dead, so must the members rise by the same powerby the energy of that Holy Comforter who has been shed abroad upon the people of God. By virtue of the Lord Jesus Christs ascension we must be sustained and perfected that the many Brethren may in all things be made like to the Elder Brother. There is much more in this illustration than I can bring forth, therefore I leave it with you as a goodly dish to feed upon at your leisure.

In enlarging upon the operations of the blessed Spirit, dear Friends, if you and I know the Spirit of God at all, we shall know Him first as having operated upon us to convict us of our sin. I trust I shall never be second to anyone in preaching plainly that whoever believes in the Lord Jesus Christ has everlasting life. Yet I cannot but think that many, in their overzeal for preaching up the simplicity of faith, have fallen into grievous error by disparaging repentance of sin, and setting at nothing all idea of a sinners coming to Jesus because sin has become loathsome and unbearable. Beloved, no one ever did come to Christ nor ever will until he feels his need of Jesus Christ!

Though it is the duty of the minister to preach the Gospel to every sinner, yet that Gospel never can be and never will be of any value to a soul until that soul is emptied of self, made to see its sin and to abhor it. Now, if ever you and I have spied out our disease, have seen the blotches of our spiritual leprosy, have been made to know that it is more than skin-deep and lies far down in the very core of our being. If ever we have been made to feel that the whole head is sick and the whole heart is faint (and I am sure we must feel this before we can savingly put our trust in Jesus), this is the finger of God, this is the work of the Spirit of God in the soul!

When He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He shall convince the world of sin. And if you have been convinced of sin, the Spirit of God has come to you. There is no convincer like the Spirit. Beloved, I may tell you of your sinsI do try to do so as plainly as I know. I may set before you the heinousness of sin as against a just, and holy, and merciful God. I may try to show you the bitterness of sin in its eternal results. But all this is nothing until the Holy Spirit comesand then, without words or with them, by whichever way He chooses to actHe can make your soul shake! He can make your whole heart quiver till rottenness enters into your bones.

I pray God that all of us may feel this in such a measure as He may think fit to show it to us. But you will never doubt the existence of the Holy Spirit after such an experience of His power as a consuming fire and a rushing mighty wind! When He wields the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, and drives that sword through you again, and again, and again, you will know Him beyond a question! When He takes the great sledge hammer of the Law and breaks you in pieces, and pounds you like wheat in a mortar with the pestleyou will never have doubts about His power! You will know Him, for He is with you and has bowed you in the dust by His Presence.

But next, if you know the Holy Spirit, you will also know Him as the great Revealer of Christ. There is the serpent lifted up on the pole in the midst of the sin-bitten, dying, host. But, Brothers and Sisters, many may die, albeit that the bronze serpent is within view, unless someone shall direct their eyes to the spot. How many have I known, who, when they have been told about Christ and the plan of salvation, have said, Where is He? And they have turned their poor bewildered glances everywhere except to the right place! And even when their eyes have had a little light, they have been looking for quite another Christ than the one who is set before them in the Gospel.

Oh, I remember how long I looked for Christ but could not find Him, and when at last I did spy Him, I perceived how near He was while my eyes were looking a long way off for Himlooking up into Heaven or into my own soul! But of this I am conscious at this momentthat I never could under any ministry have been enabled to spy out my Lord Jesus if it had not been that the Holy Spirit cast a ray of light upon Christ and opened my eyes so that I could perceive Him! It is our duty to set forth Christ very plainly, manifestly, crucified, in the congregation. But Jesus Christ is never seen by any light which comes from either the minister or his hearerthe light must come from the Holy Spirit.

When the Holy Spirit shines full upon the crown of thorns and the five wounds and the mournful countenance of the Man of Sorrows, oh, how the wounds glisten, and how fair is Jesus to a poor sinners tearful eyes! But without that light a man may sit at the foot of the Cross and see nothing, and even die in his darkness and sin. Brethren, if you have ever put your trust in Jesus, you will know the Holy Spirit who worked your faith in you and led you to trust in the finished salvation of our exalted Savior!

Since that blessed day, have we not often known the Spirit as our helper in prayer? I went to my chamber and I bowed upon my knees and tried to cry unto God, but though I sought to pray, I could not till on a sudden I found a Friend. It is written, The Spirit also helps our infirmities...for He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God. What delightful praying it is when the Holy Spirit indites the prayer so that we have nothing to do but just to read what He writesto utter what He suggests, to speak out what He speaksto be the rams horn trumpet and He the breath that causes the sound! Oh, it is rapturous praying when the Spirit helps you pray!

Ah, Beloved, you know what this means, some of you. When you have had wrestling times like Jacob at Jabboks brook. When you have been able to say, like Luther, I have overcome, I have had my desire of God, to what did you ascribe your prevalence, your moving that arm which moves the world, but to the Holy Spirit, who is the great Helper of His people in times of prayer? Yes, we know the Spirit in that respect, for He is with us daily.

Then, when we rose from our knees, we opened the Scriptures and began to read, and the Spirit of Truth acted as Interpreter. He wrote the Book, and therefore He understands its meaning. What Bible readings those are when the Spirit of God is the Expositor! It is poor reading when you merely sound the words and find not the Spirit! The letter kills, the Spirit is life. When a glory gilds the sacred page, majestic like the sun when every letter reflects the light of Deity, and every Word glows in the Presence of the living God like the bush at Horebs mountain that glowed with living fireah, then, Bible readings become soul-fattening times and the soul, being taught of God, sees the Father, has communion with the Son, and is filled with life, and light, and joy ineffable!

You may say, perhaps, the Spirit of God is with us in these solitary and secret engagements and so we know Him, but is He with us in public? Ah, Beloved, you know not the Spirit unless you have often recognized Him in His operations as the great Calmer and Quieter of His peoples minds when under distractions. It is perfectly marvelous how a soul that is like the Lake of Galilee, tossed with a thousand waves, becomes smooth as a sheet of glass when the Holy Spirit breathes upon it. Cares, losses, woes, brokenness of heartevery shape of human misery yields to the soft whisper of the Spirit of God! Oh, if you do not know the Comforter, I pity you!

You may have a thousand friends, but they are nothing compared to this one Comforter. All the remedies of other comforters can only be applied to the ear, but this celestial medicine affects the heart itself with matchless power of consolation. He does not merely give us something out of which we may draw comfort, but He actually comforts us for He reaches the secret spring of our being and sheds a sacred peace abroad.

Yes, we know the Heavenly Dove! We have known Him when we have heard the slander of the many, and fear was on every side. We have known Him, for He has helped us to say

*If on my face, for Your dear name,   
Shame and reproach shall be,   
Ill hail reproach, and welcome shame,   
If You remember me.*

We have known Him when we have lost much. When friend after friend has been hurried away to the grave. When there has been disappointment without, and dismay within, we have turned to Him and have rested in the infallible promise of an immutable God, I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. I trust you know the Holy Spirit as the Comforter!

More especially is the Spirit known to Believers as their Sanctifier. In a certain sense we are sanctified by the blood of Jesus and by the election of the Father. We are set apart by election to be made holy through the blood by the power of the Holy Spirit. This third kind of sanctification which consists in the subjugation of inbred sin, and in the victory of the new life over the old naturethis is the daily work of the Spirit of God in the soul. It is the Spirits work to check the unruly passion, to put the bit into the mouth of the fiery desire! It is the Spirits work to feed the new-born soul, to give it energy and vigor, to give it victory over the old enemy.

And, glory be to God, it will be the Spirits work, one day, to make us exactly like our Master! We shall be fashioned into His imagewe are to be melted and poured anew into the moldand made like the First-born among many Brethren! And while we shall give the Savior the praise for having washed us in His blood, yet we shall also bless the Holy Spirit who has worked all our works in us, and worked in us to will and to do according to the good pleasure of the Father

*And every virtue we possess,   
And every victory won,   
And every thought of holiness,   
Are His, and His alone.*

My dear Brethren, I have not time to mention at length the multiform and hallowed works of the Spirit in us, but I trust you know them so well that you know Him by them. Suffice it to say that if you would receive blessing from the ministry, it must be through the power of the Spirit. And if, on the other hand, you would minister with power to others, you must wait upon that Spirit for your help. If we are ever to be lifted up from selfishness to disinterested sacrifice. If we are ever to be raised from cowardly doubts and fears to dauntless courage. If ever we are to arise from worldliness and carnality into heavenly mindedness and true spirituality. If ever we are to shake off the serpent slough of our old nature, and put on the pure vesture of Christs likeness. If ever, in fine, we are to be delivered from this present evil world and to be filled with all the fullness of God, we must find our strength for each and all in the power and energy and quickening Spirit of the living God.

I leave this point, only endeavoring to urge each one to enquire, What do I know of all this? I am afraid many of you know nothing at all about it. You are a good sort of people. You were sprinkled when you were infants and have been regularly to Church or Chapel all your lives. You do not owe anything and live as you should live in many respects. But you think that outward morality and outward religion are everything. You use your hymnbooks and prayer books, and behave yourselves like respectable peoplebut if you have not the Spirit you are lost.

The external without the inward is good for nothing. It is all good for nothing. A wagonload of profession is not worth an ounce of Divine GraceYou must be born again. The Holy Spirit must come into your souls, or else, if for a 1,000 years you could persevere in the most reputable external religion, you would end where you beganor in something worse, namely, in weariness of flesh about such empty thingsor in a self-righteousness which would be more damnable, perhaps, than open sin.

Beware of resting in anything short of the indwelling Spirit. You must have the Spirit! You cannot pass the gate of pearl without it. You cannot know Christ without it. Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. This is no slight change which can be easily worked. You must be made new creaturesold things must pass awayand all things must become new. This is a work that your free agency cannot accomplish. This is a work that your poor weakness, which you call strength, will never be able to achieve. You must, therefore, have power from above. God must come into contact with you! The Eternal Spirit must dwell in your soul or else you can never dwell in Heaven! Let this be laid home to your heart and God bless the thought to your souls profit.

II. Very briefly, in the second place, the chosen of God not only know the Spirit by His operations which they have seen in the Church, and which they have felt in themselves, but, THEY KNOW HIM BY HIS PERSONAL INDWELLING IN THEIR SOULS. I shall not attempt to preach upon this great mystery, but I should like you to catch the thought and to hold it in your hearts. You know that Jesus Christ gave us His righteousness and His blood, and He did a great deal more and then gave us Himself. He loved us, and gave Himself for us.

You have learned to distinguish between the gifts of Christ, and Christ Himself. Now, the Holy Spirit gives us His operations and His influences, for which we should be very grateful. But the greatest gift is not the operation nor the influence, but Himself, which dwells with you and shall be in you. The great Covenant gift is the Holy Spirit Himself. Do you understand that Truth of God? It is asserted many times in Scripture that the bodies of the saints are the temples of the Holy Spirit. God dwells in you! You are the temples of God!

Now, do not cut that down and say that it means that He influences us and operates upon us. It does mean that, but it means a great deal more. It means literally thisthat the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the sacred Trinity, actually dwells in every regenerate man and womanthat He has made our bodies to be His shrine and He is the indwelling Lord. Do you perceive this grand doctrine? I say again, not merely the Graces of God, nor the operations of the Spirit, but the Spirit Himself dwells in us! He is everywhere. He fills all in all, but still He has a special residenceand though we are told in the chapter before us that the Father and the Son take up their abode with us, yet not in the same sense in which the Holy Spirit does.

He Personally dwells in the Church, and in each Believer. God the Holy Spirit is pleased to dwell in our bodies, not so as to deify our humanity, or to take us into connection with Deity in the same way as the humanity of Jesus was exalted, but still so as truly to dwell in us and abide in us! Brothers and Sisters, gather up this manna, it is better than angels food! And when you have received this Truth of God thoroughly into your soul, you will say, This is wondrously condescending; for, O Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof, and yet here it is, God dwells in me and I in Him.

This indwelling must be singularly effective. It is very powerful for a great God to send His influences, but if He comes Himself? There is no way of doing work well, you know, except doing it yourself. And when the Master comes and gives Personal attendance, it is sure to be done! Since the Holy Spirit dwells in us, how well His sanctifying work will be done! Depend upon it, He will not leave a single relic of sin when His work is achieved, because He has not sent an angel to us, but He has Himself come here to effect the Divine purpose of making us qualified for the kingdom.

Oh, how effective that presence must be! How delightfully encouraging is this indwelling, If God actually dwells in me, then what may I not expect? There can be no blessing too great to expect if I have received the Holy Spirit Himself. If I am like one of old, a man full of the Holy Spirit, then I cannot be empty of anything else, for when God gives Himself, how shall He not also give us all things? Brethren, if this is so, how potently sanctifying the thought isfor if God dwells in uslet us not defile these bodies.

What a powerful operation that Truth ought to have, and will have, upon every man who believes it, for every man that has this hope in him purifies himself, even as He is pure. We must make the temple pure while God is with us. We cannot prostitute the soul to sin while the Holy Spirit resides with us, and embraces us in the mighty cloud of His Divine influences. What can be nobler than a Christian? Talk of kings and queens what are they compared with men who, every day, carry God about with them? When Ignatius stood before the judges, they said, You are called the God-bearer, Theophorus. What do you mean by this?

He said, I am a God-bearer. God dwells in me. When the persecutor looked at him and said he blasphemed, he replied that the Holy Spirit dwelt in him. Ah, and Ignatius proved it! For when they put him to a cruel death, he bore it with undaunted courage. God shone through the man, and made human weakness a platform for Divine strength! If you and I dare to say God dwells in us, we must prove it, too. Perhaps not by a cruel death, but by what is far more difficulta holy life.

The Lord help us so to live that men may take knowledge of us that God looks through our eyes! That the love of God acts through our hands in deeds of integrity and kindness! That God speaks through our tongues in words of truth and holiness! And that God has been pleased to fill us to the full with His own love, breathing Himself into us that we might breathe out Himself among the sons of men in actions that shall be like Christ, and reflect honor upon His name.

Thus I have brought before you a rich thought for meditation. III. Now, in the third place, Beloved, if we thus know the Holy Spirit, WE SHALL KNOW HIM BETTER SOON. We shall be more instructed, and the instructed disciple knows the master better than he who is in the A, B, C, class. We shall be more fully sanctified, and the pure in heart see God. And the more pure we become, the more clearly shall we see the great Purifier. The Holy Spirit will daily reveal Christ to us, and as we grow more like Christ we shall see more of Christ, and more of Him whose office it is to take of the things of Christ and show them unto us.   
None of us know to what we may yet attain. I had no idea, when I first knew the Lord, of even the small attainment to which I have come in Divine Truth. I have put away many a childish thing and learned many a manly truth which was too high for me before. But if the Lord shall spare our liveswhy, Beloved, we have specimens among us of saints who have known the Lord 40 or 50 years, who far outstrip us in a thousand thingsI do not know what we may be even here! I do not think any man knows to what a Christian may attain.   
We become warped and crippled by our small conceptions of the possible in Divine Grace. Many Christians get Chinese shoes put on their feet and never get developed, and therefore they think there must be doubts and fears always. There is no need for it. A man might as well live without doubts and fears as notif he would grow in Divine Grace, he would outgrow unbelief. We fancy if we get to be as full of faith as Abraham that it will be a great attainment. Oh, but Abraham only lived in the twilight, when Christ had not come!   
We live in a better age than Abraham, after the coming of Christ, and we ought never to stint ourselves to the same degree as those ancient saints. We are to excel them and mount higher and higher. You know not how sweet and clear the air is, how glorious the views above these clouds, if you could but stretch your wings of love and confidence and zeal, and mount above the world. We do not know what we shall be! We cannot tell what we shall know of the love and of the Spirit of God here. There is one thing we knowthat when He shall appear, whose coming is our daily hope, we shall be like He, for we shall see Him as He is.   
And when we shall be like He, then we shall know the Spirit of God, for we shall be filled with wisdom and knowledge, and made in the image of Christ, who is our All in All. If any of you desire the Spirit of God, remember that your business is not with Him first, but with the Cross of Christ. Trust Christ, poor, broken-hearted Sinner. I pray that the Holy Spirit may give you precious faith to do it. Your brokenness of heart comes from Him. The Christian who is saved has to do with the Spirit of God, but to you, poor Sinner, the Gospel command is, look to Jesus, look to Jesus and live! May the Lord bless you, for Jesus Christs sake.

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THE BELIEVER NOT AN ORPHAN   
NO. 2990

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, MAY 31, 1906.   
DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. John 14:18.

You will notice that the margin reads, I will not leave you orphans: I will come to you. In the absence of our Lord Jesus Christ, the disciples were like children deprived of their parents. During the three years in which He had been with them, He had solved all their difficulties, borne all their burdens and supplied all their needs. Whenever a case was too hard or too heavy for them, they took it to Him. When their enemies well near overcame them, Jesus came to the rescue and turned the tide of battle. They were all happy and safe enough while the Master was with them. He walked in their midst like a father amid a large family of children, making all the household glad. But now He was about to be taken from them by an ignominious death and they might well feel that they would be like little children deprived of their natural and beloved Protector. Our Savior knew the fear that was in their hearts and before they could express it, He removed it by saying You shall not be left alone in this wild and desert world. Though I must be absent from you in the flesh, yet I will be present with you in a more efficacious manner. I will come to you spiritually and you shall derive from My spiritual Presence even more good than you could have had from My bodily Presence, had I still continued in your midst.

I. First, here is AN EVIL AVERTED.   
Without their Lord, Believers would, apart from the Holy Spirit, be like other orphansunhappy and desolate. Give them what you might, their loss could not have been recompensed. No number of lamps can make up for the suns absenceblaze as they may, it is still night. No circle of friends can supply to a bereaved woman the loss of her husband without him she is still a widow. Even thus, without Jesus, it is inevitable that the saints should be as orphans. But Jesus has promised in the text that we shall not be so He declares the only thing that can remove the trial shall be oursI will come to you.   
Now remember that an orphan is one whose parents are dead. This, in itself, is a great sorrow, if there were no other. The dear father, so wellbeloved, was suddenly smitten down with sickness. They watched him with anxiety. They nursed him with sedulous care, but he expired. The loving eyes are closed in darkness for them. Those active hands will no longer toil for the family. That heart and brain will no longer feel and think for them. Beneath the green grass the father sleeps. And every time the child surveys that hallowed hillock, his heart swells with grief. Beloved, we are not orphans in that sense, for our Lord Jesus is not dead! It is true that He died, for one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side and forthwith came out blood and watera sure evidence that the pericardium had been pierced and that the fountain of life had been broken up. He died, that is certain, but He now is not dead! Go not to the grave to seek Him. Angel voices say, He is not here, for He is risen. He could not be held by the bands of death. We do not worship a dead Christ, nor do we even think of Him now as a corpse. That picture on the wall which the Romanists paint and worship, represents Christ as dead, but oh, it is so good to think of Christ as living, remaining in an existence real and true, none the less living because He died, but all the more truly full of life because He has passed through the portals of the grave and is now reigning forever! See then, dear Friends, the bitter root of the orphans sorrow is gone from us, for our Jesus is not dead! No mausoleum enshrines His ashes, no pyramid embalms His body, no monument records the place of His permanent sepulcher!

The orphan has a sharp sorrow springing out of the death of his parents, namely, that he is left alone. He cannot now make appeals to the wisdom of the parent who could direct him. He cannot run, as once he did, when he was weary, to climb the parental knee. He cannot lean his aching head upon the parental bosom. Father, he may say, but no voice gives an answer. Mother, he may cry, but that fond title which would awaken the mother if she slept, cannot awaken her from the bed of death! The child is alone, alone as to those two hearts which were its best companions. The parent and lover are gone! The little ones know what it is to be deserted and forsaken. But we are not sowe are not orphans. It is true that Jesus is not here in body, but His spiritual Presence is quite as blessed as His bodily Presence would have been. No, it is better, for supposing Jesus Christ to be here in Person, you could not all come and touch the hem of His garmentnot all at once, at any rate. There might be thousands waiting all the world over to speak with Him, but how could they all reach Him if He were merely here in body? You might all be wanting to tell Him something, but, in the body He could only receive some one or two of you at a time.   
But in spirit, there is no need for you to stir from the pew, no need to say a wordJesus hears your thoughts talk and attends to all your needs at the same moment! There is no need for us to press to get at Him because the throng is great, for He is as near to me as He is to you, and as near to you as to saints in America, or the islands of the Southern Sea. He is everywhere present and all His beloved may talk with Him! You can tell Him, at this moment, the sorrows which you dare not open up to anyone else. You will feel that in declaring them to Him, you have not breathed them to the air, but that a real Person has heard you. One as real as though you could grip His hand and could see the loving flash of His eyes and mark the sympathetic change of His Countenance.   
Is it not so with you, you children of a living Savior? You know it is! You have a Friend that sticks closer than a brother! You have a near and dear One who, in the dead of the night is in the chamber, and in the heat and burden of the day is in the field of labor. You are not orphansthe Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace is with youyour Lord is here and, as one whom his mother comforts, so Jesus comforts you!   
The orphan, too, has lost the kind hands which always took care that food and raiment should be provided, that the table should be well stored, and that the house should be kept in comfort. Poor feeble one, who will provide for his needs? His father is dead, his mother is gonewho will take care of the little wanderer now! But it is not so with us! Jesus has not left us orphans. His care for His people is no less, now, than it was when He sat at the table with Mary, and Martha and Lazarus, whom Jesus loved. Instead of the provisions being less, they are even greater, for since the Holy Spirit has been given to us, we have richer fare and are more indulged with spiritual comforts than Believers were before the bodily Presence of the Master had departed! Do your souls hunger tonight? Jesus gives you the bread of Heaven! Do you thirst tonight!? The waters from the Rock cease not to flow

*Come, make your needs, your burdens known.*

You have but to make known your needs to have them all supplied! Christ waits to be gracious in the midst of this assembly. He is here with His golden hands, opening those hands to supply the needs of every living soul. Oh, says one, I am poor and needy. Go on with the quotation. Yet the Lord thinks upon me. Ah, says another, I have besought the Lord thrice to tear away a thorn in the flesh from me. Remember what He said to Paul? My Grace is sufficient for you. You are not left without the strength you need. The Lord is still your Shepherd. He will provide for you till He leads you through deaths dark valley and brings you to the shining pastures upon the hilltops of Glory! You are not destitute? You need not beg an asylum from an ungodly world by bowing to its demands, or trusting its vain promisesfor Jesus will never leave you, nor forsake you!

The orphan, too, is left without the instruction which is most suitable for a child. We may say what we will, but there is none so fit to form a childs character as the parent. It is a very sad loss for a child to have lost either father or mother in its early days, for the most skillful preceptor, though he may do muchby the blessing of God, very much is but a stop-gap, and but half makes up for the original ordinance of Providence that the parents love should fashion the childs mind. But, dear Friends, we are not orphans! We who believe in Jesus are not left without an education. Jesus is not here, Himself, it is true. I daresay some of you wish you could come on Lords-Days and listen to Him! Would it not be sweet to look up to this pulpit and see the Crucified One, and to hear Him preach? Ah, so you think, but the Apostle says, Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more.

It is most for your profit that you should receive the Spirit of Truth, not through the golden vessel of Christ in His actual Presence here, but through the poor earthen vessels of humble servants of God like ourselves. At any rate, whether we speak, or an angel from Heaven, the speaker matters notit is the Spirit of God, alone, that is the power of the Word and makes that Word become vital and quickening to you. You now have the Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit is so given that there is not a Truth of God which you may not understand. You may be led into the deepest mystery by His teaching. You may be made to know and to comprehend those knotty points in the Word of God which have hitherto puzzled you. You have but humbly to look up to Jesus and His Spirit will still teach you. I tell you, though you are poor and ignorant, and perhaps can scarcely read a word in the Biblefor all that, you may be better instructed in the things of God than doctors of divinity if you go to the Holy Spirit and are taught of Him! Those who go only to books and to the letter and are taught of men, may be fools in the sight of God, but those who go to Jesus and sit at His feet, and ask to be taught of His Spirit, shall be wise unto salvation! Blessed be God, there are not a few among us of this sort. We are not left orphanswe still have an Instructor with us!

There is one point in which the orphan is often sorrowfully reminded of his orphanhood, namely, in lacking a defender. It is so natural in a little child, when some big boys bully him, to cry, Ill tell my father! How often did we use to say so, and how often have we heard from the little ones since, Ill tell Mother! Sometimes, the not being able to do this is a much severer loss than we can guess. Unkind and cruel men have snatched away from orphans the little which a fathers love had left behind and, in the court of law, there has been no defender to protect the orphans goods. Had the father been there, the child would have had its rights, scarcely would any have dared to infringe them. But, in the absence of the father, the orphan is eaten up like bread and the wicked of the earth devour his estate. In this sense, the saints are not orphans. The devil would rob us of our heritage if he could, but there is an Advocate with the Father who pleads for us. Satan would snatch from us every promise and tear from us all the comforts of the Covenant, but we are not orphans. And when he brings a suit-at-law against us and thinks that we are the only defendants in the case, he is mistaken, for we have an Advocate on high! Christ comes in and pleads, as the sinners Friend, for usand when He pleads at the Bar of Justice, there is no fear but that His plea will be of effect, and our inheritance shall be safe! He has not left us orphans.

Now I want, without saying many words, to get you who love the Master to feel what a very precious thought this is, that you are not alone in this worldthat if you have no earthly friends, if you have none to whom you can take your cares, if you are quite lonely so far as outward friends are concernedyet Jesus is with you, is really with you, practically with you, able to help you and ready to do so! You have a good and kind Protector close at hand at this present moment, for Christ has said it, I will not leave you orphans.

II. Secondly, there is A CONSOLATION PROVIDED. The remedy by which the evil is averted is thisour Lord Jesus said, I will come to you.

What does this mean? Does it not mean, from the context, I will come to you by My Spirit? Beloved, we must not confuse the Persons of the Godhead. The Holy Spirit is not the Son of God. Jesus, the Son of God, is not the Holy Spirit. They are two distinct Persons of the one Godhead. But there is such a wonderful unity and the blessed Spirit acts so marvelously as the Vicar of Christ, that it is quite correct to say that when the Spirit comes, Jesus comes, too. And, I will come to you, meansI, by My Spirit, who shall take My place and represent Me, I will come to be with you. See then, Christian, you have the Holy Spirit in you and with you to be the Representative of Christ! Christ is with you now, not in Person, but by His Representativean efficient, almighty, Divine, everlasting Representative who stands for Christ and is as Christ to you in His Presence in your souls.

Because you thus have Christ by His Spirit, you cannot be orphans, for the Spirit of God is always with you! It is a delightful Truth of God that the Spirit of God always dwells in Believersnot sometimes, but always. He is not always active in Believers and He may be grieved until His sensible Presence is altogether withdrawn, but His secret Presence is always there. At no single moment is the Spirit of God wholly gone from a Believer. The Believer would die spiritually if this could happen, but that cannot be, for Jesus has said, Because I live, you shall live also. Even when the Believer sins, the Holy Spirit does not utterly depart from him, but is still in him to make him smart for the sin into which he has fallen. The Believers prayers prove that the Holy Spirit is still within him. Take not your Holy Spirit from me, was the prayer of a saint who had fallen very foully, but in whom the Spirit of God still kept His residence, notwithstanding all the foulness of Davids guilt and sin!

But, Beloved, in addition to this, Jesus Christ, by His Spirit, makes visits to His people of a peculiar kind. The Holy Spirit becomes wonderfully active and potent at certain times of refreshing. We are then especially and joyfully sensible of His Divine Power. His influence streams through every chamber of our nature and floods our dark soul with His glorious rays as the sun shining in its strength. Oh, how delightful this is! Sometimes we have felt this at the Lords Table. My soul pants to sit with you at that Table because I remember many a happy time when the emblems of bread and wine have assisted my faith and kindled the passions of my soul into a heavenly flame! I am equally sure that at the Prayer Meeting, under the preaching of the Word, in private meditation and in searching the Scriptures, we can say that Jesus Christ has come to us. What? Have you no hill Mizar to

remember *No Tabor-visits to recount   
When with Him in the holy mount?*   
Oh, yes! Some of these blessed seasons have left their impression upon   
our memories so that the remembrance of those blessed seasons when   
Jesus Christ manifested Himself unto us as He does not unto the world   
will mingle among our dying thoughts! Oh, to be wrapped in that   
crimson vest, closely pressed to His open side! Oh, to put our finger into   
the print of the nails and to thrust our hand into His side! We know what   
this means by past experience.   
And now, gathering up the few thoughts I have uttered, let me remind   
you, dear Friends, that every word of the text is instructiveI will not   
leave you orphans: I will come to you. Observe the, I, there twice over. I will not leave you orphansfather and mother may, but I will not. Friends once beloved may turn stony-hearted, but I will not. Judas may play the traitor and Ahithophel may betray his David, but I will not leave you comfortless. You have had many disappointments, great heartbreaking sorrows, but I have never caused you any. Ithe faithful and true Witness, the Immutable, the unchangeable Jesus, the same yesterday, today and foreverI will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. Catch at that word, I, and let your souls say, Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. If You had said, I will send an angel to you, it would have been a great mercy, but what do You say, I will come unto you? If You had bid some of my Brothers and Sisters come and speak a word of comfort to me, I would have been thankful but You have put it thus in the first person, I will come unto you. O my Lord, what shall I say, what shall I do but feel a hungering and a thirsting after You which nothing shall satisfy till You shall fulfill Your own Word, I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you? And then notice the persons to whom it is addressed, I will not leave you comfortless: you, Peter, who will deny Me. You, Thomas, who will doubt Me: I will not leave you comfortless. O you who are so little in Israel that you sometimes think it is a pity that your name is in the church book at all because you feel yourselves to be so worthless, so unworthy, He will not leave you comfortless, not even you! O Lord, you say, if You would look after the rest of Your sheep, I would bless You for Your tenderness to them, but II deserve to be left! If I were forsaken of You, I could not blame You, for I have played the harlot against Your love, but yet You say, I will not leave you. Heir of Heaven, do not lose your part in this promise! I pray you say, Lord, come unto me and though You refresh all my Brothers and Sisters, yet, Lord, refresh me with some of the droppings of Your love! O Lord, fill the cup for me! My   
thirsty spirit pants for it   
*I thirst, I faint, I die to prove   
The greatness of redeeming love,   
The love of Christ to me.*

Now, Lord, fulfill Your word to Your unworthy handmaid, as I stand, like Hannah, in Your Presence. Come unto me, Your servant, unworthy to lift so much as my eyes toward Heaven, and only daring to say, God be merciful to me, a sinner. Fulfill Your promise even to me, I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. Take whichever of the words you will and they each one sparkle and flash after this fashion!

Observe, too, the richness and sufficiency of the textI will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. Jesus does not promise, I will send you sanctifying Grace, or sustaining mercy, or precious mercy, but He promises you the only thing that will prevent your being orphans, I will come to you. Ah, Lord! Your Grace is sweet, but You are better! The vine is good, but the clusters are better! It is well enough to have a gift from Your hands, but oh, to touch the hand itself! It is well enough to hear the words of Your lips, but to kiss those lips, as the spouse did in the Song, this is still better! You know, if there is an orphan child, you cannot prevent its continuing an orphan. You may feel great kindness towards it, supply its needs and do all you possibly can for it, but it is still an orphan. It must get its father and its mother back, or else it will still be an orphan. So, our blessed Lord, knowing this, does not say, I will do this and that for you, but, I will come to you.

Do you not see, dear Friends, that there is not only all you can need, but all you think you need wrapped up in a sentence, I will come to you? It pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell, so that when Christ comes, in Him all fullness comes! In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, so that when Jesus comes, the very Godhead comes to the Believer!

*All my capacious powers can wish   
In You do they richly meet*

and if You shall come to me, it is better than all the gifts of Your Covenant. If I get You, I get all, and more than all, at once. Observe, then, the language and the sufficiency of the promise.

But I want you to notice, further, the continued freshness and force of the promise. Somebody here owes another person 50 pounds, and he gives him a note of hand, I promise to pay you 50 pounds. Very well. The man calls with that note of hand tomorrow and gets 50 pounds. And what is the good of the note of hand now? Why, it is of no further value, it is discharged! How would you like to have a note of hand which would always stand good? That would be a right royal present. I promise to pay evermore, and this bond, though paid a thousand times, shall still hold good. Who would not like to have a bond of that sort? Yet this is the promise which Christ gives you! I will not leave you orphans: I will come to you. The first time a sinner looks to Christ, Christ comes to him. And what then? Why, the next minute it is still, I will come to you. But here is one who has known Christ for 50 years and he has had this promise fulfilled a thousand times a year! Is it not done with? Oh, no! There it stands, just as fresh as when Jesus first spoke it, I will come to you. Then we will treat our Lord in His own fashion and take Him at His word! We will go to Him as often as we can, for we shall never weary Himand when He has kept His promise most, then is it that we will go to Him and ask Him to still keep it! And after ten thousand proofs of the truth of it, we will only have a greater hungering and thirsting to get it fulfilled again! This is fit provision for life and for death, I will come to you. In the last moment, when your pulse beats faintly and you are just about to pass the curtain and enter into the invisible world, you may have this upon your lips, and say to your Lord, My Master, fulfill to me the word on which You have caused me to hope, I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

Let me remind you that the text is at this moment valid and for this I delight in it. I will not leave you comfortless. That means now, I will not leave you comfortless now. Are you comfortless at this hour? It is your own fault. Jesus Christ does not leave you so, nor make you so. There are rich and precious things in this promise, I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you, I will come to you now. It may be a very dull time with you and you are pining to come nearer to Christ. Very well, then, plead the promise before the Lord! Plead the promise as you sit where you areLord, You have said that You will come unto me; come unto me tonight.

There are many reasons, Believer, why you should plead thus. You want Him. You need Him. You require Him. Therefore plead the promise and expect its fulfillment! And oh, when He comes, what a joy it is! He is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber with his garments fragrant with aloes and cassia! How well the oil of joy will perfume your heart! How soon will your sackcloth be put away and the garments of gladness adorn you! With what joy of heart will your heavy soul begin to sing when Jesus Christ shall whisper that you are His and that He is yours! Come, my Beloved, do not tarry! Be like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of separation and prove to me Your promise is true, I will not leave you orphans: I will come to you.

And now, dear Friends, in conclusion, let me remind you that there are many who have no share in the text. What can I say to such? From my soul I pity you who do not know what the love of Christ means. Oh, if you could but tell the joy of Gods people, you would not rest an hour without it! Remember that if you sincerely desire to find Christ, He is to be found in the way of faith. Trust Him and He is yours! Depend upon the merit of His Sacrificecast yourselves entirely upon that and you are savedand Christ is yours!

God grant that we may all break bread in the Kingdom above, feast with Jesus and share His Glory! We are expecting His second coming. He is coming personally and gloriously. This is the brightest hope of His people. This will be the fullness of their redemption, the time of their resurrection. Anticipate it, Beloved, and may God make your souls to sing for joy!

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: JOHN 15.

Many of you know the words of this chapter by heart. You could repeat them without a mistake. May the savor of them abide in your hearts even as the letter of them abides in your memory!

Verse 1. I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. We thank You, O Savior, for this blessed answer to the often-repeated question, Which is the true Church? Are you one with Christ? Then are you a part of the true vine. If we have a real, vital, personal, saving connection with Christ, to whatever section of the visible Church we may belong, we are part of the true vine. And we are told, in the next sentence, who is the great Caretaker of the Church. Some of us are much occupied in Christs service and there is a tendency with all of us to get like Marthacumbered in serving for Him. We are apt to fancy that the burden of all the churches lies upon our shoulders, but, Beloved, this is a great mistake. Jesus said, I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. He will take the utmost possible care of it, for it is very dear to Him. There is not a branch in that vine which the Father does not love with Infinite affection and, as for the majestic stem, even Jesus, He loves Him beyond measure.

2. Every branch in Me that bears not fruit He takes away. This operation is always going on. God is continually taking away from the Church, in some way or other, non-fruit-bearers. We know that these do not truly belong to Christ, for fruit must come from vital union to Him. But it is a trial to the Church to have non-fruit-bearing branches. These are taken away, sometimes by death, sometimes by judgment, sometimes by the open discovery of their secret sinthe culmination of their backslides in overt acts of transgression. Every branch in Me that bears not fruit He takes away. But side by side with this action another process is constantly going on.

2. And every branch that bears fruit, He purges it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Is this, then, dear Friend, one reason why you are being chastenedbecause you are a fruit-bearing branch? If you bore no fruit, you would be left unpruned because the knife would do its sterner work upon you by taking you altogether away. If you really do bring forth fruit to God, you must expect to have trial, trouble, afflictionand that full often.

3. Now you are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. That was a word which had sorely grieved them and cut them to the quick, so that the Savior had to say to them, more than once, Let not your heart be troubled. (See the 1st, and the 27th , verses of the preceding chapter). They had felt the sharp edge of the pruning-knife, so Jesus said to them, Now you are clean (purged or pruned) through the word which I have spoken unto you.

4. Abide in Me, and I in you. The main thing is not restless activity, running here and there, and doing this and that, and the other thingit is abiding in Christ, persevering, constantly cleaving to Christ by virtue of a vital union with HimAbide in Me, and I in you.

4. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abides in the vine; no more can you, except you abide in Me. You may hurry, and flurry and worry, but you will lose by it. Keep close to Christ. Never let your heart be dissociated from intimate communion with Him. So shall you bring forth fruit, but no way else.

5, 6. I am the vine, you are the branches: he that abides in Me, and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit: for without Me you can do nothing. If a man abides not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered: and men gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. The vine is of use for nothing but fruit-bearing and if it does not bear fruit, it is good for nothing except to be burned. In the social economy of life, a man may be of some use however bad he may be, but a man who is in the nominal Church of Christ and yet does not bring forth fruit unto God, is of no use whatever! There is nothing to the done with him but to gather him up with the sere autumn leaves and the decaying stalks of vegetation, to be burned in the corner outside the wall. How trying is the smoke that comes from such a burning as that! We pastors sometimes get it into our eyes and it fills them with bitter tears. I know of nothing that is more grievous to us than this putting out of the unworthy, this casting the fruitless vine branches into the fire that they may be burned.

7. You abide in Me, and My words abide in you. You see that doctrinal vitality is necessary to true union to Christ. Some, in these days, talk about a spiritual attachment to the Person of Christ, while they shoot their envenomed darts against the dogmas of Christ. But that will not do. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in youMy words of doctrine, precept, or promisethen

7. You shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you. This is the secret of successful prayer! Christ listens to your words because you listen to His words. If you are conformed to His will, He will grant you your will. Disobedient children, when they pray, may expect to get the rod for an answer. In true kindness, God may refuse to listen to them until they are willing to listen to Him.

8. Herein is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit. What a wonderful vine that must be whose branches glorify God! Who ever heard of such a thing? The very branches do this and they do it by bearing fruit. How this ought to excite us to desire to bear Christian Graces and to do Christian service, and to endure with resignation the Lords will, for those are the clusters that hang upon this vine.

8. So shall you be My disciples. For Christ is not merely a fruit-bearer, but a bearer of much fruit. If we are to be Christs disciples, we must not be content with doing something for Him, but we must do everything that is possible to us! And God can strengthen us till we shall get beyond our natural possibilities into a still loftier realm.

9. As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you: continue you in My love. As truly as the Father loves the Son, so truly does Jesus love us. No, more than that, in the same manner as the Father loved the Son that is, without beginning, without cessation, without change, without end, without measureso does Jesus love us! There are many great texts in the Bible, but I have often questioned whether there is a bigger text than thisa vaster abyss of meaning than can be found in these few words, As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you.

Continue you in My love. Recognize it, enjoy it, walk in consistency with it, reflect itContinue you in My love.   
10. If you keep My commandments, you shall abide in My love, even as I have kept My Fathers commandments, and abide in His love. I said just now that the doctrinal words of Christ were to be regarded by us. So, dearly-beloved, the precepts or commands of God must always be regarded. It is an idle tale for men to talk of a mythical visionary love to Christ which does not result in obedience to His will. We must keep His commandments, or we cannot truly say to Him, You know all things, You know that I love You.   
11. These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. Good children are truly happy when their parents are happy in them. When they, through the good teaching and example of their parents, bring honor and joy to their parents, then they are sure to be, themselves, joyful. Oh, that we might so live that Christs joy might abide in usfor then our joy would be full!   
12. This is My commandment, That you love one another as I have loved you. Are you doing this, Brothers and Sisters in Christ, really loving one another? Do you ever pick holes in each others character? Do you ever judge a fellow Christian harshly? If you do these things, chide yourself and cease from this evil habit at once, for Your Lord says to you, This is My commandment, That you love one another, as I have loved you.   
13. Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. I lift you above the rank of servant and make you My table companions, privileged to sit at the table with Me in communion. I put you down on My list of associates and familiars with whom I take sweet counsel, and in company with whom I walk to the House of God. You are My Friends if you do whatever I command you. This condition applies to the whole range of Christs commands. We are not to omit any one of them, nor to make a little nick in our conscience as some do, nor to neglect what seems to be a comparatively small duty, for neglected duties, even of the lesser kind, often set upon us as little stones in a boot do upon a traveler. They lame himthey may not prevent him from travellingbut they mar his comfort on the road. Be scrupulous, Brothers and Sisters, lest, through the neglect of what some regard as scruples, you should bring upon yourselves great sorrows.   
14-16. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knows not what his lord does: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you. You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you. That is where the love begannot with you, but with Me.   
16. And ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain. There are some people who are very fond of quoting the first part of this verse, they are very glad to hear a sermon upon the free, Sovereign Grace of God. They cannot too often repeat the words, you have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, but they do not talk so much about the next clauseand ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain. Let us accept all Gods Words as He has given them to us and keep up the due proportion of the whole. Note that Christ is not speaking here of spasmodic piety, the religion that can only be kept up by popular preaching, great meetings, much excitement and all that sort of thing but of the religion of principle that bears its clusters to-morrow as well as today, and even months and years hence! The religion that bears its fruit every month and the leaf whereof does not wither! May we be such branches in the true vine that our fruit shall thus remain.

16. That whatever you shall ask of the Father in My name, He may give it to you. For, where the fruit remains, power in prayer will remain. If we are constantly living unto God, we shall find ourselves privileged to have the ear of God and when we pray to Him, He will grant us the desire of our hearts.   
17. These things I command you, that you love one another. Our Lord repeated the command, for He knew how prone even His disciples would be to disobey it.

18. If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. It is no new thing for the ungodly to hate the godly, so let us not be surprised if that is our portion.

19, 20. If you were of the world, the world would love his own: but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept My saying, they will keep yours also. It ought to be quite sufficient for the servant if he is treated as his Lord waswhat higher honor than that could he wish to have?

21. But all these things will they do unto you for My names sake, because they know not Him that sent Me. They professed to know God and some of them even thought that they were rendering acceptable service to God when they rejected His Son, whom He had sent to them!

22-24. If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin. He that hates Me hates My Father also. If I had not done among them the works which no other man did, they had not had sin: but now they have both seen and hated both Me and My Father. Our Lord did not mean that they would have been sinless if He had not come to them, but that His coming and their rejection of Him had enormously increased and intensified their sinfulness.

25. But this came to pass that the Word might be fulfilled that is written in their Law, They hated Me without a cause. They fulfilled what had been written long before, even as they afterwards did when they put Christ to death.

26, 27. But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceeds from the Father, He shall testify of Me: and you also shall bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning. The witness of the Spirit of Truth still continues and Christs disciples are still privileged to be co-witnesses, even with the Holy Spirit, Himself. Let us take care to avail ourselves of this privilege whenever we can.

Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #2953 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

SPIRITUAL SIGHT AND ETERNAL LIFE   
NO. 2953

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 1905,

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON THURSDAY EVENING, JUNE 3, 1875.

**Yet a little while, and the world sees Me no more, but you see Me: because I live, you shall live also.   
John 14:19.**

IT is very noticeable in this verse and in many other parts of the New Testament, what a sharp line of demarcation the Lord draws between His people and the worldThe world sees Me no more, but you see Me. We have the same Truth of God taught in Johns first Epistle. We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies in the Wicked One. It is quite evident that our Lord kept prominent in His teaching the distinction between the regenerate and the unregeneratethe converted and the unconvertedthose who have been quickened by the Holy Spirit and those who have remained dead in trespasses and sins. This distinction which our Lord kept up so strikingly, should always be made clear in every ministry. I feel that much evil comes of a mode of address which is adopted by some of my ministerial brothers in which they speak to the entire congregation as though all who were present were Christians. That is a false theory to go upon because it is not at all likely that any congregation ever gathered together will consist wholly of Christians. The mere coming together for public worship, nowadays, does not at all prove people to be followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. When they met in the Catacombs or in the caves of the earth and every worshipper had to carry his life in his hands, there might have been some excuse for addressing the whole assembly as Christians. In these days we know right well that there are unconverted persons in the audience and it is proper, therefore, to have one message to the saints and another message to the sinners and to let it be seen, all through the sermon, that the preacher is aware that the Lord has made a distinction between Israel and Egyptbetween them that fear Him and them that fear Him not.

The same rule ought, I think, to be observed in prayer. It is a radical mistake to have forms of prayer which take it for granted that the whole congregation is saved. In this way, many persons are comforted who ought to be awakened to a sense of their true spiritual condition. At the grave, especially, things are said of men who have lived and died in sin, which are calculated to make unsaved survivors think lightly of their own lost state. There should be one prayer for the saint and another prayer for the sinnerand all through the supplication, as well as the preaching, there should be such a distinction as Christ drew, in this verse, between His disciples and the worldbetween those who continue to see Jesus and those who will never behold His face with joy either in this world or in that which is to come.

If you look carefully at our text you will notice in it, first, a fact which should solemnize the mind of every unconverted person here, namely, that the religious privileges enjoyed by the world will, sooner or later, be taken awayYet a little while, and the world sees Me no more. Secondly, the text very clearly tells us that the Holy Spirit has given to Believers a sight of Christbut you see Me. And, thirdly, this sight is accompanied by a life which is linked with the life of Christbecause I live, you shall live also.

I. So the first lesson to be learned from our text is that THE PRESENT PRIVILEGES ENJOYED BY THE WORLD WILL BE TAKEN AWAYYet a little while, and the world sees Me no more.

For a comparatively long time Jesus was seen here among the sons of men. I call His life a long time, for every moment of it must have been painful to Him, since, for His pure spirit to have dwelt in the midst of impurity such as pervades this world must always have been painful. Yet He tarried here and worked innumerable miracles of blessing. Sometimes He fed the thousands who crowded around Him. He was constantly healing the sick and doing everything that He could for mans goodthe summary of His life was that He went about doing good. He is gone, now, and the world sees Him no more. How shamefully the men of the world treated Him! It would not be right for Him to come back to another persecution and a second Crucifixion. They said, This is the heir. Come, let us kill Him and let us seize on His inheritance. They did kill Him, but He will never come here to be killed again! When He comes the next time, it will be in a very different fashion and for a very different purpose. The world will never again see Him as it saw Him then

*A lowly Man before His foes,   
A humble Man, and full of woes.*   
No, Earth, you have lost your Miracle-Worker. You sick ones, you have lost your Great Physician. You hungry ones, you have lost Him whose blessed hands fed you! Never again will the weeping Mary and Martha see their brother raised to life. Never again will sorrowing widows have their dead sons restored to them from the graves mouth. No, Jesus has gone and all the blessings which He was known to bestow have ceased to be given, for the world sees Him no more. It will see Him again, certainly, but in a very different fashionit will not see Him as Savior, a Friend

and Physicianit will only see Him with the rod of iron in His hand, passing sentence upon those who said, We will not have this Man to reign over us!

Now, what has taken place as to the physical sight of Christ by the sons of men will take place with all of you as to your mental sight of Christ unless you receive from the Gospel an inner and spiritual sight of Him. All of you have, in a certain sense, seen Jesus Christ. I mean that when the Sabbath bells ring out, you are accustomed to go where you hear concerning Christ and His great salvation. There you sit and Jesus Christ is set forth evidently crucified among youand blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear what Prophets and kings in vain desired to see and hear concerning Christ in days of yore. You go to your houses and there is that precious Book, the Bible, which contains the image of your Saviors face almost on every page. Your family altar brings Jesus very near even to some of you unconverted ones! The Kingdom of God has, indeed, come near to you. Nowadays Jesus Christ is preached in almost every street. A man need not go far, especially on the Sabbath, if he wants to hear about Jesus Christ. So far as the hearing with the ears is concerned, He may be heard of almost everywhere! But it will not always be so. Some of you will soon go where the Sabbath bell is never heard. You will go where Sabbaths, themselves, are all unknown, except as dreadful memories of shamefully neglected privileges. You will go where no minister will tell you of Grace, and mercy, and pardon bought with blood. You will go where you will never hear the music of

*Those charming bells, Free Grace and dying love.*

The very opposite sound to that will forever grate upon your ears! There will be no godly teacher there to urge you to seek the Lord in your youth and to give Him your heart while you are yet young. There will be no loving parents there, with tears, sighs and pious examples striving to lead you to Jesus. There will be no faithful preacher there, earnestly endeavoring, in simple language, to tell you the old, old story and to point you to Christ upon the Cross! Only a little while and there shall be no Bible for you to read, no Mercy Seat to which you can go, no promise which you can plead, no blood of Jesus in which you can ask to be washedfor you will be beyond the line of hope and beyond the reach of mercy. You will be in Hell.

I am sure that if I had to come to you and say that I had received a Revelation from Heaven telling me that never again would some of you be permitted to attend a place of worship, never again to read your Bible, never again to kneel in prayerbut that you were forever to be denied all these eternal privilegesyou would feel unhappy, indeed. I wish you felt something of that kind of unhappiness now, because to have these privileges and yet to neglect them is as bad asin some respects, it is even worse thanit would be to have the privileges taken away! Godly Mr. Rogers, of Dedham, was preaching on one occasion about the Scriptures and their value, and endeavoring to impress upon the people the duty of prizing the Word and being obedient to it. And, to bring the Truth of God home very clearly to their consciences, he asked them to imagine that he was commissioned to take away the Bible from them. He took it up from the pulpit and turned round with it in his hand. There, he said, you are never to have it again. It has been a dreary Book to many of youyou have not cared for it and you have neglected the reading of it, so I must take it away and you shall never hear another sermon from it, or hear anything more read from it. Then he pictured them all weeping and begging that the Book might be brought back to them again. And I would that, even though the Lord should not take these privileges away from you while you are in this life, you might nevertheless prize them, for this life will soon be endedand then these privileges will be gone forever!

Notice also that our Savior said, Yet a little while, and the world sees Me no more. Oh, it is such a little while even if we live the longest life that is possible to men! But human lives are often cut short, suddenly and unexpectedly. Useful servants of the Lord Jesus Christ are taken away in the very midst of their usefulness and the Home-call to them is a message to us, saying, Be you, also, ready, for in such an hour as you think not, the Son of Man comes. Some of you young people are reckoning that it will be a long while before you need come to a decision, but, I pray you, think how short your lifetime may be! Certainly, if you do ever reach that period in which the voice of mercy shall cease to have a syllable to address you, you will then realize what a little time it has been. Why, even if a man could live as long as Methuselah, yet, if he once found himself shut up in Hell, a life of a thousand years would seem to be but as a pins point compared with the endless eternityand he would grieve and lament bitterly that he had wasted in sin those winged hours upon which his destiny throughout eternity had hung! A little while, Sinner, and you will never have another invitation to come to Christ! A little while and there will be no outstretched arms of Him who died upon the Cross, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God. A little whileand such a little whileand you will see Jesus no more as a Savior, but you will see Him as your Judge and hear Him say, not, Come, you blessed, but, Depart, you cursed. Those who have outward privileges and yet neglect them, shall have them taken from themand then how will they dare to appear before God?

II. Let us now turn to the second point, which is far more sweet to our souls. Let us think upon HOW THE HOLY SPIRIT HAS GIVEN SIGHT TO THE PEOPLE OF GODThe world sees Me no more, but you see Me.

In the deepest meaning of the word, no one ever truly sees Christ until the Holy Spirit opens his eyes. There are some persons who have very strange notions of what it means to see Christ. I occasionally have to talk with poor, ignorant peoplewho do not, however, think themselves ignorantwho tell me that they have seen Christ. But I soon discover that they mean that they fancy they have seen Him with their natural eyes! I tell them that it is impossible and then they tell me of some dream in which they think they saw Him. Now, my dear Friend, even supposing you had a vision and that you did see Christ in itdo not place any reliance upon that. There is many a man who has had a vision of the devil, yet has gone to Heavenand there is many a man who has had a vision of Christ yet has gone to Hell! There is nothing in that. Did not great multitudes who lived in the days of Christ upon the earth, see Him with their natural eyes? Yet they were not saved! Many even stood around the Cross and saw Him die in that dread culmination of His lifework, when He was paying the price of His peoples redemption. They stood and gazed at Him, but their hearts were not softened even by that matchless sight, for they jeered and jested while He was in His deaththroes! That which can be seen with these eyes is of little consequence! The true sight of Christthat sight which alone can saveis a spiritual sight, the sight of the inward soul!

Our Lord Jesus Christ said to His disciples, You see Me. Let us notice the ways in which Believers see Him in a spiritual sense. We see Him, first, with that earliest glance which continues throughout our whole livesthe life-look at the Lord Jesus Christ. You remember when you first saw Him thus. Could any other word describe your experience? You did not see anything with your natural eyes, but you perceived, in your soul, that Jesus Christ stood as the one Substitute for sinners and that, trusting in Him, your sin would be forever removed from you. And you trusted in Him. You looked unto Him and were lightened, and your face was not ashamed. Possibly before that you had been a diligent student of the Scriptures and you may have been a tolerably intelligent theologian. But you knew more of Christ in a single moment, when you had looked to Him with that saving glance, than you had ever learned from any book, or heard from any ministry! Then you could say, I have heard of You with the hearing of the ears, but now my eyes see You. Then you knew what was meant by pardon through His precious blood and justification by His righteousness, for you had looked for yourself and had seen that Christ is able to save, for He had saved you! From that moment you began to see Christ with the opened eyes of your spiritual understanding. Just as Christs disciples were made to know that He was in the Father and that the Father was in Him, so you began to know that Jesus of Nazareth was in you and that you were in Him! You began to understand the eternal relationship between Christ and the Father, and between the Father and yourself. You began to perceive the offices of Christ as Prophet, Priest and King. You began to study Himthe different points of His Character, the different stages of His life, the different gleams of Glory that shone even amid the darkness of His deathand so you saw Him.

O dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, since that happy day we have had many precious sights of Christ and we have been constantly led to see more and more of Him! The Holy Spirit has lit up Christ to us by degrees, just as I have sometimes seen the lighting up of an illumination in which some one word was to be spelt out in letters of light. They have brought it out, letter by letter, with bright lamps and, at last, you could see the whole word. I am afraid that we have not yet learned to spell the whole of Jesus Christs name, but what we do know, we would not give up for twice ten thousand worlds! We do not yet see Him so clearly as we shall see Him, by-and-by, but still, our spiritual understanding does perceive far more of Him than it once did and we expect, in due time, to be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge.

If you follow the run of the chapter from which our text is taken, you will be helped further to perceive how it is that we see Christ. According to the 12th verse, we see Christ by participating in His power. He that believes on Me, the works that I do shall he also do; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto My Father. A preacher who has never seen Christ in the way I have been describing, delivers sermons which are without spiritual power. But if anyoneeven the feeblest among uswill teach others the Truths of God which he has received from the Holy Spirit, feeling that all power in Heaven and earth is given to Christ and that, therefore, He has sent His servants to preach His Gospel to all nationssuch a man, I say, will have the Presence of Christ and shall realize it by the power which will rest upon him and by the results which will follow his testimony! Yes, Brothers and Sisters, Christ is still with His people! The power of Christ is not only up there in Heaven, but it is given to Him on earth as well, and He clothes with His Spirit those who preach His Gospel simply and humbly! And that Spirit breaks mens hearts and binds them up againslays men spiritually and makes them alive againand does great marvels so that the power of Jesus Christ is truly seen in the midst of the assembly! Out of His mouth proceeds that two-edged sword with which the battles of Divine Grace are fought and won. I wonder how many of you who are here have ever seen Christ in this sensethat His power has rested upon you in all forms of Christian service that are done as unto the Lord?

If you have seen Christ thus, you have also seen Him in the sense described in the 13th and 14th verses, pleading through you and with you in prayerWhatever you shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you shall ask anything in My name, I will do it. Have you ever prayed in that way, as though Christ had said to you, Go to My Father and tell Him I sent you. Use My name with Him, for My name has authority in the courts of Heaven? It is, indeed, blessed, when you are pleading with God, to feel that Christ is pleading through youto see Him, as it were, as the great High Priest of our profession, standing before God with outstretched hands, pleading the merit of His blood that we may prevail! It is powerful pleading when you have Christ praying by your side and know that you have Him there and when you feel that your prayer is not the petition of a suppliant who is pleading alone, but the utterance of one who is covered up and lost sight of in the Person of the greater Pleaderthe Lord Jesus Christ. This is, indeed, seeing Christ. You see Me, said Christ to His disciples, and we do see Him when we realize His power with us in the hour of prayer!

We see Christ, again, when we are obedient to His commands, for the 15th verse tells us that He said to His disciples, If you love Me, keep My commandments. A real Christian does what Christ bids him do, whether he is observed of men or not, because he realizes that he is in the Presence of Christ. The very best check upon sinful passions and the most Divine incentive to spiritual earnestness is the Presence of Christ. O Brothers and Sisters, I cannot tell you what a delight it is to feel sure that Christ is near you and observing youto feel as if His hands were upon your shoulder and His shadow resting upon you, like that of a father leaning over his child and guiding the childs hand as he writes his copywhile you are trying to serve Him and yielding yourself up completely to Him, saying, Tell me, my Lord, what You have for me to do and, by Your Grace, I will do it, for I live in Your sight and to please You is the one desire of my soul.

Sinners never see Christ in this way. In fact, they do not care anything about Him. The children of God constantly see Jesus Christ before them so that if they are tempted to sin, they cry, How can we do this great wickedness and sin against God? If they are tempted to slumber when they ought to be actively engaged in His service, they can hear Christ knocking at their door and saying to them, Open to Me. And they rise from their beds and open the door to Him and go forth with Him to do His will! You can, each one of you judge, Beloved, whether in this sense Christ can say to you, You see Me.

Christ is also to be seen by Believers in the efficacy of His Spirit. Read what He says in the 17th verseEven the Spirit of Truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it sees Him not, neither knows Him: but you know Him; for He dwells with you and shall be in you. Have you ever felt the Presence and power of the Spirit of God working within you? Does He ever comfort you when you are depressed? Does He ever guide you when you are in perplexity? Has He ever come upon you to calm you when you have been getting excited with worldly joy? Have you ever known the Spirit of God illuminate a Truth which before you could not understand? Have you not known Him to point out to you a way of answering your accuser or adversary which you had not thought of, giving you in the same hour the very words that you should speak? Some of us know what it is to be more swayed by the Spirit of God than by our own spiritand it should be so with every Christian. He should yield himself up absolutely to that Divine Spirit who will bear him wherever He pleases, upward or downward, to ecstatic joy or to holy sorrow, but always onward in that which glorifies God! Those who feel this power of the Holy Spirit really see Jesus Christ and so hear Him say to them as He said to His disciples, You see Me.

And, Beloved, I must add here what some of you know right wellI would that we all knew it more and morethat Jesus Christ is to be seen by that near, and dear, and intimate communion which He permits His children to have with Him. They are to be daily walking with God, but as the sea, though always full, is not always at flood-tide, so the Believer, who lives nearest to God, will not always experience precisely the same delights. There are high days and holidays for ushave you not had them? We hardly like to talk about them, for the love-dealings of Christ with our souls are such sacred secrets between Himself and us that we can scarcely speak of them to others. We have known such joy in fellowship with Christ that we have felt almost as the Apostle did when he said that He was caught up into Paradise and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Indeed, we cannot utter them, for human language can never express the bliss which sometimes fills our spirit when Jesus Christ reveals Himself to us! It is vain for infidels to tell me that there is no Christ for I have seen Him! When men tell us that there is no Heaven, we say, as Bunyans pilgrims did, What? No Mount Zion? Did we not see from the Delectable Mountains, the gate of the city? Do they tell us that the love of Christ is a myth? We reply that it has been shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit and that, therefore, we can never doubt its reality and power!

There is an individual who is accustomed to go down the sewers and who has no sense of smellHe has got no nose, a man told me once. Suppose that this man comes into a place which has been recently perfumed with perfume of roses or lavender water and, while we are all saying, What a delicious perfume! He says, I do not believe there is any perfume here. But we are sure that there is. He says that he cannot see it, he cannot hear it, he cannot taste it, he cannot feel it and he cannot smell it, so he does not believe it is there. No, poor man, he has lost one of his senses, so he cannot perceive it. And the world has lost its spiritual sensethat delicate nostril which can perceive the sweet perfume of the Rose of Sharon and detect His Presence wherever He may be! But we, Beloved, are not to be argued out of an undoubted fact of our spiritual experience! It is useless to try to pervert a genuine Christian from the faith because he knows it, for he has tasted and handled it, and felt it! It is not a matter of opinion to him, but a matter of fact. The heathen philosophers said of the early Christians, that they were the most obstinate men and women that they ever met. They said that the plainest arguments were lost upon them, for they clung to certain things which they asserted to be facts and no one could, by any logic whatever, induce them to deny those facts! If we are genuine Christians, we are of the same stamp as those early saints. We might change our opinions, but we cannot give up our knowledge of the great facts of our spiritual experienceand we do know that Jesus Christ has revealed Himself unto us as He does not unto the worldand we dare not deny that it is so!

He has given us such sweet fellowship with Himself that only in Heaven, itself, can we ever be happier! Sometimes we have seemed to sit on the very doorstep of Heaven and have heard the music insideand we have wondered whether they could be happier, there, than we were outside. We have felt that they must have larger capacity for joy than we had if they had more joy than we possessed, for we were as full of joy as we could be! Well, this being the case with us, we cannot be made to deny the faith by anything that may be said to us by those who are strangers to our joy. You see Me, said Christ to His disciples and, oftentimes we have felt that He might also say to us, You see Me, for, in the highest sense, it is true.

Beloved Friends, I must leave this point, but I wish, first, to ask everyone here, Have you thus seen Jesus Christ? Do you see Him at this moment? Remember that you must spiritually see Him with the eyes of your soul or else, when He comes to Judgment, you will in vain call upon the rocks to hide you from His face! Recollect, also, that you cannot see Christ till the Spirit of God opens your eyes. You are spiritually blind. You are dead! And only the Spirit of God can make you live and give you sight. Oh, that the prayer might ascend from every unsaved soul here, Blessed Spirit, breathe into me the breath of life that my dead soul may be quickened and that my darkened mind may be enlightened that I may truly see You. May the Lord first give you that prayerand then may He graciously answer it in your happy experience this very hour!

III. My last point is thisTHE HOLY SPIRIT NOT ONLY GIVES US LIGHT, BUT HE ALSO GIVES US LIFE. Jesus said to His disciples, Because I live, you shall live also.

Every soul that has seen Christ in the ways I have described is a living soul, and such a living soul that as long as Christ lives, and because Christ lives, that soul shall also live! What a precious promise this is! One needs to have a whole sermon upon itBecause I live, you shall live also.

That is to say, we first get spiritual life from Christ. We are dead in trespasses and sins, but a glance from His eyes through the gracious operation of the Holy Spirit, creates the first spark of life within us and then we look to Himand so we live! We find in Jesus Christ and in context and in communion with Him, all that our souls need, so that we not only derive from Him spiritual life, but also the sustenance of that life.

Then, we get the life of Christ reproduced in us by living in fellowship with Hima life which is to bloom and come to perfection in the eternal life with Christ in Glory. All the life that any Believer ever had on the face of the earth, he must have derived from the Lord Jesus Christ for he had none of his own. And when the Holy Spirit had given him this life from Jesus Christ, he could not keep it alive by his own power. He had to remain in union with Jesus if he was to continue to live, as Christ reminded His disciples, Without Me, (severed from Me), you can do nothing. Let us recognize this fact, Beloved, that we who have seen Christ have a new life within us which we did not create and which we could not nourish and sustain, but which Jesus keeps, feeds and preserves through the gracious ministry of the Holy Spirit! And thus we live as the world does not liveit is dead in sin, but we are alive unto God by Jesus Christ!

This life, being Christs life, is an everlasting life. I give unto them eternal life, says Christ concerning His sheep. Somebody once said, Ah, but they may lose it! What nonsense! How can they lose eternal life! How can that be eternal which comes to an end? Eternal life means a life that never ends! Language can only be meant to conceal mens thoughts if it does not mean that! But God uses language, not for the sake of concealing His Truth, but in order to reveal it! And when the Lord Jesus Christ puts everlasting life into a Believer, he has everlasting life and he will live forever! And for this reason he will live forever because Christ will live forever. Because I live, you shall live also. When Christ can die, then can the Believer perish. When it shall be possible for Christ to be cast out of Heavenfor His power and Glory to be taken from Him, yes, for His very Deity to wax old and grow effete with agethen may the Believers life be quenched, but not till then!

What strange notions some people seem to have about this matter! The Doctrine of Final Perseverance, or the Eternal Preservation of Believers, seems to me to be written as with a beam of sunlight throughout the whole of Scripture! If that is not true, there is nothing at all in the Bible that is true, for that Truth of God is there if anything is! It is impossible to understand the Bible at all if it is not so. But it is so, glory be to God! What do the objectors say concerning the mystical body of Christ? Do they suppose that Christs body keeps losing its members, as lobsters lose their claws, and grow fresh ones? Is that their strange similethat the blessed mystical body of Christ goes on changing its members and getting new ones? To suggest such a monstrosity is approaching blasphemy! The members of Christs body must be safe forever, for they are one with Him. Shall Christ be mutilated? Shall He be cut in pieces and His beauty marred? That is impossible

*Once in Christ in Christ forever!   
Nothing from His love can sever.*   
He never did and He never can lose one of those who are in Him!

Put your trust in Jesus, dear Friends, and this passage shall be true concerning you, As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of Godbeing born-again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which lives and abides forever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withers and the flower thereof falls away; but the Word of the Lord endures forever. Blessed is the man who has this Word of the Lord sown in His heart as a living seed which cannot die or be destroyed! The Lord grant this blessing to each one of you, for His dear Sons sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 14:15-31.**

Verses 15-17. If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever, even the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it sees Him not, neither knows Him but you know Him; for He dwells with you, and shall be in you. I am going away from you. You will not have My personal Presence much longer, but I will send you One who will never go away from you, for whom there is no death and no departureanother Comforter, that He may abide with you forever, even the Spirit of Truthwho knows the Truths of God, who can teach the Truths of God and who applies the Truth to the hearts and consciences of menwhom the world cannot receive, because it sees Him not, neither knows Him. Let us not imagine that the world will ever receive the Spirit of God. It is supposed, by some, that the world gets more enlightened from age to age, but that is a supposition for which there is not the slightest foundation! The death of human nature never develops into life! The darkness brought by the Fall never becomes the Light of God without the operation of a supernatural power. It is the Spirit of God that works this change in Gods own childrenbut you know Him, for He dwells with you, and shall be in you. He was with them in a certain sense even while Christ was here, otherwise they would have learned nothing. And He was more fully in them when Christ had gone back to Heavenhence they learned, after Pentecost, more of the meaning of the Gospel than they had ever gathered from the teaching of their Master.

18, 19. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world sees Me no more; but you see Me: because I live, you shall live also. There is a continuous sight of Christ even as there is a continuous life in Christ. They who have not received the life of Christ cannot see Christ. How can there be eyes without life? And how can there be the spiritual sight of Christ without the spiritual life in you?

20. At that day you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. This is a wonderful trinity of unities, each one a mystery, but each one to be known by the Believer when he is instructed of the Spirit of GodChrist in the Father, the saints in Christ, and Christ in them. He that experimentally knows what it is to be in Christ knows more than all the secular philosophers who have ever lived!

21. He that has My commandments, and keeps them, he it is that loves Me: and he that loves Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him. Oh, what privileges are enjoyed by those who love the Lord Jesus Christ! We cannot help loving Him and, by that love we are assured that the Father, Himself, loves us and we have the promise that Christ will yet more and more manifest Himself to us!

22. Judas said unto Him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself unto us, and not unto the world? Why are we the subjects of this election, this selection, this gracious manifestation?

23. Jesus answered and said unto him, if a man loves Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him. Just as the angels came to believing Abraham and sojourned for a little while with him, so will Jesus and the Father, strangers in this world, become sojourners with us. Jesus says of the man who loves Him, My Father will love him, and We will come unto him and make Our abode with him. This is not a mere call, it is residenceWe will make Our abode with him. God, whom the Heavens cannot contain, yet comes and dwells in a lowly heart and abides with a loving spiritWe will come unto him and make our abode with him. There is an aroma about these words which I cannot convey to you. But if you have the spiritual nostrils, you will perceive their fragrance for yourselves.

24. He that loves Me not keeps not My sayings: and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Fathers which sent Me. You see that the Lord Jesus Christ does not profess to be a great original thinker, but He speaks as the Messenger sent by the Father. And unless we, also, are commissioned and taught by the Father, of what value will our poor feeble thoughts be? Our only power lies in the fact that we do not utter our own thoughts, but the Truths of God which have been taught to us by the Holy Spirit! To some, this may look like weakness, but it is real strength.

25-27. These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatever I have said unto you. Peace I leave with you. When men in the East met one another, they usually gave the salutation, Peace be unto you, Peace be to this house. But Christ says

27. My peace I give unto you: not as the world gives, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. I do not say, Peace, Peace, where there is no peace. It is not a mere formal salutation, but there is a real, true peace communicated to you when I thus speak.

28. You have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If you loved Me, you would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for My Father is greater than I. Love makes us rejoice in the prosperity of the one we love. The Lord Jesus Christ, in coming to this earth, had taken upon Himself a subordinate positionHe had become the stepping-stone between man and God. But now that He was returning to His Gloryreturning to His Fatherit was the duty of those who loved Him to rejoiceand we should do the same now. He has left behind Him the humiliation, the scorn, the spitting, the Crucifixionand who among us, who truly loves Him, would wish to bring Him back to this poor earth as He same at first? Ah, no! It is well that all that is over! There is sweetest music to our ears in our Lords declaration, It is finished, and our soul swims in a sea of light as we think of the ineffable Glory with the father to which He has returned forever!

29-31. And now I have told you before it comes to pass, that when it is comes to pass, you might believe. Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the Prince of this world comes, and has nothing in Me. But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave Me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence. Let us go to Gethsemane and to the Passion! Let us go fulfill the Fathers will! It was a sure proof of Christs love when He went forward from speaking to suffering that He might save His own forever!

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SHARING CHRISTS LIFE

NO. 3401

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, APRIL 9, 1914.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, DECEMBER 1, 1867.

**Yet a little while, and the world will see Me no more; but you will see Me. Because I live, you shall live also.   
John 14:19.**

THIS was and is the mark of the true Believerthat he sees Jesus. When Jesus was here among men, the world saw Him in a certain sense, but yet in truth it did not see Him at all. The worlds eyes saw the outside of Christthe flesh of the Man, Christ, but the true Christ the ungodly eyes could not discern. They could not perceive those wonderful attributes of Character, those delightful graces and charms which made up the true spiritual Christ. They saw but the husk, and not the kernel. They saw the quartz of the golden nugget, but not the pure gold which that quartz contained. They saw but the external Manthe real, spiritual Christ they could not see. But unto as many as God had chosen, Christ manifested Himself as He did not unto the world! There were some to whom He said, The world sees Me not, but you see Me. Some there were whose eyes were anointed with the heavenly salve, so that they saw in the Man, Christ Jesus, the God, the glorious Savior, the King-ofkings, The Wonderful, The Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace!

The blind world said of Him that He was a root out of a dry ground. And when they saw Him there was no beauty in Him that they should desire Him. He was despised and rejected of men. But Gods elect were men who saw Him as God over all, blessed forever, descending to tabernacle among men and to take upon Himself mans imperfect nature, so that He might redeem him from all iniquity and save him.

Now, to this hour, this is the mark of the true Christian. This is to be of the elect! This is the very badge and symbol of the faithfulthey see Jesus. They look beyond the clouds. Other men see the cloud and the darkness and they know not what it is. But these men with more than eagle eyes, pierce through the clouds of mere sensual impressions and see the Glory that was always His, even the Glory of the Only-Begotten of the Father, full of Grace and truth. Beloved, have you ever seen Jesus with the eyes of faith? Have you ever perceived the glory of His Person and the beauty of His Character? Have you so perceived Jesus as to trust in Him? Have you been so enamored of Him as to have yielded yourselves to be His servants forever? Do you take up His Cross? Do you avow yourselves to be His followers, come what may? If so, then you are saved! But if you see not Christ with your spirit, neither do you know Him, nor shall you enjoy a portion with Him.

Blessed be God, there is this to be saidthat he who has once seen Christ, shall always see Him! The eyes may sometimes gather dimness, but the Light of God shall yet return. Where Christ has opened blind eyes, blindness comes not back again! He takes the cataract totally away. He does not give a transient gleam of spiritual sight and then permit the soul to go back into the darkness of its gravethe sight which He gives is the sight of things eternala sight which shall strengthen and grow until at the last, when death shall take away every barrier which parts us from the unseen world. We shall know even as we are known and see even as we are seen! To see Jesus is Heaven begun! And Heaven consummated is but to see Jesus no longer through a glass darkly, but face to facestill it is to see Jesus, to behold the King in His beauty! This, I say, is the sum and substance of life eternaland it is true life here below.

And now our Lord, speaking to those who had seen Him, truly seen Him and in spiritual recognition, talks to them concerning life. Sometimes it is ours to speak to you of death, not necessarily with gloom, for it is illuminated with rays of heavenly light to the Christian, but here and now we desire to speak of life, the best and most divine life! We will forget the raven with its dusky wings and see only the tender, gentle dove, bearing for each one of us the olive branch of peace and victory.

We shall speak of lifelife of the highest possible degreenot the life which gladdens our eyes in the sunlight when we behold the flowers of the field opening their cups. This is vegetable life. Nor the life of the young lambs as they frisk and caper and dance for very gladness in the spring sunbeams. This is but animal life. Nor even the life that enables men to think and speak upon common themes of interest and perform the ordinary duties of their different callingsthis is but mental and social life. We reach to something still higherspiritual lifelife in Christ Jesus! A life twice-created, a life which is grafted and is an advance upon the first life which we have when we are bornfar surpassing the life of the flesh because that shall, by-and-by, expirethis is a life which springs from incorruptible seed and which lives forever!

The text, in talking to us about life, gives us, first, the assurance that Jesus lives. It then promises us that His people shall live. And it clearly states that there is a link of connection between the two thingsthat because Jesus livesHis people shall live also First, then

I. JESUS LIVES.   
He always lived. There never was a time when He was not. Before the hills were brought forth I was there, He says. The eternal Wisdom of God is from everlasting. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God, and the Word was with God. The same was in the beginning with God. The life, however, which we think is intended in the text, is not His Divine lifeHis life as Deitybut His life as Man, His life as Mediator between God and man. In that life He lives! We needed not to be assured of His Divine life, but seeing that as a Mediator, He died, it was necessary to assure us that as a Mediator He descended into the tomb. It is well for us to be assured that as a Mediator He rose again from His grave and now lives at the right hand of the Father, no more to bleed and die.   
Jesus Christ at this time lives in His proper Manhood. He lives as to His soulHis human soul is as it was on earth. He lives as to His human body. He is a Man before the Throne of God and I have no doubt that He wears the symbol, of course, mightily glorified, of His sufferings *Looks like a Lamb that had been slain.   
And wears His priesthood still.*   
That very Christ, who did once as a Baby lie upon His mothers breast and who, afterwards, trod the waves of Gennesaretwho, after His resurrection ate a piece of broiled fish and of honeycombthat very Christ is now before the eternal Throne of God! In very soul and body the Man, Christ Jesus, is there! He lives!  
He lives a real life. We are so very apt to mystify and becloud everything and to suppose that Christ lives by His influence only, or lives by His Spirit. Brothers and Sisters, He livesthe very Man that died, as surely as He bled upon the tree, and in His own proper Person, from five actual wounds poured out the warm life-torrents of His heart, so surely does He actually live at this present moment in the midst of unnumbered hearts that sound His praisethe delightful Object of the vision of the myriads of spirits who continually adore Him! He actually lives! He really and truly lives as He lived here below!  
He lives, also, activelynot in some wondrous sleep of quiet and sacred repose. He is as busy, now, as He was when here. He proposed to Himself, when He went away, a certain work. I go to prepare a place for you, He said. He is still preparing that place for us. He also daily intercedes for His people. Oh, if your faith is strong enough, even now you can see Him standing before the Throne of God, pleading His glorious merits! I think I see Him now as clearly as ever the Jews saw Aaron when he stood with his breastplate on before the Mercy Seat, for remember, the Jew never did see Aaron at all there, for the curtain was dropped and Aaron was behind the veil. And, therefore, the Jew could only see him in his fancy. But I say I see Him as clearly as that, for I see my Lord, not by fancy, but by faith! There, where the veil is torn in two, so that He is not hidden from my souls gaze, I see Him with my name and yours upon His breast, pleading before God!   
Why, gaze awhile and you may think you see Him now! Just as the Jew saw Aaron waving the censer, standing between the living and the dead and stopping the plague, even so is Christ standing at this hour between the living and the deadand so moving the whole Deity to spare the guilty yet a little longerwhile He makes intercession for them that they may live! And then comes His higher intercession for His elect, of whom He says, I pray for them. I pray not for the world. He lives, then, an actual life of which you and I reap the daily fruits! Not a life of slumber and stillness, but an active, busy life by which He continually dispenses gifts to us!   
For this reason it is well to remind you that, therefore, Jesus can only live as a Man in one place. When we speak of Christ being found in every assembly of His people, we understand that of His Presence in His Godhead and by His Holy Spirit, who rules on earth in this dispensation of the Spirit. But the Man, Christ, can be but in one place. And He is now at the right hand of the Majesty on high. It is absurd, it is horrible both to faith and to reason to say that Christs body is eaten and that His blood is drunk in tens of thousands of places wherever priests choose to offer what they call, the mass! It is a mass of profanity, indeed! Our Lord Jesus Christ, as to His real, positive, corporeal Presence, is not here. As to His flesh and His blood, He is not and cannot be here! He will be here one daywhen He shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the trumpet of the archangel and the voice of God! But in His real Person, He is now where His saints arebefore the Throne of God, from where, by-and-by, He will descend. Meanwhile, His spiritual Presence is our joy and our gladness, but His corporeal Presencea Doctrine which our faith grasps and lays hold ofHis corporeal presence is before the Throne of God and there He lives in proper flesh and blood as the Son of Man.  
Brothers and Sisters, listen to a brief sketch of the biography of Christs life in Glory. When the holy women and godly men wrapped Him in spices and laid Him in the tomb, Jesus was dead. There for parts of three days and nights He tarried. He saw no corruption, but yet He was in the place of corruption. No worm could assail that Holy Thing which no sin had taintedand yet He laid in the place where death seemed sovereign. A while He slept, and the Church mourned, but blessed was the day when, at the first rosy dawn of light, the Savior rose!   
Then could He say, I live. His body, instinct with life, rose from its slumber and began at once to put off the grave clothes. He unwound the winding-sheets and the fine white linen and laid them carefully down. And He left them there for you and me, that we might have our bed well sheeted when we come to lie in it at the last.   
As for the napkin, He unwound it and laid it by itself, as though that were for us who are living, to wipe our eyes when our dear ones are taken awaysince we have no cause to sorrow as they do who have no hope. And when this was done, an angel rolled away the stone and forth came the Saviorglorious, no doubt, but so much like other men that Mary supposed Him to have been the gardener, so that there could have been no very supernatural splendor surrounding His Person! He revealed Himself to many of His disciplessometimes to as many as 500 at once. He ate with them. He drank with them. He was a Man among men with them, till, when 40 days had passed, He gathered them all at Olivet, the mountain from which He had so often addressed them, and took His final leave. While He was blessing them, His hands outstretched in benediction, a cloud received Him out of their sight. And since then He has sat down at the right hand of God, expecting till His enemies be made His footstool. He is tarrying there yet a little while longer. When the fullness of time shall comeif I may go on with His biographyHe will come again. This same Jesus, said the angels, which is taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come in a like manner as you have seen Him go into Heaven. He will, therefore, come in proper Person a second time, without a sin-offering unto salvation. Then will He gather His saints together who have made a Covenant with Him by sacrifice. Then shall they reign with Him. Then shall the earth be covered with His Glory. All nations shall bow before Him and all people shall call Him blessed! And then shall come the end, when He shall deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father, and God shall be All-in-All. But Christ shall still live, for He has received a priesthood after the order of Melchisedec, without beginning of days, or end of yearsa priest forever. When suns and moons shall grow dim with age and the round world shall all dissolve like the morning hoar-frost, and time shall be rolled up like a vesture, and all the ages shall have been trodden out like sparks beneath the foot of the Eternal God, then shall Jesus Christ still live on, world without end! Thus have we spoken concerning Christ as living. But now, in the next place

II. LIFE IS PROMISED TO CHRISTS PEOPLE.   
This does not mean their natural existence. They have received that from Adam and, through their sin, it has become a curse to them rather than a blessing. Should they remain unpardoned, the fact of continued existence will become to them the most dreadful of calamities since it must be an existence in Gods holy abhorrence of sin foreverdriven from every glimpse or hope of forgiveness!   
The life which comes to us through Christ is of this sortI trust you know it in your own heartsit is spiritual life, given to us in regeneration. When the Holy Spirit quickens a dead soul, that dead soul then receives the life of Christ! No man is alive unto God, spiritually, except through Christ. Because Christ lives, we live. When a dead soul gets into living contact with the living Savior by the power of the Spirit, then it is, that spiritual life begins. The very first evidence of spiritual life is trusting in Jesus, which shows that as the first symptom is alliance to Christ, the cause of the life must be somewhere here, namelyunion with Christ! One of the very first outward signs is prayerprayer to Christ and that, again, rises from the fact that Christ gives us of His lifeand then that life goes back again to Him. Brothers, if you seek the life of other souls and desire to see them brought to God, preach Christ to them! Do you not see, Because I live, you shall live? Then no sinner will ever live spiritually apart from Christ! Though you and I cannot quicken them, yet we can preach the Gospel to themand faith comes by hearing! And where faith is, there is life. It is no use trying to raise the dead by preaching the Law of God to them. That is only covering them up fairly with a lie in their right handbut to preach of dying love and of rising power, to tell of pardons bought with blood and to declare that Christ died a Substitute for sinnersthis is the hopeful way of bringing life to the dead! It is by such instrumentality that souls are brought to eternal life. Because Christ is alive, His elect, in due time, receive spiritual life by the power of the Holy Spirit and, although once they were dead in sin, they begin to live unto righteousness!   
Further, this spiritual life is preserved in us by Christ still living. Because I continue to live, you shall continue to live also. The text clearly means thatit bears that paraphrase. Oh, dear Friends, when we once get spiritual life into us, what a thousand enemies there are who try to put it out! Many and many a time has it seemed to go hard with my soul as to whether I really had a spark of life within my spirit. Temptation after temptation have I endured until it appeared as if I must yield my hold on Christ and give up my hope! There has been conflict upon conflict, and struggle upon struggle until, at last, the enemy has got his foot upon my neck and my whole being has trembled! And had it not been for Christs promise, Because I live, you shall live also, it might have gone harder with me and I might have despaired and given up all hopeand laid down to die. The assurance, then, that the spiritual life of the Christian must be maintained because Christ lives, was the only power to get me the victory! Let it teach us, then, this practical lesson. Whenever our spiritual life is very weak and we need it to grow stronger, let us get to the living Christ for the supply of His strength! When you feel you are ready to die, spiritually, go to the Savior for revived life. The text is like a hand that points us to the storehouse. You who are in the desert, there is a secret spring under your feet, and you know not where it isthis is the mysterious finger which points you to the spot! Contemplate Christ! Believe in Christ! Draw yourselves by faith nearer and nearer to the Lord Jesus Christ and so shall your life receive a Divine impetus which it has not known for many a day.Because I live, you shall live also.   
And further, Brothers and Sisters, we get from Christ an educated life. Any man may be spiritually alive and yet he may not know much about the higher life. There is, in spiritual life, a scale of degrees. One man is just alive unto God. Another man may be active and vigorous. Another may be rapturously consecrated. I hope you and I will anxiously desire to get the highest form of spiritual life that is known! We do not wish to be beggars in the Kingdom of Christ, but if we can, to take our place in the House of Peersto be princes through Jesus Christ. We need not be poorChrist is willing to enrich us. We are not straitened in Himwe are straitened in ourselves. Now, Christ gives the promise, Because I live, He says, the highest life, far above all principalities and powersyou shall also live this higher life with Me. You may have it! You may obtain it, but Brothers and Sisters, if you want to get it, never go to Moses for it! Never go to yourselves for it. Do not seek to school yourselves by rules, regulations and resolutions, or by a morbid asceticism such as some men delight in! But go to the living Savior and in the living liberty which you will enjoy in communion with Him, your soul will take unto itself, wings, and mount into a clearer atmosphere! Your spirit will be braced to a higher degree of robust devotion! You will draw nearer to Heaven because you have got nearer to Christ, who is the Lord of Heaven! Because I live, you shall have life: you shall have that life continued and you shall have that life yet more abundantly. I am come not only that you may have life, but more abundantly. These are your Masters words! Plead them before your Masters Throne!   
And now, Brothers and Sisters, we will go a little further. We will suppose that you are well acquainted with these forms of life, but now there comes a jerk, as it were. You are travelling along the iron road of the railway and there comes a sudden jerk and you stop. What is it? It is the thought of death! Well, but Jesus tells us, here, that that is of no consequence! It is an item in the great world of life that to you who are in Him is scarcely worth consideration because the text overrides that and swallows it up! As it is written death is swallowed up in victoryit is made as though it did not exist! Because I live, you shall live also. Your continued life of happiness, of holiness, of spirituality, of consecration and of obediencewhich, indeed, is your only life worth havingis guaranteed to you in the text! Death cannot interfere with it, not even by the space of a single second! No, I tell you not even by the space of the ticking of a clock! What? A Christian die? Because I live, you shall live also, is never suspended! There is no time for it to be suspended. Do you know what death really is? Does it take long to die? I have heard of men who have been said to be weeks in dying. Not so! They were weeks livingthe dying occupied no spacethat was done at once and immediately. And so with the Believer. To him death is so slight a jerk that he still keeps on upon the same line! He still lives, only there is this difference, that it is as though the railway had been running through a tunnel and he now comes out of it into the open plain. His life below was the train in the tunnel, but when he dies, as we call it, there is a jerk and then it comes right out of the tunnel into the fair, open, plain country of Heaven where all is clear and bright! Where all the birds are singing and the darkness is over, the mist and fogs are gone and his soul is forever blessed! Because I live a life that cannot be suspended, Christ seems to say, you shall live also.   
At the bottom of every mans heart there is, I suppose, a fear of ceasing to be. Some infidels seem to find comfort in the thought of being annihilated, but that thought is, perhaps, the most abhorrent that ever crossed the human mind! There is a something within us that tells us we are immortal, or there is, at any rate, something which makes us hope we are, but we shrink with loathing from the idea of being annihilated! Now, at that point comes in our text and it says, What? Annihilated? You who believe in Jesus cannot be! You shall live also, live with that higher life which you have receiveda life of beauty, a life of excellence, of holiness and of God-likeness! That new life implanted within you shall never be suspended. No, never by the space of a single tick, for, Because I live, you shall live also.   
Further, Brothers and Sisters, our text is such a wide one that we have a hold of the fact that we are to continue to live as to our spirits and our souls. The text, beneath its sheltering wings, like a hen gathering her brood, gathers many precious Truths of God. The next one is that this very body of ours is to live, too. It must take its time for that. It must abide in the earth, whereon it has dwelt. It is so decreed that there it should lie unless Christ should come before that time. But concerning this very body, there is no decree of annihilation. It will smolder away. It may be taken up by the spade of the careless sexton and all the atoms of the body be scattered to the winds of Heaven! But there is a life-germ within it which no human power can destroy, and over which the Divine eyes perpetually watchand when that mysterious and long-expected sound of the angelic trumpet shall ring over land and sea, through Heaven and earth, and the graves shall all be opened, then shall my soul find my body yet againfashioned after a more beautiful form, more fit for the spirit than before! More elastic, altogether free from weakness, no longer such as shall be subject to pain, sickness, accident, decay, to ultimate corruptionbut a spiritual body, raised in power, in glory and in immortality! Not raised in the likeness of the first Adam in the Garden, but in the likeness of the Second Adam in the everlasting Paradise of God!  
Courage my eyes, courage! You shall be closed for a while, but you shall see the Redeemer when He stands a second time upon the earth. Courage, my fingers and my hands! You must, for a time, lie still and motionless, but you shall not be so forever, for you, even you, shall strike the strings of those celestial harps that pour forth His praise! Courage, all you members of my body which have been sanctified to be members of Christ and made to be parts of the Holy Spirits Templeyou shall all take your part in the grand triumphal entry of Christ when He shall descend to take possession of His Kingdom! Though worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God whom I shall behold for myself and not another. So go to your bed in the earth, poor body, and sleep there awhile. Bathe yourself like her who bathed herself in spices to make herself ready for the Kingso go and get yourself prepared to meet your Lord! Take off your workday dress and put on your Sabbath garments, your bridal array and then shall you come to the King and see Him in His beauty, and crown Him with the crown wherewith His mother crowned Him in the days of His espousals. Yes, because He lives in the body which He bore, this body shall live again also.

And so, Beloved, the text amounts to this, that in body and soul the Christian shall be immortal like his Master! When our reign on earth whether it shall last a thousand years, or a thousand ages(we know not what the Word of God intends)but when that glorified state on earth which I do most assuredly believe in, shall be over, and it shall be said *Now Jehovahs banners furled,   
Sheathed His sword because tis done*   
when the drama of the mediatorial reign shall all be closed and we shall dwell under the immediate Sovereignty of God once again, then, Beloved, every Believer shall be with Christ, eternally glorified, for here stands the irrevocable decree and the Divine mandate of Creations Lord, who is also the redeeming Lamb, Because I live, you shall live also. Reel, you pillars of earth! Be shaken, you arches of the starry heavens! Pass away, O Time, and you, you rolling worlds, dissolve into your native nothingness! But the Believer must live on because Jesus lives! And until the Lords Christ can bow His head. Until He who only has immortality can expire. Until God, Himself, can cease to be, no soul that believed in Jesus can lose the incorruptible Life which Gods own Spirit has put within it!   
I want to sing, Brothers and Sisters, rather than to talk with you. These are words and thoughts fit for some ancient bard, or for the spirit of some Inspired Prophet sent from Heaven! I do but lisp where even seraphs might find their loudest songs fail in the theme. Let your hearts mount! Let your souls exult! Let your spirits be glad! Do you *Long for evening to undress,   
That you may rest with God,*   
and enter into His Heaven? Do you long for the evening of death when your toil shall be over and the hour of your bliss shall have come? I shall have no time, I fear, for the third and last point, and, therefore, must only give a few hints of what I would have said.   
III. THIS LIFE IS LINKED WITH CHRISTS LIFE.   
Immortal, all glorious, promised to true Believers, it is bound up with the life of our immortal Lord. Why is this? First, because Christ leads a justified life. I scarcely know how to express my meaning. You understand that so long as Jesus was here, He lay under the charge of our sins. While He was in the world, His Father had made to meet upon Him the iniquity of us all. But when He died, His death discharged all the liabilities of His elect. The handwriting of ordinances that was against us, was then taken away. When He went to Calvary as our Surety, the sins of all His people were His debtsHe had taken them upon Himself. But when He rose from the dead in the garden that first Easter morning He had no debts of ours! He had no longer any substitutional engagement or liability! All the debts which He had taken upon Himself as our Redeemer, He had fully and completely discharged. No officer can arrest a man for debt who has none, and Christ now lives, therefore, as a justified Person. And Brothers and Sisters, no officer of Justice can arrest any of the people for whom Christ paid their debts! How, then, shall death have any dominion over those whose debts are all discharged? How shall they be laid in prison for whom Christ was laid in prison? How shall they suffer death, which is the penalty of sin, for whom Christ has already suffered all the penalties which Justice could have demanded? Because He lives the life of One who has discharged the debts of His people, they must, in Justice, live!  
Secondly, Christ lives a representative life. He is no longer Christ for Himself. As the Member of Parliament represents a town, so Jesus Christ represents all the people who are in Him. And as long as He lives, they live. He is their Covenant Head. As long as Adam stands, his race shall stand. When Adam falls, the human race falls. While, therefore, Christ lives, the Christly ones who are in Him, live through His representation.   
In the next place, Christ lives a perfect life. Perhaps you do not see how this is a link between His living and your living, but it is, because we are a part of Christ. According to the Word of Scripture, every Believer is a member of Christs body. Now, a man who lives perfectly has not lost his finger, or his arm, or his hand. A man may be alive with many of his limbs taken away, but you can scarcely call him a perfect living man. But I cannot imagine a maimed Christ. I have never been able to conceive in my soul, of Christ lacking any of His members! Such a thing was never seen on earth. The barbarous cruelty of the Jews could not effect that and, by the Providence of God, Pilates officers were not permitted to cause such a thing. Not a bone of Him shall be broken, was the ancient prophecy. They broke the legs of the first and second thief, but when they came to the matchless Lord, they saw He was already dead, so they broke not His legs. Even in His earthly body, which was the type of His spiritual body, He must suffer no maiming injury! Therefore, my Brothers and Sisters, because Christ lives as a perfect Christ, everyone that is one with Him must live also!  
Then, fourthly, Christ lives a blessed lifea life of perfect blessedness and, therefore, we must live also. Why? you say. Why, lookthere is a mother here. She is alive. She is in good health, but she is not perfectly happy, for she is a Rachel weeping for her children and will not be comforted because they are not! Time will heal her wounds, it is true, for the most affectionate heart cannot be always mourning, but our Lord Jesus Christ, in that Infinitely affectionate heart of His, would not only mourn over one of His children, if lost, but He would mourn forever over it! I cannot conceive of Christ being happy and losing one of His dear children! I cannot conceive Christ to be personally blessed and yet one of the members of His own Person cast into the outer darkness. Because He lives in perfect happiness, I conceive that all who are dear to Him will be round about Him! It shall not be said that He lost one of them, nor shall one of the family be missing, but   
*All the chosen seed   
Shall meet around the Throne   
To bless the conduct of His Grace   
And make His wonders known!*   
And lastly, Christ leads a triumphant life and, therefore, you shall live also! You say again, How is that? Why, Brothers and Sisters, the triumph of Christ concerns us! This is the triumph of Christ, Of all those whom You have given Me, I have lost none. Now, suppose there to be heard a whisper from the infernal Pit, Aha! Aha! You lie! There is one here whom the Father gave You, but whom You did lose? Why, Christ would never be able to speak again by way of triumph! He could never boast anymore! Then might He put down His crown! If it were but to happen in that one case, at any rate, the enemy would have got the advantage over Him and He would not have been the Conqueror all along the line. But, glory be to God! He who trod the winepress with none for His assistant, came forth out of the crimson conflict, having smitten all His foes and won a complete victory! There shall not be in the whole campaign a single point over which Satan shall be able to boast!  
Christ has brought many sons to glory as the Captain of their salvation and never yet has He failed! And He never shall in any point, neither the least nor the greatest, neither the strongest nor the weakest. This is essential, dear Friends. It is essential to the acclamations of Heaven that every soul that believes in Jesus should live forever. It is essential to the everlasting harmony and to the joy of Christ throughout eternity, that all who trust in Him should be preserved and kept safe, even until the end. Therefore, says the text, Because I live, you shall live also. So I leave this Truth of God with you, only praying that those who have no part in this matter may seek Christ at this very timeand be led by the Spirit to cry mightily to Himand His promise is, They that seek Me early shall find Me. Seek you the Lord while He may be found. Call you upon Him while He is near.   
God bless you, for Christs sake. Amen.

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SEEING JESUS   
NO. 3443

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, JANUARY 28, 1915.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
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**Yet a little while, and the world sees Me no more; but you see Me. John 14:19.**

WHATEVER religious privileges men of the world may have, they will lose them. It was a great favor to see Christ in the flesh. Kings and Prophets had desired to see His day and had died disappointed because He had not come, but that sight of Him which the generation in which Christ lived enjoyed was taken from them. They were none the better and, in some respects, they were all the worse for having seen Him, whose blood was on them and on their children. So, as a general Truth of God, all the outward religious privileges which any of you may enjoy, if you do not become spiritual men and are not, indeed, Christs disciples, will be taken from you, speedily taken from you, leaving no blessing behind, but rather a curse! You are hearers of the Gospel today, some of you, though unconvertedbut you shall not always hear it. There is a land where Sabbath bells never ring, where the joyful feet of the messengers of mercy are never seen, and where no loving expostulations and no affectionate entreaties will be addressed to you! Now you join in song with Gods people but you will not do so soonanother sound, more strange and full of tremblingwill be in your ears! Some of you, it may be, unconverted as you are, even venture to touch the ordinances and have been baptized and have come to the Lords Table. There will be another baptism for you and you will eat bread at a far different table from that of the Lord, by-and-by, for unless you are converted, these, instead of being means of Grace, shall be swift messengers against you to your condemnation! It is a very sorrowful case when a man is so bad that that which is good becomes bad to him, and a fearful proof of the fall of our race and the depravity of our unregenerate naturethat even the best religious privileges will only become a savor of death unto death unto us unless the Grace of God shall change our hearts!

Note, then, that as the text says that the world which saw Christ should soon see Him no more, so it teaches us that there are many outward privileges in religion that even worldly people enjoy that they shall soon enjoy no more, for, as they would not have the inward spiritual Grace, they shall not forever have the outward and visible sign to tread beneath their feet! As they would not receive the Grace of God into their hearts in the power of it, so shall the very offers of love and the outward ministrations of mercy be withdrawn from them!

With that black foil, the gem of our text may shine the brighter. But you see Meyou, My people. You that have believed, you who, by Grace, have received the new nature. You who have passed from death unto lifewhen the world sees Christ no more, you shall see Him in His Glory! And even now, while a blind world beholds Him not, you are enjoying a sight of Him. Our first word tonight, after this preface, shall be

I. SPIRITUAL DIFFERENCES.   
The world sees Him no more, but you see Him. The difference lies in the kind of sight. The worlds sight of Christ, in the first place, was only a sight to the eyes and, consequently, the moment Christ was gone out of this world, the world saw Him no more. But when He was gone, there were others who had seen Him with a different sight, which was not affected by His corporeal absencethey continued to see because their seeing had been something other than the sight of the eyes. Now, when Jesus Christ was here upon earth, all that an ungodly man saw of Christ was His outward formas some think incomparably beautiful, and so I suppose it was at the first. So perfect a spirit must surely have been enshrined within a matchless, outward form! I can conceive Him to have been full of Grace, even in the common sense of that term, as well as in its higher meaning. But in later years, such were the griefs of His heart that we know that He appeared to be older than He was, for the Jews said, You are not yet fifty years old, when He was but a little more than thirty. Such was the decay, probably, such the emaciation that grief brought upon Him, that He had no form or comeliness, and when men looked upon Him they saw Him as the Man of Sorrows and the acquaintance of grief. Whatever the outward form may have been, it was certainly all that the ungodly man saw, all that the Pharisee saw, all that Pilate saw, all that Herod sawjust that outward form. They did not, therefore, see the real Christ of God at all, and in proof that they did not see Him, we find that some of them could only see in Him an impostor, who pretended to be what He was not. Others could only see in Him an ordinary Prophet, a remarkable man, but still one of the common of Prophets, and no more. They could not see in Him what His disciples saw, namely, His glorious inward Character, the Glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth.   
Now, you do not know a man because you happen to know the color of his eyes, the peculiar curl of his hair, or what kind of features he may possess. You know a man better when you have lived with him, when you know his spirit, when you have traced his virtues, when you have read his secrets. That is the man. The spirit is the man. The body is, after all, but the shrine in which the spirit dwells. The world saw Christ only as to His outward formand when He was gone they saw Him no more in that respect. But His disciples had seen His inward Nature. Some of them had seen what flesh and blood could not reveal to them they had been made to see, by having their eyes spiritually anointed with heavenly eye-salves and, consequently, when Christ was gone from their natural sight, they continued to seeand I venture to say they saw more clearly than they had done before, for now, when He was taken up from them, they began to read what He had said to them with greater understanding! They began to see some of His actions in a different lightand much that they did not understand at one time when He was with them, because they could not bear it, they began to understand now that He was gone because His Spirit revealed ittheir understandings being capable of receiving the deeper Truth. They saw the better for His absence, while the world saw not at all!   
Beloved Friend, I shall ask you, before I pass onHave you ever had such a sight of Jesus Christ? No, I do not mean, did you ever dream you saw Him? I do not mean, did you ever think you saw a vision? I do not care whether you have or have not. If you saw the devil, that would not send you to Helland if you saw Christ, it would not send you to Heaven. But have you ever had that spiritual sight of Him which has made you to understand His Character? Have you ever seen Him as the Christ of God, the God-Man, the Only-Begotten, the Well-Beloved, the Savior, the King of your spirit? Have you so seen Him as to be subdued by the sight and to be at once enlisted in His service? Oh, this is the sight which He gives to His own people, the sight which saves, the sight of which He speaks when He says, The world sees Me no more, but you see Methe difference between the sight of the eyes and the sight of the inner man!   
We have a sight of Christ, further, which not only lasts when Christ is gone, but which lasts when our eyes are gone. The world can only see while the eye endures. If the eye should by any means be filmed, or if especially the eye and all the powers of the body should be smitten by death, then there would be to the world no sight of Christ. But in our case our sight of Jesus Christ is one which has been known to be even brightened by the eyes being quencheda sight which grows more and more clear as the flesh decays, a sight which will be clearest of all when we have done with eyes altogether, when we shall be in the disembodied and spiritual statethen shall we see the King in His beauty to perfection and though, after a while there shall be added to that sight a corporeal sight, when the body shall rise again from the grave, yet meanwhile our sight is such that if our eyes were taken away from us, we thank God it would not dim our sight of Christ one bit! There are some in this place, tonight, whom I remember with affectionate regard, who have not seen the light of the sun for many years, and yet their eyes see the face of Christ almost always, for their love to Christ is so fervent and the communion they have with Christ is so constant that the loss of their eyes seems to be, in their case, almost a privilege! They see the better because that drop screen has crossed the optic glass and shut them out from the world. Yes, and if any of us should be overtaken by the gradual closing of the eyes, heavy as such an affliction must be, we thank God we shall still be able to see Him! And when the eye-strings break in death, then, even then, shall we see Him! And while we lie pining there, and friends think us shut out from everything that is happy, we shall but consider ourselves shut in, waiting for the full appearing of the Lord our Savior! The sight, then, which God gives to His people, is a sight which is not dependent upon Christs bodily Presence, and is not dependent, in the next place, upon our bodily eyes!   
On this matter of spiritual differences we remark next, that the sight which is here meant is one which is an available thing when everything else goes to the contrary. When everything prospers with a man of the world, even he sees, and says, Perhaps God is here. If he is an outwardly religious man, though not inwardly so, if he mingles in a congregation where there is some degree of religious excitement, if his own mind is gratified, he will say he thinks Christ is there. But the child of God can see Jesus Christ where nobody else can, namely, in the midst of the storm and the tempest, where everything threatens present destruction! The Believer hears Him say, It is I, and sees Him walking upon the wavessees Him not only in exciting religious meetings, but in the quiet of solitude. Worldlings in solitude see nothing, have no holy thoughts but there the Christian perceives Jesus, and if that solitude is attended with much of trial, and temptation, and inward sorrow, and distress, yet faith is fully at work and the Believer looks through every mist and cloud, and still sees Jesus, according to His promiseLo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. It is a poor faith that can only see Christ in the sunlight. It is a brave faith that sees Him at midnight. It is poor faith that believes that Jesus is there when all prospers, but it is right faith that knows He is there when nothing prospers except faith, which prospers most when tried. It is glorious to be able to read Gods Word sometimes backwardsnot to believe that His hard messages mean unkindness, but to understand that there is love in every stroke of the rod, eternal love in every hard word that falls from the Saviors lips. Faith, then, not only sees Jesus when He is corporeally absent, and sees Him without corporeal eyes, but sees Him when to sense it seems quite impossible that Jesus should be there! Note these differences, and let us pass on. Now we have here   
II. SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT.   
I shall ask you, Brothers and Sisters, now quietly to look into yourselves to see whether you have the spiritual discernment we shall now speak of. We see Him. We see Him, first, with a trust which hangs all its confidence upon Him. The world does not see Christ as the great Foundation Stone of its hope. It sees its own works. It hopes in ceremonies and in outward forms. But we see Him. Whenever our faith looks abroad, she sees nothing but Jesus. No man, but Jesus only. On that dear Cross my soul hangs all her confidencenot a rag anywhere else! *All my trust on You is stayed,   
All my help from You I bring.*   
This is an essential mark of a Christian, that he sees Jesus with the simple faith that relies alone upon Him. Dear Hearer, do you in this respect see Jesus? If so, rest assured that where He is in His Glory, you shall shortly be! There is life in that look! There is more than life presentthere is life eternal in a look at Him! I hope you are not among those who say, I did look to Jesus once. No, we still see Him. The life of our faith dwells in a perpetual life-look at Christ! We do not say that we have seen Him and then we have withdrawn our glance, but we continue still to look. Our faith does not depend on something done in the past in us, but on that finished work which abides still for us, and to which we look day by day. We see Him with the look of a simple faith.

We see Him, next, with the look of a reverent worship. Where is He tonight, Christian, do you think? He is yonder as to His bodyHe is yonder at the right hand of the Father! I will not try to use my imagination to picture Him there in that supernal splendor which far outshines the lamps of Heaven, otherwise we might so speak of Him that you might seem to hear Him pleading, now, for you, and see Him wearing your names engraved on the jewels of His breastplate, displayed before the Fathers face for you at this hour. But though we will not thus picture Him, yet we see Him there by faith, and our soul bows and worships! All hail! All hail! Immanuel, Son of Mary and Son of God! Man and God, we worship You with all our hearts! Had we crowns, we would cast them at Your feet, but as these are not ours as yet, we bring You our songs, and our prayers, and our hearts love. And here, tonight, in the assembly of Your saints, we look at You and we worship You!  
Now, I am conscious in my own heart, tonight, of a clearer sight of Christ than the sight which I take of you sitting in your pews. As I see you in your pews, I do but glance upon the flesh in which you live. As for what you really may be, I cannot see you. Your thoughts and your feelings are all unseen of me. But when I look at Christ, tonight, though I cannot see His flesh, nor behold His scars, nor all the Glory of His risen body, yet I can see Him, for I know what He is thinking of, I know what He is feeling, I know what He is looking for, I know what His heart is bent on. He is full of love to His people! He is thinking of their interests! He is pleading for us! He is working for us as an intercessor before the Throne of God! We see Him with the glance of reverent adoration, then, and see Him clearly, too!   
Again, we see the Lord Jesus Christ tonightI trust we dowith the eye of sanctified obedience. We believe that He is here. We believe that when we go to our homes He will be with us in spirit. That when we go to our business or to our work tomorrow morning, He will still be with us. Now we could not sin in His Presence as other men sin. We dare not plunge into the common customs of the world. We could not use the worlds talk. We would not yield to its maxims, and why? Because Jesus is there and a sense of His Presence is always a check to us against temptation, and oftentimes it is not only a negative force, but a sense of His Presence compels us to serve Him as best we may! I wish we saw Jesus more usually in this sense, and yet, my Brothers and Sisters, I hope some of us do, as a general rule, see Him daily thus, as though He were overshadowing us. I know I often do when I am sitting and thinking of what I shall say to you, and I start, as though I could look up and see Him looking down on me. And as I am walking by the way it often happens that I almost seem to check myself as though I heard His footsteps at my side. I know it cannot be, but I am conscious of His Presence, conscious that He talks with me and I with Him. Is it so with you? I know it is with many of you. Oh, cherish this more! Some of us lose His Presence by the week or the month together, and it is very sad, sorely sad, to be living in such a world as this, far off from Christ. Oh, Sheep, you cannot afford to be so far off from the Shepherd when the wolf is so near! Child, you cannot afford to be so far away from your Elder Brother when the pestilence is walking in darkness and the arrows are flying by day, and none but Himself can shield you! Oh, try to get into the fullness of this thoughtwe see Him, not only up there, reverently to be worshipped, but here to be worshipped by our feeling the restraints and the constraints of His Presence, feeling with regard to Him as Hagar did with regard to Jehovah in the wilderness when she said, You God see meYou Christ see me. You Crucified One, You are with me. You exalted Lord, I tread in Your footsteps. How can I consent to sin when You are so near me? Still we see Him!   
We see Him further, dear Friends, oftentimes with a trust which consoles us in hours of difficulty. Mark what I mean here. Oftentimes the servant of God, when he sees how ill things go in the world, and especially in the religious world, is apt to think that Jesus is not there. Indeed, it needs a great deal of faith to see Jesus when things are sluggish in the Church, when there are ministers who do not seem to care about souls being saved, when there are churches that fall asleep, and when the world seems to grow more wicked, more lascivious in its amusements and more blatant in its atheistic blasphemy! But faith learns to know that Jesus is still here, that He cannot be away from the army. He is the Prince and He is concerned in the victory. He cannot be away. The whole of what goes on in the world is still under His direction and His control. Life has not put away the keys, blessed be His name! Nor has He left them to the devil, but they are at His belt. There they hangthe sovereign keys of death and Hell, still entrusted to Him, alone! He has not left the chariot for some diabolic Jehu to drive, and bring confusion upon this world. The government shall be upon His shoulder! He shall be called The Wonderful, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Still *He everywhere has sway,   
And all things serve His might.*   
When He allows, for a while, the powers of evil to have a longer tether than usual, it is that afterwards He may pull them in again and prove His power and lift them up to scorn by defeating then, even with all the advantages they seem to gain! Have confidence, child of God! The Church of God is safe! There is no danger to that. The pillars of that house no Samson shall ever remove! The house goes on building, stone by stone, both by night and by day, most surely and most certainly, and the Top Stone shall be brought forth with shouts of, Grace, Grace unto Him. We see Him, then, with the eye of a confidence that consoles us greatly in the times of darkness and of despair!   
And, Brothers and Sisters, I trust we see Christ oftentimes with a joy which enlivens us. Do you not think that a Believer ought to be ashamed to be sad? Oh, says one, we have a great deal of trouble. Yes, I know we have, and what a mercy it is that we have! I have a great many things that God has given me that I much value, but of all the things I ever had, next to His dear Son, that which I value most is the cross that is the heaviest. I have got more good out of my affliction than out of all my prosperity! I would not be without a cross for all the world! Blessed be God, one loves to learn to bear his sorrows, for one does not seem to need faith to see that it is good. One gets by experience to see how good it is and to love our Fathers cup, out of which He gives us the gall every morning which is so bitter, but oh, it has done us so much good! Like the man subject to fever, walking through the malaria districts, he does not shudder to drink the quinine as the child does who thinks it is so bitterthe man feels the tonic effects of it, so that at last he comes to accept that cup with thankfulnessso, Brothers and Sisters, our afflictions ought not to make us sad! When they come to us we should remember that their ordinary tendency is sadness, but their extraordinary tendency, when they are rightly used, is to make us rather rejoice because our Father pleases to send us these things! An old German writer tells us of some birds which were in the house of a neighbor of his and which were being taught to sing. Some were bullfinches, I think, and they were teaching them to pipe, but there were some other birdslarks, and nightingales, and so on, and these were in the dark. It was very cruel the poor little things were in the dark, and could see no light. But, he said, these were they that could sing the sweetest. And oftentimes the child of God, when he gets a sense of the Lords Presence, is one of the birds that can sing best in the dark. Why, when it is all light, you know, there are plenty of things to distract our attention. But when it is all dark, and Christ comes in, and He is the only thing to be seen, why, then He is better than all the things we do not see and His Light is brighter than all the stars that have been put out! And now we can sing more clearly about His Presence than we could about all the worlds gifts, and about all the outward joys that have been taken away. Do but let a child of God know that Christ is with him, and his joy will be unspeakable and full of glory!  
*Since Christ is rich, while I am poor,   
What can I need beside?*   
Since my Beloved is mine, and I am His, I will even sit down by Babels stream and sing the Lords song, for the land is not strange where He is. Even Kedars tents are bright as the silken embroideries of Solomon when Jesus comes there, and Meshech is no longer a name of lamentation and of sorrow, but a name of joy and gladness when Jesus sojourns with us, a Pilgrim and a Stranger, as we also are! We see Jesus with the joy that enlivens us. And so once more, Beloved, we have learned to see Jesus with the hope that inspires us, for, having seen Him once, here, we do not believe that He is teasing us. We cannot, we will not be led to imagine that if we have lived to see Him here as in a glass darkly, we shall be denied that for which we have been educatedeven a face to face view of Him! No, Beloved, the day is comingevery winged hour is bringing it nearerwhen we shall see the King in His beauty for ourselves, and not another for us! Did you ever try to put yourselves into that happy condition when you shall see Him? I have sometimes been on the top of a Swiss mountain to see the sun rise. I must confess I was never successful. I have strained my eyes in watching to see when the sun should rise, but the clouds have generally concealed it. But a sunrise is always a glorious thing, and what will the Everlasting Sunrise be, when, from the top of Pisgah we shall see Him, when from the top of Nebo we shall see our Savior? Beloved, it is well that we shall not be in the body, then, for surely, that sight of Him would be too much for us! It is well that when this body shall see Him, it shall be a risen body, strengthened and accommodated to such an excess of bliss, for if He were to reveal Himself, now, to us, as He does to the saints in Heaven, I suppose we would die with the excess of brightness! But do you ever try to picture to yourselves that you see Him? Christiana asked Mercy what made her laugh. Did I laugh? she asked. Yes, last night you laughed in your sleep. Then Mercy told her dream, of how she had seen the land, had been within the gates of pearl, and seen the King. And Christiana said that well she might laugh. And have you never laughed at the thought that your eyes shall soon see the Christ of God, the Man that died for you, that these weeping eyes shall weep no more, but shall look full on Him? Oh, tis well worth the pilgrimage! When Godfrey had led his troops up to Jerusalem, they had not yet captured the city, but the very sight of it made their hearts leap for joy! But what will it be to see, not the new Jerusalem only, but the King of the new Jerusalem, to have Him forever as ours, and to lie in His embrace without fear of banishment, world without end? Come, you disconsolate, pluck up courage! Come over the thorny way, for the end is sweet and it will make amends for all the toil of the road! Oh, that we were but looking at Him now, and that the kisses of His mouth were ours forever and ever!

*My heart is with Him on His throne,   
And ill can brook delay,   
Each moment listening for the voice,   
Rise up, and come away.*   
May we have such a sight as this, then, inflaming our hope, inspiring our desires and making us long for the bright day when we shall see Him face to face! I shall close these fragmentary thoughts with two or three   
III. WORDS OF SPIRITUAL ENCOURAGEMENT.   
My Brothers and Sisters, some of you, perhaps, have been following me while I talked about a sight of Christ, and you said, Yes. Well, I hope I know something about these thingsnot what I want, or what I wish, or what I hope I shall knowbut still, I know something of them. Well, then, please remember that if you see Jesus, the Holy Spirit made you see Him. You would never have seen Jesus in that spiritual way by the power of human nature, or if you had been left to yourselves. Here is a clear mark, then, that the Holy Spirit has begun to work in your soul! Be grateful tonight, oh, be grateful that ever He should come to those bleary eyes of yours and open them! That ever He should come to that dead soul of yours and make it live! Tens of thousands who are wiser, greater and, perhaps, better than you in some respects, are left as blind as bats, while you, through Sovereign Grace, are made to see! Will you not praise Him? Have you no music for Him? Are there no good works that shall be like palm branches, with which you can strew His pathway in your joyful adoration of His Grace to you tonight?   
Please remember, too, that if you have received this sight, this sight will lead you to other sights. We see Him. Lay the stress there a moment. There are some here who do not see the Doctrine of Election. My dear Brother, I wish you did, but if you can see Him, be glad for that. There are some who cannot see the mysterious Doctrines of the Word of God. They are often puzzled with the higher mysteries which belong to men in Christ. My dear Friends, you shall see all these, by-and-by, if you see Him! See Jesus first, and in Jesus, and through Jesus, you shall be led into all the Truths of God! What body of divinity, said someone to me the other day, do you recommend? I answered, I have never heard of but one. But there are several. No, there is only onethe only body that divinity ever had was the body of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and the study of that body of divinity will make you systematic theologians of the best kind! Begin at the center, with the sun, and you will understand astronomy! And if you put anything in the center of your system, except Christ, you will be sure to be in a thousand muddles and will never be able to understand the things of the Kingdom of God! A sight of Jesus secures a sight of other things. He that has seen Him has seen the Father, seen the Spirit, and shall see all the rest!   
Let us encourage ourselves with the thought that a sight of Jesus Christ makes amends for a great deal else that we do see. And what do I see? I see wars on all sides. I see sin in my members, but I see Him and, therefore, I know that He will subdue sin. You shall call His name, Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins. I see a thousand imperfections and weaknesses in my daily walk and conversation, but when I see Him, it covers all, for His blood and righteousness shall cover all the iniquities of Israel, and if they are searched for, they shall not be found. My dear Brothers and Sisters, perhaps some of you see poverty tonight. Some of you Brothers see many difficulties in your callingsome Brother minister here, perhaps, sees much disappointment about his sphere of labor. But, my dear Friends, if you can see Him, you shall find that that one sight will make amends for all the black and dreary visions that rise before youand you shall be content and look on them with holy cheerfulness if you have fully learned to look on Him!   
To look on Him, again, is, as we have said before, to prepare our eyes for the greatest sight that ever eyes can see. If we see Him today, it is a small thing compared to that. It is a small thing to see angels, as we shall see them, hovering about our dying bed. It is a small thing to see the shining ones, as we shall see them, meeting us at the rivers brink to help us up the hill whereon the Celestial stands. If we see Him, it will be, comparatively, no very great advance to see the innumerable company of angels and the glorious Church of the First-Born, whose names are written in Heaven, for in seeing Him we have had the earnest and the pledge of all these wondrous sights! We shall not fear to see the world on fire, though the elements dissolve with fervent heat. We shall not fear to see the graves all opened and the myriads of the saints departed starting up from their graves. We shall not fear to see the dread assize and the Judgment Seat, and the King with the balances in His hand, weighing out the fates of men! We shall not fear to look upon yonder Hell, with all its horrors past conception dire, nor on yon eternity, through which the terrors of Divine Justice shall blaze forth as consuming fires! There is nothing that can alarm the man who has seen the Lord! No, there shall be little that shall astonish him, for the sight of Jesus is the glorious sight of all things in embryo. It is the sight that shall make a Heaven within us, while teaching us, by His Spirit, what the Heaven shall be in which we shall dwell hereafter! Press forward for more of this sight of Christ. Get your eyes clear, and God grant that you may continue to see Him and only Him.   
If any here have never seen Jesus, let me remind them of this one text, Like as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. To believe on Him is to trust Him. If you trust Him, you shall have everlasting life, but if you trust not in Jesus Christ, you shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on you! May these words never be forgotten by you till you have, by His Grace, looked to Christ. Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **PSALM 110:1-7; HEBREWS 7:1-14.**

Verse 1. The LORD said unto my Lord. Or Jehovah said unto my Adonai.   
1, 2. Sit You at My right hand, until I make Your enemies Your footstool. The LORD shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion: rule You in the midst of Your enemies. This is the Messiah, this is Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews, the King of Kings, and the Lord of Lords. Where are His subjects?   
3. Your people shall be willing in the day of Your power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: You have the dew of Your youth. A willing people shall make up the forces of this great Kingand upon them the freshness of the morning shall rest!   
4. The LORD has sworn, and will not repent, You are a Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. King and Priest. None other of the house of David save our Lord Jesus Christ could claim the union of these two offices. In Christ we have a King and a Priest, as also with Melchizedek of old, a great type of Jesus.   
5-7. The Lord at Your right hand, shall strike through kings in the day of His wrath. He shall judge among the heathen, He shall fill the places with dead bodies; He shall wound the heads over many countries. He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall He lift up the head. This conqueror shall be refreshed in His journey; therefore shall He lift up the head.

**HEBREWS 7:1-14.**  
Verse 1, 2. For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him: To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of Righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of Peace. His very names being instructive, Righteousness first, and Peace afterwards, as it is with our Divine Lord who has brought in everlasting righteousness, and speaks peace to guilty men!

3. Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abides a priest continually. Melchisedec just passed across the pagehe has no predecessor, he has no successor. We see him in Scripture and we know nothing of his descent. We know nothing of his death. We only know that he was a priest of the Most High Godand this very silence about him is highly significant and instructivefor in this he is like unto the Son of God, who abides a priest continually. Now consider who this great man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth part of his spoil. If Abraham, the father of the faithful, the friend of God, paid tribute to him, how great must he have been, how high his office!

5-7. And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham. But he whose descent is not counted from them receive tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises. And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better. Therefore, Abraham was less than Melchisedeche could not bless Melchisedec, but Melchisedec could bless him. How great, then, was he. How far greater still is that Lord of ours of whom Melchisedec was but a type!

8-10. And here men that die receive tithes; but there he receives them of whom it is witnessed that he lives. And as I may so say, Levi also, who receives tithes, paid tithes in Abraham, for he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him. Thus the old priesthood, the Levitical and Aaronic priesthood, did homage unto the Melchisedec priesthood, which is still greater!

11. If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law), what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? We read in the Psalm just now, You are a Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec, which proves that the priests of the order of Levi were not sufficientthere was need of a still greater priesthood.

12. For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law. The law of the priesthood alters, since the person of the priest, the character of the priest, and the very office of the priest had altered too.

13. For He of whom these things are spoken pertains to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar. According to the belief of the Jewish people, the Messiah was to come of the tribe of Judah, yet none of the house of David or of the tribe of Judah ever presumed to present themselves as priests of the order of God.

14. For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah; of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood. So there was an entire change of the priesthood and of the law of priests.

Adapted from the C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software.   
PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #968 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

LIFE IN CHRIST   
NO. 968

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, JANUARY 1, 1871, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Because I live, you shall live also.   
John 14:19.**

This world saw our Lord Jesus for a very little time, but now it sees Him no more. It only saw Him with the outward eye and after a carnal sort, so that when the clouds received Him and concealed Him from bodily vision, this spiritually blind world lost sight of Him altogether. Here and there, however, among the crowds of the sightless there were a few chosen men who had received spiritual sightChrist had been Light to themHe had opened their blind eyes, and they had seen Him as the world had not seen Him. In a high and full sense they could say, We have seen the Lord, for they had in some degree perceived His Godhead, discerned His mission, and learned His spiritual Character. Since spiritual sight does not depend upon the bodily presence of its object, those persons who had seen Jesus spiritually, saw Him after He had gone out of the world unto the Father.

We who have the same sight still see Him. Read carefully the words of the verse before usYet a little while, and the world sees me no more. But you see me. It is a distinguishing mark of a true follower of Jesus that he sees his Lord and Master when He is not to be seen by the bodily eye. He sees Him intelligently and spiritually. He knows his Lord, discerns His Character, apprehends Him by faith, gazes upon Him with admiration, and looks to Him for all he needs.

Now, my Brethren, remember that as our first sight of Christ brought us into spiritual life, for we looked unto Him and were saved, so it is by the continuance of this spiritual sight of Christ that our spiritual life is consciously maintained. We lived by looking, we still live by looking. Faith is still the medium by which life comes to us from the life-giving Lord. It is not only upon the first day of the Christians life that he must look to Jesus only, but every day of that life, even until the lasthis motto must be, Looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith.

The world sees Him no more, for it never saw Him aright. But you have seen Him and lived, and now, through continuing still to see Him, you remain in life. Let us always remember the intimate connection between faith and spiritual life. Faith is the life-look. We must never think that we live by works, by feelings, or by ceremonies. The just shall live by faith. We dare not preach to the ungodly sinner a way of obtaining life by the works of the Law, neither dare we hold up to the most advanced Believer a way of sustaining life by legal means. We should, in such a case, expect to hear the Apostles expostulation, Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now made perfect by the flesh?

Our glorying is that our life is not dependent on ourselves, but is safe in our Lord, as says the Apostle, I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live. Yet not I, but Christ lives in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me. Because He lives, we live, and shall live forever. God grant that our eyes may always be clear towards Jesus, our Life. May we have no confidence but in our Redeemer. May our eyes be so fixed upon Him that no other object may in any measure or degree shut out our view of Him as our All in All.

The text contains in it very much of the weighty Truths of Godfar more than we shall be able to bring forth from it this morning. First, we see in it a life. Secondly, that life preserved. And thirdly, the reason for the preservation of that lifeBecause I live, you shall live also.

I. First, we have LIFE here spoken of. We must not confuse this with existence. It were, indeed, to reduce a very rich text to a poverty-stricken sentence if we read it, Because I exist, you shall exist also. We could not say of such a use of words that the water of ordinary speech was turned to wine, but rather that the wine was turned to water. Before the disciples believed in Jesus they existed, and altogether apart from Him as their spiritual life their existence would have been continued. It was something far other and higher than immortal existence which our Lord was here dealing with.

Life, what is it? We know practically, but we cannot tell in words. We know it, however, to be a mystery of different degrees. As all flesh is not the same flesh, so all life is not the same life. There is the life of the vegetable, the cedar of Lebanon, the hyssop on the wall. There is a considerable different meaning when we come to animal lifethe eagle or the ox. Animal life moves in quite a different world from that in which the plant vegetatessensation, appetite, instinct are things to which plants are dead, though they may possess some imitation of them, for one life mimics another. Animal life rises far above the experience and apprehension of the flower of the field.

Then there is mental life, which all of us possess. This introduces us into quite another realm from that which is inhabited by the mere beast. To judge, to foresee, to imagine, to invent, to perform moral actsare not these functions which the ox has not? Now, let it be clear to you, that far above mental life there is another form of life of which the mere carnal man can form no more idea than the plant of the animal, or the animal of the poet. The carnal mind knows not spiritual things because it has no spiritual capacities. As the beast cannot comprehend the pursuits of the philosopher, so the man who is but a natural man cannot comprehend the experience of the spiritually minded. Thus says the ScriptureThe natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him. Neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

There is in Believers a life which is not to be found in other men nobler, far more Divineeducation cannot raise the natural man into it, neither can refinement reach it. For at its best, that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and to all must the humbling Truth of God be spoken, You must be born again.

It is to be remarked concerning our life in Christ that it is the removal of the penalty which fell upon our race for Adams sin. In the day that you eat thereof you shall surely die, was the Lords threat to our first parent, who was the representative of the race. He did eat of that fruit. And since God is true and His Word never fails, we may be sure of this that in that same day Adam died. It is true that he did not cease to exist, but that is quite another thing from dying. The threat was not that he should ultimately die, but, In the day you eat thereof you shall surely die. And it is beyond all doubt that the Lord kept His Word to the letter.

If the first threat were not carried out we might take liberty to trifle with all others. Rest assured, then, that the threat was fulfilled on the spot. The spiritual life departed from Adam. He was no longer at one with God, no more able to live and breathe in the same sphere as the Lord. He fell from his first estate. He had need, if he should enter into spiritual life, to be born again, even as you and I must be. As he hides himself from his Maker and utters vain excuses before his God, you see that he is dead to the life of Goddead in trespasses and sins. We also, being heirs of wrath even as others, are, through the Fall, are deaddead in trespasses and sins. And if ever we are to possess spiritual life, it must be said of us, And you has He quickened.

We must be as those that are alive from the dead. The world is the valley of dry bones, and Divine Grace raises the chosen into newness of life. The Fall brought universal death, in the deep spiritual sense of that word, over all mankind. But Jesus delivers us from the consequences of the Fall by implanting in us a spiritual life. By no other means can this death be removedHe that believes on the Son has everlasting life: and they that believe not the Son shall not see life. But the wrath of God abides on him. The work of regeneration, in which the new life is implanted, effectually restores the ruin of the Fall, for we are born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which lives and abides forever.

But you remind me that sin still remains in us after we have received the Divine life. I know it does, and it is called the body of this death. And this it is which the new life has to struggle with. There is a contention which rages withinbetween the power of the death in the first Adam and the power of the life of the second Adam. But the heavenly life will ultimately overcome the deadly energy of sin. Even today our inner life groans after deliverance, but with its groan of, O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? it mingles the thankful song, I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

This life is of a purely spiritual kind. We find analogies and resemblances of it in the common mental life, but they are only analogiesthe spiritual life is far above the carnal life. There are scarcely words in which it can be described. To know this life you must have it. It must pulsate within your own bosom, for no explanations of others can tell you what this life is. It is one of the secrets of the Lord. It would not be possible for us, with the greatest skill, to communicate to a horse, to explain any conception of what imagination is to him.

Neither could we, by the most diligent use of words, communicate to carnal minds what it is to be joined unto the Lord so as to be one spirit. One thing we know, namely, that the spiritual life is intimately connected with the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the soul. When He comes we are born again from above, born of the Spirit. While He works in us mightily, our life is active and powerful. If He withdraws His active operations, our new life becomes faint and sickly. Christ is our life, but He works in us through His Holy Spirit, who dwells in us forevermore.

Further, we know that this life very much consists in union with God. For to be carnally minded is death. But to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the Law of God, neither, indeed, can be. So then, they that are in the flesh cannot please God. Death as to the body consists in the body being separated from the soul. The death of the soul lies mainly in the souls being separated from its God. For the soul to be in union with God is the souls highest life. In His Presence it unfolds itself like an opening flower. Away from Him it pines and loses all its beauty and excellence till it becomes as a thing destroyed. Let the soul obey Godlet it be holy, pure, graciousthen is it happy, and truly living.

But a soul separated from God is a soul blasted, killed, destroyed. It exists in a dreadful death. All its true peace, dignity, and glory are gone. It is a hideous ruinthe mere corpse of manhood. The new life brings us near to God, makes us think of Him, makes us love Him, and ultimately makes us like He is. My Brethren, it is in proportion as you get near to God that you enter into the full enjoyment of lifethat life which Jesus Christ gives youand which Jesus Christ preserves in you. In His favor is life (Psa. 30:5). The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life (Prov. 14:27).

To turn to God is repentance unto life. To forget God is for a man to be dead while he lives. To believe the witness of God is to possess the faith which overcomes the world. He that believes on the Son of God has the witness in himself: he that believes not God has made Him a liar, because he believes not the record that God gave of His Son. And this is the record, that God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that has the Son has life. And he that has not the Son of God has not life.

This life within the soul bears fruit on earth in righteousness and true holiness. It blooms with sweetest flowers of fellowship with God below, and it is made perfect in the Presence of God in Heaven. The life of glorified spirits above is but the life of justified men here below. It is the same life, only it is delivered from encumbrances and has come to the fullness of its strength. The life of Heaven is in every Believer even now. The moment a sinner believes in Jesus he receives from God that selfsame life which shall look down serenely upon the conflagration of earth, and the passing away of these lower skies.

Blessed is that man who has everlasting lifewho is made a partaker of the Divine naturewho is born again from above! Blessed is he who is born of God by a seed which remains in him, for he is the man upon whom the second death has no power! He shall enjoy life eternal when the wicked go away into everlasting punishment. Thus much concerning this life.

We have now to ask each of you whether you have received it. Have you been born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God? Was there a time with you when you passed from death unto life, or are you abiding in death? Have you the witness in yourself that you have been operated upon by a Divinely spiritual power? Is there something in you which was not once therenot a faculty developed by educationbut a life implanted by God Himself? Do you feel an inward craving unknown to carnal minds, a longing desire which this world could neither excite nor gratify? Is there a strange tenant within that body of yours, a prince incognito, an exiled spirit sighing for a land as yet unseenof which it is a native, and for which it yearns?

Do you walk among the sons of men as a being of another race, not of the world, even as Christ was not of the world? Can you say with the favored Apostle, We know that the Son of God is come, and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son, Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life. Oh, then, thank God for this, and thank God yet more that you have an infallible guarantee that your life shall be continued and perfected, for so says the text, Because I live, you shall live also.

II. Our second head treats of life preserved. Because I live, you shall live also. There stands the promise, You shall live also. This heavenly life of yours which you have received shall be preserved to you. Concerning this sentence let me draw your attention, first of all, to its fullness You shall live.

I think I see in that much more than lies upon the surface. Whatever is meant by living shall be ours. All the degree of life which is secured in the Covenant of Grace, believers shall have. Moreover, all your new nature shall liveshall thoroughly liveshall eternally live. By this Word it is secured that the eternal life implanted at regeneration shall never die out. As our Lord said, so shall it be, Whosoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst. But the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. We may be tempted, but we shall not be so led astray as to cease to live in Christ.

It may be that we shall decline in Divine Gracea thousand sorrows that it should be so! But we shall not so decline as to become utter apostates, or sons of perdition. He that is begotten of God keeps himself, and that Wicked One touches him not. Thus says the Redeemer unto you, you trembling children of God! You shall live, you shall never perish neither shall any pluck you out of His hands. May I not view this precious Word as referring to all the essential spiritual Graces which make up the new man? Not even, in part, shall the new man die. You shall live, applies to all the parts of our new-born nature.

If there is any Believer here who has not lived to the full extent he might have done, let him lay hold upon this promise. And seeing that it secures the preservation of all his new nature, let him have courage to seek a higher degree of health. I am come, says Christ, that you might have life, and have it more abundantly. There is no reason, Christian, why your love to Jesus should not become flaming, ardent, conquering!

For it LIVES, and ever must live!

As to your faith, it, also, has immortal vitality in it. And though it is just now weak, and staggeringlift up the hands that hang down and confirm the feeble kneesfor your faith shall not die out! Here in your Lords promise: the abiding nature of the vital faculties of your spirit is guaranteed. There is no stint to the fullness of life which is given you in Christ Jesus. I know not who shall tell me what it must be to live in all the fullness of Christian life. Beneath the skies I would labor to attain it, but herein is my joythat it shall be most surely mine, for His Word is faithful and true.

As surely as I have this day eternal life by reason of faith in Christ Jesus, so surely shall I reach its fullness when Christ, who is my Life, shall appear. Even here on earth I have the permit to seek for the fullest development of this life! No, I have a precept in this promise bidding me to seek after it. You shall live, means that the new life shall not be destroyed no, not as to any of its essentials. All the members of the spiritual man shall be safe. We may say of it as of the Lord Himself, Not a bone of Him shall be broken.

The shield of Christs own life covers all the faculties of our spiritual nature. We shall not enter into life lame or maimed. He will present us faultless before the Presence of His Glory, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, much less any dead limbs or decayed faculties. It is a grand promise and covers the spiritual nature as with the wings of God so that we may apply to it the words of David, in the ninety-first Psalm:

Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings shall you trust: His Truth shall be your shield and buckler. You shall not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flies by day. Nor for the pestilence that walks in darkness. Nor for the destruction that wastes at noonday. A thousand shall fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand. But it shall not come near you.

The text secures that the death penalty of the Law shall never fall upon Believers. The quickened man shall never fall back into the old death from which he has escaped. He shall not be numbered with the dead, and condemned either in this life or the next. Never shall the spiritually living become again dead in sin. As Jesus, being raised from the dead dies no more, death has no more dominion over Him. Even so sin shall not have dominion over us again. Once, through the offense of one, death reigned in us. But now having received abundance of Grace and of the gift of righteousness, we shall reign in life by one, Christ JesusRomans 5:17. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life (Rom. 5:10).

We are united to Christ this day by bands of spiritual life which neither things present nor things to come can separate. Our union to Jesus is eternal. It may be assailed. But it shall never be destroyed. The old body of this death may for awhile prevail, and like Herod it may seek the young childs life, but it cannot die. Who shall condemn to death that which is not under the Law? Who shall slay that which abides under the shadow of the Almighty? Even as sin reigned unto death, even so must Divine Grace reign unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

Notice carefully the continuance insisted upon in this verse. Continuance is, indeed, the main element of this promiseYou shall live. It means, certainly, that during our abode in this body we shall live. We shall not be again reduced to our death-state during our sojourn here. Ten thousand attempts will be made to bring us under dominion to the Law of sin and deathbut this one Word baffles all. Your soul may be so assailed that it shall seem as if you could not keep your hold on Christ but Christ shall keep His hold on you.

The incorruptible seed may be crushed, bruised, buried, but the life within it shall not be extinguished, it shall yet arise. You shall live. When you see all around you ten thousand elements of death, think, Believers, how grand is this Word of God, You shall live. No falling from Grace for you! No being cast out of the Covenant! No being driven from the Fathers house and left to perish. You shall live!

Nor is this all, for when the natural death comeswhich indeed to us is no longer deathour inner life shall suffer no hurt whatever. It will not even be suspended for a moment. It is not a thing which can be touched by death. The shafts of the last enemy can have no more effect upon the spiritual than a javelin upon a cloud. Even in the very crisis, when the soul is separated from the body, no damage shall be done to the spiritual nature. And in the awful future, when the Judgment comes, when the thrones are setand the multitudes are gathered, and to the right the righteous, and to the left the wickedlet what may of terror and of horror come forth, the begotten of God shall live!

Onward through eternity, whatever may be the changes which yet are to be disclosed, nothing shall affect our God-given life. Like the life of God Himselfeternal, and ever-blessed, it shall continue. Should everything else be swept away, the righteous must live on! I mean not, merely, that they shall existbut they shall live in all the fullness of that far-reaching, much-comprehending word life. Bearing the Nature of God as far as the creature can participate in it, the begotten from the dead shall prove the sureness of the promise, You shall live.

Let me further call to your notice that the fact here stated is universal in application to all spiritual life. The promise is, You shall live, that is to say, every child of God shall live. Everyone who sees Christ, as the world sees Him not, is living and shall live. I can understand such a promise given to eminent saints who live near to God, but my soul would prostrate herself before the Throne in reverent loving wonder when she hears this word spoken to the very least and meanest of the saints, You shall live.

You are not exempted, you whose faith is but as a smoking flaxyou shall live! The Lord bestows security upon the least of His people as well as upon the greatest. It is plain that the reason given for the preservation of the new life is as applicable to one saint as to another. If it had been said, Because your faith is strong, you shall live, then weak faith would have perished. But when it is written, Because I live, the argument is as powerful in the one case as in the other. Take it home to yourself, my Brothers and Sistershowever heavy your heart, or dim your hope

Jesus lives! And you shall live!   
Note, yet again, that this text is exceedingly broad. Mark its breadth  
and see how it meets everything to the contrary, and overturns all the   
hopes of the Adversary. You shall live. Then the inbred corruption which   
rises within us shall not stifle the new creature. Chained as the spirit   
seems to be to the loathsome and corrupt body of this death, it shall live   
in spite of its hideous companionship. Though besetting sins may be as  
arrows, and fleshly lusts like drawn swords, yet Grace shall not be slain.  
Neither the fever of hasty passion, nor the palsy of timorousness, nor the   
leprosy of covetousness, nor any other disease of sin shall so break forth   
in the old nature as to destroy the new. Nor shall outward circumstances   
overthrow the inner life. For He shall give His angels charge over you, to  
keep you in all your ways. They shall bear you up in their hands, lest you  
dash your foot against a stone.   
If Providence should cast you into a godless family where you dwell as   
in a sepulcher, and the air you breathe is laden with the fog of death, yet   
shall you live! Evil example shall not poison your spirityou shall drink   
this deadly thing and it shall not hurt you. You shall be kept from giving   
way to evil. You shall not be decoyed by fair temptation. You shall not be   
cowed by fierce persecutionmightier is He that is in you than he which   
is in the world. Satan will attack you, and his weapons are deadly, but  
you shall foil him at all points. To you is it given to tread upon the lion   
and adder, the young lion and the dragon shall you trample under foot. If   
God should allow you. for a while. to be sorely tried, as He did His servant   
Job, and if the devil should have all the world to help him in his attempt  
to destroy your spiritual lifeyet even on the dunghill of poverty, and in  
the wretchedness of sickness, your spirit shall still maintain its holy life  
and you shall prove it so by blessing and magnifying God, notwithstanding all!   
We little dream what may be reserved for us. We may have to climb   
steeps of prosperity, slippery and dangerous, but we shall live! We may be   
called to sink in the dark waters of adversity. All Gods waves and billows  
may go over us, but we shall live! We may traverse pestilent swamps of error, or burning deserts of unbelief, but the Divine life shall live amid the   
domains of death. Let the future be bright or black, we need not wish to   
turn the page. That which we prize best, namely, our spiritual life, is hid   
with Christ in God, beyond the reach of harm, and we shall live! If old age   
shall be our portion, and our crown shall be delayed till we have fought a   
long and weary battlenevertheless we shall live. Or if sudden death  
should cut short the time of our trial here, yet we shall have lived in the   
fullness of this word.   
III. Our third pointthe reason for the security of the spiritual life. The   
reason assigned is this, Because I live, you shall live also. Christ has life,   
essentially, as God. Christ, as Man, having fulfilled His life-work, having  
offered full Atonement for human sin, dies no more. Death has no more  
dominion over Him. His life is communicated to us, and becomes the  
guarantee to us that we shall live also.   
Observe, first, that this is the sole reason of the Believers spiritual life.  
Because I live, you shall live also. The means by which the soul is pardoned is found in the precious blood of Jesus. The cause of its obtaining   
spiritual life at first is found in Christs finished work. And the only reason why the Christian continues to live after he is quickened, lies in Jesus   
Christ, who lives and was dead and is alive forevermore. When I first come   
to Christ, I know I must find all in Him, for I feel I have nothing of my   
own. But all my life long I am to acknowledge the same absolute dependence. I am still to look for everything to Him. I am the vine, you are the   
branches: he that abides in Me, and I in him, the same brings forth much   
fruit: for without Me you can do nothing.   
The temptation is after we have looked to Jesus and found life there, to   
fancy that in future time we are to sustain ourselves in spiritual existence   
by some means within ourselves, or by supplies extra and apart from   
Christ. But it must not be soall for the future as well as all for the past  
is wrapped up in the Person and the work of the Lord Jesus. Because He   
died, you are pardoned. Because He lives, you live. All your life still lies in   
Him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Does not the Christians life   
depend upon his prayerfulness? Could he be a Christian if he ceased to  
pray?   
We reply, the Christians spiritual health depends upon his prayerfulness, but that prayerfulness depends on something else. The reason why   
the hands of the clock move may be found, first, in a certain wheel which  
operates upon them, but if you go to the primary cause of all, you reach  
the main-spring, or the weight, which is the source of all the motion.  
Many secondary causes tend to sustain spiritual life. But the primary  
cause, the first and foremost, is because Jesus Christ lives. All my fresh  
springs are in You.   
While Jesus lives, He sends the Spirit. The Spirit being sent, we pray.   
Our prayer becomes the evidence of our spiritual life. But are not good   
works essential to the maintenance of the spiritual life? Certainly, if there  
are no good works, we have no evidence of spiritual life. In its season the   
tree must bring forth its fruit and its leaves. If there is no outward sign,   
we suspect that there is no motion of the sap within. Still, to the tree, the   
fruit is not the cause of life, but the result of it. And to the life of the  
Christian, good works bear the same relationshipthey are its outgrowthnot its root.   
If, then, my spiritual life is low, what am I to look to? I am not to look to  
my prayers! I am not to find comfort in my works! I may from these discover how declining I ambut if I want my life to be renovated, I must fly   
to the Fountain of my lifeJesus Christfor there, and there only, shall I   
find restoration! Do let us remember thisthat we are not saved because

of anything that we are, or anything that we do. And we do not remain  
saved because of anything we are or can be. A man is saved because   
Christ died for him. He continues saved because Christ lives for him. The   
sole reason why the spiritual life abides is because Jesus lives. This is to get upon a rock, above the fogs which cover all things down   
below. If my life rests on something within me, then today I live, and tomorrow I die. But if my spiritual life rests in Christ, then in my dark framesyes, and when sin has most raged against my spiritstill I live   
in the ever-living One, whose life never changes.   
Secondly, it is a sufficient cause for our life. Because I live, you shall   
live also. It must be enough to make Believers live that Christ lives. For  
first, Christs life is a proof that His work has accomplished the absolution  
of His people from their sins. He would have been in the tomb to this hour  
had He not made a complete satisfaction for their sins. His rising again   
from the dead is the testimony of God that He has accepted the Atonement of His dear Son. His resurrection is our full acquittal.   
Then if the living Christ is our acquittal, how can God condemn us to   
die for sins which He has, by the fact of Christs resurrection, declared to  
be forever blotted out? If Jesus lives, how can we die? Shall there be two   
deaths for one sinthe death of Christ and the death of those for whom   
He died? God forbid that there should be any such injustice with the Most  
High! The very fact that Jesus lives proves that our sin has been atoned   
for, that we are absolved, and therefore, cannot die.  
Jesus is the representative of those for whom He is the federal Head.  
Shall the representative live, and yet those represented, die? How shall  
the living represent the dead? But in His life I see my own life, for as Levi   
was in the loins of Abraham, so is every saint in the loins of Christand  
the life of Christ is representatively the life of all His people. Moreover, He is the Surety for His people. He is under bonds and   
pledges to bring His redeemed safely home. His own declaration is, I give   
unto My sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any  
pluck them out of My hands. Will He break His Covenant bonds? Shall   
His Suretyship be cast to the winds? It cannot be. The fact that Jesus   
lives guarantees our life to all eternity. Remember, that if any of His people for whom He died, to whom He has given spiritual lifeshould after all   
dieChrist would be disappointed of His intent, which supposition involves the grossest blasphemy.   
What He came to do, He will do. As many as His Father gave Him, so   
many shall He have for His reward. The purchase-price shall not be given  
in vain. A Redemption so marvelous as that which He has presented upon  
the Cross shall never in any degree become a failure. His life, which  
proves His labor to be over, guarantees to Himself His reward, and that is   
to be found in the salvation of His people. Know you not, my Brethren,   
that if one of those to whom Christ has given spiritual life should, after   
all, fall and die, it would argue either that He had a want of power to keep  
them, or a want of will to do so?   
Shall we conceive Him to be devoid of power? Then how is He the  
mighty God? Is He devoid of will to keep His peopleis that conceivable?   
Cast out the traitorous thought! He must be as willing as He is able, and   
as able as He is willing. While He was in the world He kept His people.  
Having loved His own, He loved them to the end. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. He will not suffer one of these little ones to perish.   
Remember, and this, perhaps, will cheer you most of allthat all who   
have spiritual life are one with Christ Jesus. Jesus is the Head of the mystical body, they are the members. Suppose one of the members of the mystical body of Christ should die, then from that momentwith reverence it is spokenChrist is not a complete Christ. What were the head without the body? A most ghastly sight! What were the head with only a part of the members? Certainly not perfect. There must be every member   
present to make a complete body.   
Therefore we gather that you, Brother, though you think yourself the   
meanest part of the body, are, nevertheless essential to its perfection. And   
you, Sister, though you fancy yourself to be one of the uncomely portions   
of the body, yet you must be there, or else the body cannot be perfect, and   
Christ cannot be a complete Christ. From Him, the Head, the life streams   
into all the membersand while that Head lives as a perfect Head of a   
perfect bodyall the members must live also. As we have often said, as   
long as a mans head is above water you cannot drown his limbs. As long as our Head is above the reach of spiritual death we, also, are   
the sameno weapons can hurt, no poison can destroy, not all Hells fires   
could burn, nor all earths floods could drown, the spiritual life within  
usit must be safe because it is indissolubly one with Jesus Christ the  
Lord. What comfort, then, lies in this, the sole but sufficient reason for the   
eternal maintenance of the new-born life within usBecause I live, you   
shall live also.   
And let it be remembered that this reason is an abiding reason  
Because I live, you shall live alsoa reason which has as much force at   
one time as another. From causes variable the effects are variable. But  
remaining causes produce permanent effects. Jesus always lives. Yesterday, dear Brothers and Sisters, you were exalted in fellowship with Him,   
and stood upon the mountaintop. Then your hearts were glad, and your   
spirits rejoiced, and you could say, We live in Christ.   
Today darkness has intervened, you do not feel the motions of the inner   
life as you did yesterday, but do not, therefore, conclude that the life is   
not there. What is to be your signwhat is to be the rainbow of the Covenant to you? Why, that Jesus lives! Do you doubt that He lives? You dare  
not! You trust Him. Doubt not, then, that you livefor your life is as sure   
as His. Believe, also, that you shall livefor that, also, is as sure as the   
fact that He lives. God gave to Noah a token that He would not destroy the   
earthit was the rainbowbut the rainbow is not often seen. There are   
peculiar circumstances before the bow is placed in the cloud. You, Brothers and Sistersyou have a token of Gods Covenant given   
you in the text which can always be seen. Neither sun nor shower are   
necessary for its appearance. The living Christ is the token that you live,  
too. God gave to David the token of the sun and the moon. He said if the   
ordinances of day and night should be changed, then would He cast off   
the seed of David. There are times when neither sun nor moon appear  
but your token is plain when these are hidden. Christ at all times lives.  
When you are lowest, when you cannot pray, when you can hardly groan,  
when you do not seem to have spiritual life enough even to heave a desirestill, if you cling to Jesus, this life is as surely in you as there is life   
in Christ Himself at the right hand of the Father.   
And lastly, it is a most instructive cause. It instructs us in many ways  
let us hint at three. It instructs us to admire the condescension of Christ. Look at the two pronouns, you, and I. Shall they ever come into contact? Yes, here they stand in close connection with each other. Ithe AM! The Infinite! You, the creatures of an hour. Yet I, the Infinite, come into union with you, the finite. I, the Eternal, take you, the fleeting, and I make you live because I live. What? Is there such a bond between me and Christ? Is there such a link between His life and mine? Blessed be His   
name! Adored be His infinite condescension!   
It demands of us, next, abundance of gratitude. Apart from Christ we   
are dead in trespasses and sins. Look at the depth of our degradation! But   
in Christ we LIVE! Live with His own life. Look at the height of our exaltation, and let our thankfulness be proportioned to this infinity of mercy.   
Measure, if you can, from the lowest Hell to the highest Heavenand so   
great let your thankfulness be to Him who has lifted you from death to  
life. Let the last lesson be your seeing the all-importance of close communion with Jesus. Union with Christ makes you live! Keep up your enjoyment of that union, that you may clearly perceive and enjoy your life. Begin this year with the prayer, Nearer to You, my Lord, nearer to   
You. Think much of the spiritual life and less of this poor carnal life  
which will so soon be over. Go to the Source of Life for an increase of  
spiritual life. Go to Jesus. Think of Him more than you have done! Pray to  
Him more. Use His name more believingly in your supplications. Serve   
Him better, and seek to grow into His likeness in all things. Make an advance this year. Life is a growing thing. Your life only grows by getting   
nearer to Christtherefore get under the beams of the Sun of Righteousness.   
Time brings you nearer to Himyou will soon be where He is in   
Heaven. Let Grace bring you nearer, also. You taste more of His love as   
fresh mercies come. Give Him more of your love, more of your fellowship.  
Abide in Him, and may His Word abide in you from now on and forever,   
and all shall be to His glory. Amen.

*Portion of Scripture read before SermonColossians 3*  
Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #29 New Park Street Pulpit 1

CHRIST MANIFESTING HIMSELF TO HIS PEOPLE   
NO. 29

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON SABBATH MORNING, JUNE 10, 1855, BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT NEW PARK STREET CHAPEL.

**Judas said unto Him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself unto us and not unto the world? John 14:22.**

WHAT a blessed Master Jesus Christ was! How familiar did He allow His disciples to make themselves with Him! Though He was the Lord of Life and Glory, the Great and Mighty One, as well as the Man of Nazareth, yet see how He talks with His poor disciples, the fishermen, just as if He had been one of the same class and order with themselves! He was none of your dignitaries who pride themselves on that dignitynone of those ecclesiastics who love to carry much of formality about them and to walk above other menas if they were not, indeed, their fellows. But He talks to His disciples just as a father would to his childreneven more kindly than a master might to his pupils. He lets them put the simplest questions to Him and, instead of rebuking them for their familiarity, He condescends to answer everything they please to ask Him! Philip uttered a sentence which one would think no sensible man who had been so long a time with Jesus ever could have troubled Him with. He said, Show us the Father and it suffices us. A stupid idea! As if Jesus Christ could show the Fatherthat is to say, could show God to Philip! And Jesus kindly answeredHave you been so long a time with Me and yet have you not known Me, Philip? Believe you not that I am in the Father and the Father in Me? He that has seen Me has seen the Father. And now comes Judas (not Iscariot). And he, also, puts a very simple and easy questionone he needed not to have asked. But Jesus Christ, instead of rebuking him, simply passes on to another subject and forbears most wisely to answer the enquiry because He would teach him more by silence than He could do by an explanation. We must also notice here how very particular the Holy Spirit is that a good man should not be confounded with a bad one. He says, Judas, not Iscariot. There were two of the name of Judas. The one who betrayed our Lord and the other who wrote the Epistle of Jude, who should properly have been called Judas. Some of us, in reading the name, Judas, might have said, Ah, it was that traitor Judas Iscariot that asked the question. But the Holy Spirit would not allow this mistake to be made. This, again, should teach us that it is not an idle wish for us to desire that our name should be handed down to posterity. We ought all to wish to have an unblemished character. We ought to desire to have that promise fulfilled, The memory of the just is blessed. I would not wish my name to be mistaken for that of some criminal who was hanged. I would not wish to have my name written, even by mistake, in the calendar of infamy. However much I may now be misrepresented, it will one day be known that I have honestly strived for the Glory of my Master. And God will say, Judas, not Iscariot. The man was no deceiver after all.

But we will now forsake Judas altogether and proceed to look at our text. It contains two thingsfirst, an important fact. Secondly, an interesting enquiry. Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself unto us and not unto the world? Here is a fact and an enquiry concerning it.

I. First, then, here is A GREAT FACTthat Jesus Christ does reveal Himself to His people, but He does not unto the world! The fact is implied in the question. And even if Scripture did not declare it to be the Truth, there are many of us who have a Scripture written in our heartsthe Bible of experiencewhich teaches us that it is true. Ask Christians whether they have not had manifestations of their Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, in a peculiar and wonderful manner, such as they never felt when they were in their unregenerate state. Turn to the biographies of eminent saints and you will find, there, instances recorded in which Jesus has been pleased, in a very special manner, to speak to their souls, to unfold the wonders of His Person and let them discern the matchless glories of His office! Yes, so have their souls been steeped in happiness that they have thought themselves to be in Heaven? Although they were not there, they were well near on the threshold of itfor when Jesus manifests Himself to His people, it is a young Heaven on earth, it is a Paradise in embryo, it is the beginning of the bliss of the glorified! Yes and it shall be the consummation of that bliss when Jesus Christ shall perfectly unveil Himself to the admiring eyes of all His people and they shall be like He and shall see Him as He is! We are about to talk somewhat, this morning, then, concerning that special manifestation which Jesus Christ vouchsafes to His people and to His people, only. We will make four observations here. We will observe, first, something concerning the favored personsunto us, not unto the world. Secondly, concerning special seasonsHow is it that You will? He was not doing it just then. But, You will. There are special seasons. Thirdly, some remarks concerning the wonderful displayYou will manifest Yourself unto us, as You do not unto the world. Then, fourthly, we shall dwell a little upon the effects which this manifestation will produce upon our souls.

1. First, then, who are the favored people to whom Jesus Christ manifests Himself? How is it that You will manifest Yourself unto us and not unto the world? It appears from the text that the persons to whom Jesus Christ shows Himself in this wonderful manner do not belong to the world. Who, then, are these people? I am sure it would be difficult for you or me to discover them. I shall, therefore, this morning, employ a fiction and shall bid some spirit from an unknown world point out these distinguished individuals. O Spirit! I give you an errand. There are a certain number of people in this world who are not of itgo, search them out and come back and tell me what you have found. We give the spirit time. He flies round the world and he returns. I have seen, says he, a multitude of men. They are all pursuing one common path. With one objective I have seen them trampling on each other in the fury of their hot pursuit. I have seen them hurrying after something which each one desired for himselfbut in the midst of the throng I saw a few marching in the opposite direction. They, with much elbowing and strong opposition were going exactly contrary to the stream! I saw written on the foreheads of those who were proceeding with the crowd, the word Self. But I marked those who were proceeding in the other direction and behold, they had inscribed upon their brows, Christ. And as I listened to them frequently in their soliloquies I heard them say, For us to live is Christ, for us to die is gain. I marked these men. I saw them constantly pursuing their way in the teeth of all defiance, going against every opposition. I wondered where they were going. And I saw that before them was a wicket gate and on it the wordsMercy for the chief of sinners. I saw them enter there. I marked them as they ran along the walls of salvation. Tracking them along to their destination, I saw them at last fold their arms in death, shut their eyes with tranquility. And I heard angels sing their requiem and a voice shouted, Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord. Surely these must be the persons who are not of the world. You have spoken rightly, O Spirit. These are the individuals. What did you see of them, O Spirit? Did they assemble and congregate together? Or did they mix with the rest of humanity? Why, he says, I noticed that once in the week they crowded to a certain place they called the House of God. I heard their songs of praise. I saw them bend their knees in reverence, not only in that house, but in private. I witnessed their groaning, their struggles and their agonies. I knew that they were men of prayer and men that loved God. I saw them gather in secret assemblies to tell what the Lord had done for their souls. I marked that they would not be found with the wicked. I saw some houses that they would not enter. At the corner of the street there stood a house, well lighted up with many a lamp. And there were on its front some mystic signs, the marks of woe and illdoings. I saw the wicked there, reeling to and fro. I observed them in their drunkenness. But I marked how the Christian puts up his hand before his eyes and passed by that place. I saw, too, another haunt of Hell, where there were enacted scenes that eyes should not have beheld where shouts of revelry and mirth, but not songs of holiness, were heard. I looked round that theater and I discerned not a single one of these blessed persons. They would not run in the ways of the wicked, nor sit in the seat of the scorner, nor stand in the council of the unrighteous! I marked that like birds of a feather they would flock togetherthat they found their mates and there they wentthat they built their nest in the same tree and would make their habitation beneath the same roof. Yes, said the spirit, I heard one of them exclaim, He that tells lies shall not abide in my sight. I saw him drive the liar from his house and bid the profligate depart from him. I marked them. They were a select and separate people and I said, surely these are the men of whom it is written, They shall dwell alone, they shall not be numbered among the people.

Well, Spirit, rightly have you described them. I wonder how many there are here? The men to whom God will reveal Himself and not to the world. They are men who are not worldly in principle, in action, in conversation, in desires, in object, or in end. These are the persons. Do not tell me anything about universal Grace, or universal manifestations! While I have the power I will proclaim Free Grace to peculiar characters, as long as I find it written, You will manifest Yourself to us, but not to the world.

Our next remark is concerning special seasons. These highly favored men do not always see Jesus Christ alike. They do not always dive in the sunshine of His Countenance. There are special times when God is pleased to reveal Himself to His people. And these seasons are generally of two kindstimes of duty and times of trial. I never found a lazy or indifferent Christian have a manifestation of Jesus Christ. I never heard one who gave himself wholly to business talk much of spiritual manifestations. No, poor Soul, he had got religion enough to save him, but not enough to make him realize the spiritual and special blessings of a Christian! Those who do but little for Christ, Christ does but little for them in the way of special favors. Those who sit down, fold their arms, eat, drink and are satisfied, are not the men who enter into the secret chamber of the Most High and enjoy the Presence of the Almighty! The men who are the most zealous for their Master discern the most of His loving kindness and enjoy the richest blessings from the Lord. Ask a Christian when he is the happiesthe will say when he works the most. I know I am. I have not tried rest yet and no doubt I shall find it anything but rest when I have it. When I pass a day without preaching my Masters name I feel that I have not done what I ought to have done and I do not rest satisfied till I am within the four boards of a pulpit again! When we work the hardest, we feel Divine Grace the most plentiful. When we dig the deepest we get the sweetest water. He who toils the most has his bread the most sweetened. And depend upon itdrops of sweat are blessed things to make dry bread go down. We shall always have more happiness, the more we labor for Christ. As for Issachar, who is so strong, crouching down between two burdensthe man who is doing littlethe promise is, A whip for the horse, a bridle for the ass and a rod for the fools back. The man who is idle must have chastisement. But he who serves his God may rejoice, for God will treat him with dainties. He will give him his portion mixed with honey. He will say, I have taken your bread and dipped it in My own dish. Take it and eat it, for you are one who works in My own vineyard. It will be in seasons of duty, or, as I have said, in seasons of trial. And you must not suppose when a Christian is laid aside from duty that he is doing nothing. Do not imagine that the time of your sickness has been lost to you. You were not only profiting yourselves, but actually serving God by your suffering, if you bore it patiently. Dont you know the textWe fill up that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ, for His bodys sake, which is the Church. Christs mystical body, you are aware, is made up of the Head and all the members. The Head had a certain amount to sufferthat is all finished. But the body has a measured portion to endure also. And the more you suffer, so much the less suffering there is for somebody else. There is a certain quantum of trial which the whole Church has to sustain before it gets to Heaven. For as Jesus Christ was afflicted, even so the whole of His people must have fellowship with His sufferings.

There is a cup that is full of mixture and the righteous must drink it. We must all have a sip from it. But if one of us can take a deep draught and do it patiently, there is so much the less for our fellows. Let us not complain, thenfor it is in the time of trouble we see most of Jesus. Before Israel fought Amalek, God gave them water from the Rock and sent them manna from Heaven. And before Jacob met Esau, the Angel of God wrestled with him at the brook Jabbok and hosts of angels met him at Mahanaim. Previous to trial you may generally expect a season of joy and when that season of joy is over, you may say, We must expect some danger now, for we have received too much delight. But when the trial comes, then expect to have delight with it. For our troubles are generally proportioned to our joys and our joys are usually proportioned to our troubles. The more bitter the vessel of grief, the sweeter the cup of consolation. The heavier weight of trial, here, the brighter the crown of glory hereafter! In fact, the same word in Hebrew signifies weight and glory. A weight of trouble is a glory to a Christian, for it is an honor to him. And glory is a weight, for it often bows him down and makes him lie low at his Masters feet. I appeal to my Brothers and Sisters and ask them when it is they have seen most of Jesuswhen they have been walking in the garden of delights, or when the bitter medicine has been in their mouth? Have you not had better visions of Jesus when you have been racked with pain than when you have been elevated by prosperity? When the barn has been full, the oil vat has been bursting and the wine has been running over, it is often then that the sanctuary of God has been forsaken and the cabinet of Gods loving kindness is nearly disregarded. But when the fig tree does not blossom and when there are no herds in the stalls, then it is that God often comes nearest to His children and most reveals Himself to them.

2. The next thought is, the wondrous display, itself. Jesus Christ manifests Himself. There are many manifestations of God to His children, but this is the most precious of all! Some manifestations we never wish to have again. We do not want to have that discovery which we had of our sinfulness, when first we were awakenedwe will leave it to Godwe will never pray for it. But here is a manifestation we should like to have every day. I will manifest Myself to him. He does this in different ways. I have had, for a long while, a manifestation of His sufferings in Gethsemane. I have been for months musing on His agonies. I think I have even eaten the bitter herbs that grow there and drank of that black brook, Kidron. I have sometimes gone up stairs alone, to put myself in the very posture Jesus Christ was in and I thought I could sympathize with Him in His sufferings. I thought I saw the sweat of blood falling down to the ground. I had so sweet a view of my Savior in His agonies, I hope that one day I may be able to accompany Him still further and see Him on Calvary and hear His death shriek Eli, Eli, lama Sabacthani? Some of you, I know, have seen Jesus with the eyes of faith quite as plainly as if you had seen Him with your natural eyes. You could see your Savior hanging on the Cross. You thought you saw the very crown of thorns on His head and the drops of blood streaming down His face. You heard His cry. You saw His bleeding side. You beheld the nails and before long you could have gone and pulled them out. You could have wrapped Him up in linen and spices and carried His body and washed it with tears and anointed it with precious ointment. At other times you have had a manifestation of Christ in His gifts. You have seen that mighty Sacrifice He offered, the pile smoking up to Heaven and all your sins burnt up with it. You have seen clearly the justifying righteousness He has put upon you. And as you have looked at yourselves you have said

*Strangely, my Soul, are you arrayed   
By the great sacred Three.   
In sweetest harmony of praise   
Let all my powers agree.*

There are times when you have felt much joy at the exaltation of Jesus Christ as displayed in His gifts.

Then, again, you will see Him in His triumph, with one foot upon Satan and the other upon death. You will be able to behold Him marching up the sky with all the glittering hosts behind Him. And in due time you will have a manifestation of Him to your soul, as sitting on His Fathers Throne until His enemies are made His footstool. And faith will sometimes so outsoar the wings of time that we can bring futurity to the present and see that great and pompous appearance when, on the Great White Throne, the King shall sit and grasp His scepter and when His saints before Him shall shout His praise! If I were to go much farther, I should be accused of fanaticism and so it may be. But yet I will believe and must believe that there are seasons when the Christian lives next door to Heaven. If I have not gone within an inch of the pearly gates, I am not here! If I have not sometimes snuffed the incense from the censers of the glorified and heard the music of their harps, I think I am not a living man! There have been seasons of ecstatic joy, when I have climbed the highest mountains and I have caught some sweet whisper from the Throne of God. Have you had such manifestations? I will not condemn you if you have notbut I believe most Christians have them and if they are much in duty and much in suffering they will have them. It is not given to all to have that portion. But to some it is and such men know what religion means. I was reading a short time ago of a Mr. Tennant. He was about to preach one evening and thought he would take a walk. As he was walking in the woods he felt so overpoweringly the Presence of Christ and such a manifestation of Him, that he knelt down and they could not find him at the hour when he was to have preached. He continued there for hours, insensible as to whether he was in the body or out of the body. And when they awakened him, he looked like a man who had been with Jesus and whose face shone! He would never forget, he said, to his dying day, that season of communion, when positively, though he could not see Christ, Christ was there, holding fellowship with him! Heart against heart, in the sweetest manner. A wondrous display it must have been. You must know something of it, if not muchotherwise you have not gone far on your spiritual course. God teach you more and lead you deeper! Then shall you know, when you follow on to know the Lord.

4. Then what will be the natural effects of this spiritual manifestation? The first effect will be humility. If a man says, I have had such-and-such spiritual communications, I am a great manhe has never had any communications at all. For God has respect unto the humble, but the proud He knows afar off. He does not want to come near the proud to know them and will never give them any visits of love. It will give a man happiness. For he must be happy who lives near to God. Againit will give a man holiness. A man who has not holiness has never had this manifestation. Some men profess a great dealbut do not believe any man unless you see that his deeds answer to what he says. Be not deceived, God is not mocked. He will not bestow His favors upon the wicked. While He will not cast away a perfect man, neither will He respect an evil doer. Thus there will be three effects of nearness to Jesus, all beginning with the letter hhumility, happiness and holiness. May God give them to us!

II. Now for the second pointAN INTERESTING INQUIRY. Judas said, How is it that You will manifest Yourself unto us and not unto the world? How was this inquiry suggested and how was it answered?

First, it was suggested by ignorance. Poor Judas thoughtHow can Jesus manifest Himself to us and not to the world? Why, if He comes down again, the world will see Him as well as we. How can He do it? Suppose He appears in a chariot of fire, or descends in a cloudy pillarif we see Him, the world must see Him, too. So, poor thing, he very ignorantly said, How can it be, Lord? Perhaps, too, the question was put by reason of his great kindness. Ah, Lord, he said, how can it be that You will manifest Yourself to us and not unto the world? He was slightly an Arminianhe wanted it all to be given to everybody! And he said, How is it that You will manifest Yourself to us and not unto the world? O Lord, he said, I wish it were for everybody! I wish it weremy benevolence bids me wish it. Ah, my Beloved, we never need be more benevolent than God is! Some say, If all sinners were saved, it would glorify God more. Certainly God knows better than we do how many sinners will glorify Him and we had better leave the number to Him and not get to meddling with what we have no business with! It says in Scripture, Fools will be meddling. And fools they are who go meddling with what is no concern of theirs. But however this was, Judas said, Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself unto us and not unto the world? Perhaps, again, it was love to His Master that made him put the question. O Lord, I thought You would come and be King over all the world. And now it appears that You are only to be King over some. He wished Christs dominion might be universal. He wanted to see every heart the Saviors Throne. He desired everyone to bow to Him and a very just and laudable wish it was. And so he asked Christ, How can it be, Lord, that You will not conquer all? Jesus never answered the question. It was right to ask it. But we shall never get the solution of it till we get up yonder. Perhaps not there. Yet againperhaps the question was proposed by admiration. Oh, he said, how is it that You will manifest to us and not unto the world? Why, he might have said of himself, What am I? What is my Brother, Peter, here? Nothing but a fisherman. What is John? Nothing but a fisherman. And as for Matthew, he was a publican and cheated hundreds. And Zaccheus, how many widows houses did he devour! And yet You say You will manifest Yourself unto

us and not unto the world? There stands Mary the sinnerwhat did she do that You should manifest Yourself to her? And there is Mary Magdaleneshe had seven devils. Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself unto us and not unto the world? Is not this a question we have often had to ask of our own souls?

*Pause, my Soul, adore and wonder;   
Ask, O why such love to me?*

And the only answer we could give was   
*Grace has put me in the number   
Of the Saviors family.*

Come to me and ask me, Sir, why am I a Christian? Why does God love me? I must reply, Because He does love you. But why does He love me? The only answer I can give you again is, Because He would love you. For it is written, He will have mercy on whom He will have mercy. Surely we might admiringly stand here and say, Lord. Why, Lord, why do You manifest Yourself unto us and not unto the world? Yes, but some would say, because you are better than the world. That is the reason. A fine lot better by nature, certainly! Better than the world by nature? Why, some of us were rather worse! There are some of you here who once indulged in every form of vicewho would blush to stand up here and tell the sins you have committed! But God has manifested Himself to you as He does not unto the world. Surely we shall have a perpetual cause of wonder in the doings of Sovereign Grace.  
But what is the answer? Why does Christ manifest Himself to some as

He does not unto the world? The question was not answered. For it was unanswerable. Our Lord went on to sayIf a man loves Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him and We will come unto him and make Our abode with him. He did not tell him why He would manifest Himself unto them and not unto the world. I have often been asked this question myselfYou say God manifests Himself to some and not to otherscan you tell me why? Well, Jesus Christ did not and I cannot be expected to do it any more than He did! But I will ask you whether you have any objection to it. Is it not enough that He should do so? He has declared that He has power over the clay, to make of the same lump one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor. And if anyone finds fault, He says, Who are you, O man? Shall the thing formed say to Him that formed it, why have You made me thus? What man shall ask of his father, Why have you begotten me? Am I not God and can I not do what I will with My own? But, says the objector, is it not unjust for God to manifest Himself to one and not to the other? God repliesDo you charge Me with injustice? In what respect? Do I owe you anything? Bring the bill and I will pay it. Do I owe you Divine Grace? Then Grace would not be Grace! It would be a debt. If I owe you Grace, you shall have it. But why should my brother have it? He is equally as bad as I. Surely, replies the King, I may give as I please. You have two beggars at your doorhave you not a right to turn one away and give the other something? And can I not do as I will with my own? I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy and to whom I will I give it. Well, says the objector, suppose I ask and plead for it, shall I not have it? Yes, you shall, says God, for so the promise runsEveryone that asks receives and he that seeks finds and to him that knocks it shall be opened. But I cannot have it unless it is written that I shall have it. Yes, but if you ask, it is written that you shall ask. And the means are as much ordained as the endyou could not ask unless I inclined you. And now do not talk to Me of injustice. I ask you to find the passage in My Word where I ever promised to give Grace to everyone. Vile wretch! Have you not rebelled against Me? Your doom is to be sent to Hell forever. Do you not deserve it? Yes. Then who are you that dare to accuse Me of injustice? If I have 50 men on a scaffold to be hanged, have I not a right to pardon which I will and give the punishment to all the rest? Will you not yield to it? No, says the objector, I will never yield to it. Then, my Friend, expect not salvation till you do. Is there a man here who kicks against Divine Sovereignty? It is a testing Doctrine. And if he does not receive it, it shows that his pride is not out of him. If we do but preach Divine Sovereignty, some will say, That man is an Antinomian and a hyper. We disdain your slander and remind you that the accusation might more properly be made against yourself. It is you that are the Antinomian, in rebelling against Divine Sovereignty! But a man who receives the Doctrine of Sovereignty will go to the Throne of God, saying

*Perhaps He will admit my plea,   
Perhaps will hear my prayer   
But if I perish I will pray,   
And perish only there.*

And now, what do you say to this, my Friends? I know what some would say. They would cry, Nonsense! We believe religion is a thing very good to keep people in order. But as to these manifestations and these ecstasies, we do not believe in them.

Very well, Beloved. I have just proved the Truth of what the text says. He does not manifest Himself unto the world. And you have proved, yourself, that you are one of the world because you have not any manifestations. But there are some Christians here who say, We do not know much about these manifestations. No, I know you do not. The Church has been getting, for the last few years, into a lean, starved state. God has sent very few preachers who would preach up these special things and the Church has been getting lower and lower. And what would become of us, I cannot tell, if there were not saved a little salt, which God has scattered over the putrefying mass. Some of us have been living on low ground, when we might have been standing on high places. We have been tarrying in the valley of Baca, when we might as well have been living on the top of Carmel. I would not choose to dwell in a valley, if I might build my house on the delectable mountains. O Christian! Up this morning! Let your feet be shod with light once more! Trip lightly across the plain of troubleget to the side of Calvaryascend to the very summit! And from Calvary, I tell youyou can see across the plain as far as Heaven, itself! If you can but get to Pisgahs top, you shall sing

*Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood   
Stand dressed in living green.*

And, by Gods Grace, your spirit shall become like the chariots of Amminadib! Seek, my Brothers and Sisters such spiritual manifestations, if you have never experienced them. And if you have been privileged to enjoy them, seek more of them. For what is there that can so certainly make life happy and so fit you for the sky, as these revelations of Jesus Christ? Oh, you who despise what we enjoy, from the depths of my soul I pity you!. Take heed, lest the first revelation you have of Christ is when He shall be revealed in flaming firetaking vengeance on His enemies!

If He is not revealed in mercy, He will be in justice. God give you Grace to see Him on Calvary before you see Him on Sinai. To behold Him as the Savior of sinners before you see Him as the Judge of the quick and dead. God bless you and lead you back to these manifestations constantly! Amen. Amen. Amen.

Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software.   
PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #2895 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

A BLESSED GOSPEL CHAIN   
NO. 2895

A SERMON   
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**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
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**Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man loves Me, he will keep My words; and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him.   
John 14:23.**

THIS is a blessed chain of Gospel experience. Our text is not meant for the men of the world who have their portion in this life, but for the chosen, called and faithful who are brought into the inner circle of Christs disciples and taught to understand the mysteries of His Kingdom. It was in answer to the question of Judas (not Iscariot) as to how Christ would manifest Himself to His own and not to the world, that these words were spoken. Christ explained that it would be manifest who were His own people by certain marks and signs. They would be those who love Him and keep His commandments and so win the confidence of the Father and the Father and the Son would come to these loving and obedient disciples and make Their abode with them. God grant that all of us may be able to take each of the steps here mentioned so that our Lord may manifest Himself to us as He does not unto the world!

The subject upon which I am about to speak to you is one which the preacher cannot handle without the people. I must have Gods people with me in spirit to help me while I am dealing with such a topic as this. You know that in the Church of England service there are certain places where the clergyman says, saying after me, so that it is not simply the minister uttering the prayer or the confession, but he is a sort of preceptor leading the rest of the congregation. In a similar style, I want you people of God, as the Holy Spirit shall enable you, to bend all your thoughts and energies in this direction and step by step climb with me to these distinct spiritual platformsascending from the one to the other by the Spirits gracious aidthat your fellowship may be with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ.

I. Our text begins with the first link in this golden chain, namely, LOVE TO CHRISTIf a man loves Me.   
This, if, seems to me to stand at the portals of our text like a sentinel at the gate of a palace, to prevent anybody from entering who ought not to enter. It is an, if, that may be passed around the present assembly, for I fear that all in this house do not love the Lord Jesus Christ. If you cannot answer in the affirmative the question asked by the lips of Jesus, Himself, Do you love Me? you have nothing to do with the rest of this verse. Indeed, what have you to do with

any of the privileges revealed in the Bible, or with any of the blessings promised there, as long as you are without love to Christ? Let that, if, stand, then, as with a drawn swordlike the cherubim at the gate of the Garden of Edento keep you from daring to intrude where you have no right to go if you do not love the Lord Jesus Christ! If a man loves Me.   
Are you a lover of the Lord, dear Hearer? Put not that question aside, but answer it honestly, in His sight, for there are some who only pretend to love Him, but really do notsome who make a loud profession, but their language is hypocritical, for their conduct is not consistent with their profession. Do you love the Lord Jesus with your whole heart? He is well worthy of your love, so let the question go round the whole assembly and not miss any one of us, Do you love Me?   
For there are some, too, who are Christs disciples only by profession. All they give Him is a cold-hearted assent to His teaching. Their head is convinced and, in a measure, their life is not altogether inconsistent with their profession, but their heart is dead. Or, if it is at all alive, it is like that of the church of Laodicea, neither cold nor hot, but lukewarmand that is a state which Christ abhors! He must occupy the throne of our hearts and be the best loved of all, or else we lack that which is essential to true Christianity!   
If a man loves Me, says Christ. So, do you love Him? I do not ask whether you love His offices, though I hope you do. You love the Prophet, the Priest, the King, the Shepherd, the Savior and whatever other title He assumes. Each of these names is music to your earsbut do you love Christ, Himself? I will not ask whether you love His work, especially the great Redemption which comprehends such innumerable blessings. I hope you do, but it is a personal love to Christ that is spoken of here. Jesus says, If any man loves Me. Have you realized Christ, personally, as still alive, gone into Heaven and soon to come again in all the glory of His Father and of the holy angels? Say, Brother, Sister, do you love Him? If, says Christ, if a man loves Meso it is right and wise for each one of us to put that question to ourselves, even though we know that we can answer it satisfactorily and say

*Yes, I love You, and adore*

*Oh, for Grace to love You more!*   
And if there should be any doubt about the matter, we ought to put the question, pointedly, again and again and again and let not ourselves escape till there is a definite answer given, one way or another! Heart of mine, do you really love the Savior? Brothers and Sisters, put this question to yourselvesand if you do love Him, let your love well up like a mighty geyserthe hot spring that leaps up to a great height! So let the hot spring of your love to Jesus leap up nowand let each one of you say to Him

*My Jesus, I love You, I know You are mine, For You all the follies of sin I resign. My gracious Redeemer, my Savior are You,*

*If ever I loved You, my Jesus tis now.*   
If you can do so, then you may add  
*I will love You in life, I will love You in death,   
And praise You as long as You lend me breath   
And say when the death-dew lies cold on my brow,   
If ever I loved You, my Jesus, tis now.*   
Remember that if you do love Him, He must have loved you first. Think of His ancient lovethe love that was fixed upon you before the earth waswhen He saw you in the glass of futurity and beheld all that you would be in the ruinous fall of Adam and by your own personal transgressionand yet loved you, notwithstanding all that! Think of Him when the fullness of time was come, stripping Himself of all His Glory and descending from the Throne of Infinite Majesty to the manger of humiliation and, being there, as a Baby, swaddled in His weakness! Will you not love Him who became God Incarnate for you? Think of Him all through His lifea life of poverty, for He had nowhere to lay His heada life of rejection, for, He came unto His own and His own received Him nota life of pain, for He bore our sicknessesa life of dishonor, for He was despised and rejected of men! Will you further think of Him in the Garden of Gethsemane? Will not your love be stirred as you watch the bloody sweat and hear His groans and mark His tears as He pleads with God until He prevails? Follow Him to the judgment seat and hear Him there charged with sedition and with blasphemyif you can bear it! Then see the soldiers as they spit in His face and mock Him while they thrust a reed into His hand for a scepter and put on His brow a crown of thorns as His only diadem! See Him tied up to be scourged till the cruel thongs lacerate and tear His precious flesh and He suffers indescribable agonies! And when you have followed Him that far, go still further and stand at the foot of the Cross and mark the crimson stream that flows from His hands, feet and side! Stand and watch Him when the soldiers spear has pierced His heart and made the blood and water flow forth for your pardon and cleansing. Did He suffer all this for you and do you not love Him in return? May I not tell that, if, to get out of the way and let you pass, that you may take the next step? Track Him as He rises from the grave for youas He ascends to Heaven for you and obtains great gifts for you! Up there, before His Fathers face, He pleads for you and governs all things as King of kings and Lord of lordsand governs all for you! Up there He prepares many mansions for His own people and gets ready to come to earth the second time that He may receive His people unto Himself, that where He is they may be forever and forevermore! As you think of all this, love the Lord, you who are His saints, you who have been washed in His blood, love Him! You who are wearing the spotless robe of His righteousnesslove Him! You who call Him, Husband, love Himyou who are married to Himunited in bonds that can never be severed!   
II. If this is true of you, let us pass on to the next pointthat of KEEPING CHRISTS WORDS. If any man loves Me, says Christ, he will keep My words. Let us see how far we have kept His words.   
I trust that, first, we keep His words by treasuring them and prizing them. Brothers and Sisters, I hope that we venerate every word that Christ has ever uttered. I trust that we desire to treasure up every syllable that He has ever spoken. There is not a word of His, recorded in the Gospels, or in any other of the Inspired pages of Revelation, by which we do not set more store than for much fine gold.   
I trust that we keep Christs words, next, by trying to know them. Are you all diligent students of the Word of God? Do you search the Scriptures? Do you live upon the Truths of God that the Lord has spoken? You should, for every word that comes out of His mouth is the true food of your souls! I must ask you whether you are doing these two things. Are you keeping Christs words by prizing them and by seeking to be so familiar with them that you know what His words are?   
Then, next, do you endeavor to lift the latch and to find your way into the inner meaning of His words? Do you pierce the shell to get at the kernel? Does the Spirit of God lead you into all Truth, or are you content with the rudiments of the faith? This is the way to keep Christs words, namely, by endeavoring, to your very utmost, to understand what the meaning of those words may be!   
Then, when you know the meaning of them, do you seek to keep them in your hearts? Do you love what Christ has spoken so that you delight to know what it is and love it because it is His Doctrine? Will you sit at His feet and receive the instruction that He is willing to impart? Have you attained to that stage that you even love His rebukes? If His words come home to you and sharply reprove you, do you love them even then, and lay bare your heart before Him that you may feel more and more the faithful wounds of this, your beloved Friend? Do you also love His precepts? Are they as sweet to you as His promises, or, if you could do as you wish, would you cut them out of the Bible and get rid of them? O Brothers and Sisters, it is a blessed proof that Divine Grace has been largely given to us when even the smallest word uttered by Jesus Christ is more precious to us than all the diamonds in the world and we feel that we only want to know what He has said and to love whatever He has spoken!   
If a man loves Me, he will keep My words. This declaration of our Lord suggests this questionDo we keep His words practically? That is a most important point, for you will not be able to get any further if you stumble here. Do you endeavor, in a practical way, to keep all His moral precepts? Are you trying to be in your lives, as far as you can, like Heor are you selfish, unkind, worldly? Are you endeavoring to be like He who has left you an example that you should follow in His steps? Come, answer honestly! Is this the objective of your life? Are you seeking to be molded by the Holy Spirit in that way? And are you practically keeping Christs words as to the precepts of the Gospel? Have you believed on Him? Believing on Him, have you been baptized according to His command? Being baptized, do you come to His Table according to His bidding, This do in remembrance of Me? Or do you turn on your heels and say that these are nonessential things?   
Beloved, if your heart is right with God, you will want to know all His words and to put them into practice! What care I about the words of any earthly church? They are only the words of men! But search and find the words of Christand wherever they lead you, even though you are the only one who has ever been led in that wayfollow wherever He leads. You cannot take the next step mentioned in my text unless you can deliberately say, Yes, Lord, Your words were found and I did eat them; and Your word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart, for I am called by Your name, O Lord God of Hosts, and I long to walk in all Your statutes and ordinances, blamelessly, even to the end of my days. You may err, you may make mistakesyou may even sinbut the intent of your heart must be that having loved the Lord, you will keep His words in those various senses that I have mentioned.

III. If you have been enabled to pass through these two gates, you may now come to the next one which tells us of A HIGH PRIVILEGE AND GREAT JOYHe will keep My words; and My Father will love him. What wonderful words these areMy Father will love him! It is quite certain that He will do so, for when a man loves Jesus, he is in sympathy with the Eternal Father, Himself. You know, my Brothers and Sisters, that the Fathers love is fixed upon His only-begotten Son. One with Himself in His essential Deity, He has loved Him from eternity! But since Jesus has been obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross, we cannot imagine what must be the Fathers complacency in the blessed Person of our risen and ascended Lord! This is a deep subject and there is no human mind that can ever fathom the depths of it and tell how truly and how wonderfully the Father loves His everlasting Son! So, you see, Brothers and Sisters, that if we love Jesus Christ, our heart meets the heart of God, for the Father also loves Him! Have you never felt, when you have been trying to praise Jesus, that you are doing, in your feeble way, just what God has always been doing in His own Infinite way? The ever-blessed Spirit is continually glorifying Jesusand when you are doing the same, God and youthough with very unequal footstepsare treading the same path and are in sympathy, one with the other! Then, besides the fact that you are in sympathy with the Father in having one Object of love, you are also in sympathy with Him as to character. Jesus said, If a man loves Me, he will keep My words. Well, when you are keeping Christs wordswhen the Divine Spirit is making you obedient to Jesus and like Jesusyou are treading the path where your Heavenly Father would have you walk and, therefore, He loves you! Let me make a clear distinction here. I am not now speaking about the general love of God towards all mankindthat love of benevolence and beneficence which is displayed even towards the thankless and the evil. Neither am I speaking, just now, concerning the essential love of God towards His own elect whom He loves irrespectively of their character because of His own Sovereign choice of them from eternity. I am speaking of that complacent love which God, as a Father, has towards His own children. You know that you often say to your child, If you do this or that, your father will love you, yet you know that a father will love his child, as his child, and always must do so even if his character is not all that the father desires it to be. But what a love that is which a father has to a good, dutiful, obedient child! It is a love of which he talks to him again and again, a love which he manifests to him in many sweet and kindly words, a love which he displays to him in many actions which he would not otherwise have done, bestowing upon him many favors which it would not have been safe to bestow upon him if he had been a naughty, disobedient child.   
Never forget that our Heavenly Father exercises wise discipline in His house. He has rods for His children who disobey Him and He has smiles for His children who keep His commands. If we walk contrary to Him, He has told us that He will walk contrary to us. But if our ways please Him, there are many choice favors which He bestows upon us. This teaching is not suggestive of legal bondage, for we are not under Law, but under Grace. But this is the Law of Gods House under the rule of Gracefor instance, if a man keeps the Lords commandments, He will have power with God in prayer. But when a man lives habitually in sin, or even occasionally falls into sin, he cannot pray so as to prevail, he cannot win the ear of God as he used to do. You know right well that if you have offended the Lord in any way, you cannot enjoy the Gospel as you did before you so sinned. The Bible, instead of smiling upon you, seems to threaten you in every text and every lineit seems to rise up, as in letters of fire, and burn its way into your conscience!   
It is certainly true that the Lord deals differently with His own children according to their condition and character. So, when a man is brought into such a state of heart that he keeps Christs words, then his character is of such a kind that God can take a complacent delight in him and, in this sense can love him. It is in such a case as this that the Father will let us know that He loves us, that He will assure us of that love and shed it abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. He will give us special blessings, perhaps in Providence, but certainly in Grace. He will give us special joy and rejoicingour horn shall be exalted and our feet shall stand upon the high places of the earth. All thingseven His trialsshall be blessed to the man who walks aright with Godand the way to do that is to love Christ and to keep His words! Of such a man, Jesus says, My Father will love him.   
IV. If you have passed through these three gates, you come to another which bears this inscription, WE WILL COME UNTO HIM. This is a singular use of the plural pronounWe will come unto him. It is a proof of the distinct Personality of the Father and of the Son. Jesus says, If a man loves Me, (do not forget the previous links in this blessed Gospel chain), he will keep My words; and My Father will love him. And then follows this gracious assuranceWe will come unto him. Does not this mean, first, distance removed? There is no longer a gap between such a mans soul and his God. He feels heavy in heart, perhaps, and thinks, I cannot get near to God, but he hears this comforting message, We will come unto him and, soon, over all the mountains of division that there may have been in the past, like a roe, or a young hart, the Well-Beloved comes and the Great Father, when He sees, in the distance, His child returning to Him, runs to meet Him and holds him to His heart! What a wondrous Divine coming this is! Christ and His Father, by the Holy Spirit, come to pay the Believer a most gracious visit! Yes, Beloved, if you are living in love to Christ and keeping His words, there will not be any distance separating you from the Father and the Son, but the text will be blessedly fulfilled in your experienceWe will come unto him. And while it means distance removed, it also means honor conferred. Many a great nobleman has beggared himself that he might receive a prince or a king into his house. The entertainment of royalty has meant the mortgaging of his estates! That is a poor return for the honor of receiving a visit from his sovereign. But, behold, my Brothers and Sisters, how different it is with us! The obedient lover of the Lord Jesus Christ has the Father and the Son to visit him and he is greatly enriched by their coming! He may be very poor, but Jesus says, We will come unto him. He may be obscure and illiterate, but Jesus says, We will come unto him. Do you all, dear Friends, know what this coming means? Did you ever know the Son to come to you with His precious blood applied to your conscience till you realized that every one of your sins was forgiven? Have you taken Jesus up in your arms, spiritually, as old Simeon did literally, and said with him, Lord, now let you Your servant depart in peace according to Your word, for my eyes have seen Your salvation? Has Jesus seemed, to your faith, to be as near to you as one who sat on the same chair with you and talked with you in most familiar conversation? It has been so with some of usand it has often been so. This also has meant knowledge increased. Jesus has revealed Himself to us by coming to us even as He came to the two disciples on the way to Emmaus. Then, in addition, have you not known the Father come to you in His Divine relationship, yet making you feel yourself His child and causing you to realize that He loved you as truly as you love your own children, only much more deeply and fervently than human love can ever be? Have you not received at His hands such tokens for good and such benedictions as only He could giveso that you felt the Divine Fatherhood to be something coming very near to you and the Spirit of God, operating within you, has made you cry, Abba, Father, with an unstammering tongue? We will come unto him. The Savior will come and the Father will comeand the blessed Spirit will represent Them both in the Believers heart!   
So, We will come unto him, means distance removed, honor conferred and knowledge increased. And it also means assistance brought, for, if the Father and the Son come to us, what more can we need? With Their gracious Presence in our souls we have Omnipotence and Omniscience, Infinity and All-Sufficiency on our sideand Grace to help us in every time of need!   
V. The last clause of the text, and the sweetest of all, is, AND MAKE OUR ABODE WITH HIM.   
Can you catch the full meaning of that phrase? Jesus says that the Father and the Son will visit usthey will come to us as the three blessed ones came to Abraham when he was at the tent door and he entertained the Lord and His attendant angelsbut they did not make Their abode with him. They went on their way and Abraham was left in the plains of Mamre. God often visited Abraham and spoke familiarly with him, but our Saviors promise goes beyond that. He says, We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him. To make your abode with a person is for that person and yourself to have the same house and homeand to live together. In this case, it means that the Lord will make His people to be His Temple wherein He will dwell continually. We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him. I have turned that thought over and over again until I have got the sweetness of it into my own heart, but I cannot communicate it to your minds and heartsonly the Holy Spirit can do that.   
See what this expression means. What knowledge of one another is implied here! Do you want to know a person? You must live with himyou do not really know someone, however much you may think you know him, until you have done so. But, oh, if the Father and the Son come and live with us, we shall know Themknow the Father and the Son! This is not the portion of carnal mindsneither is it for professing Christians who have not fulfilled the conditions laid down by our Lord. It is for those who love Christ and keep His wordsthose who consciously live in the enjoyment of the Fathers complacency and who have fellowship with the Father and with the Son by the Spirit! To these privileged individuals, God reveals Himself in His Triune Personalityand to them He will make known all that is in His Covenant of love and mercy!

This expression also implies a sacred friendship, for, when God comes to dwell with men, He does not thus dwell with His enemies, but only with those who love Him and between whom and Himself there is mutual sympathy. O Beloved, if God the Father and God the Son shall indeed come to dwell with us, it will be to us a proof of wondrous love, dear familiarity and intense friendship! If you go to live with an earthly friend, it is quite possible for you to stay too long and to outstay your welcome. But God knows all about the man with whom He comes to live and Jesus says, We will make Our abode with him, because He knows that His Spirit has purified and sanctified that heart and made it ready to receive Himself and His Father, too! You remember how Jeremiah pleaded with the Lord not merely to be as a sojourner? O the hope of Israel, the Savior thereof in time of trouble, why should You be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man that turns aside to tarry for a night? But this is not the way that the Father and the Son deal with us, for Jesus says that They will make Their abode with us! Does not this imply a very sacred friendship, indeed, between God and our soul?   
It also reveals the complete acceptance of the man before God, for, when anyone comes to stay with you, it is taken for granted that you exercise hospitality towards him. He eats and drinks in your house and, for the time, he makes himself at home with you. But, you ask, is it possible that God should accept the hospitality of man? Yes, it is. Listen to the words of Christ, HimselfBehold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hears My voice, and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me. Oh, the blessedness of thus entertaining the King of kings! Then will He drink of my milk and my wine and eat the pleasant fruits that are grown in the garden of my soul. Will that which I present to Him be acceptable to Him? It must be, or else He would not live in my house! And when the Father and the Son come to dwell in the soul of the Believer, then all that he does will be accepted. If he is, himself, accepted, his thoughts and his words, his prayers and his praises, his almsgiving and his labors for Christ will be accepted by both the Father and the Son!   
What a blessed state for anyone to reach! For then it shall come to pass that this reception on Gods part, from us, shall be followed by a sevenfold reception on our part, from Him. You do not imagine, I hope, that, when God the Father and God the Son make Their abode in a man that the man will continue to be just as he was when they came to him? No, my Brothers and Sisters, the Lord pays well for His lodging! Where He stays, He turns everything that He touches into gold. When He comes into a human heart, it may be dark, but He floods it with the Light of Heaven. It may have been cold before, but He warms it with the glow of His Almighty Love. A man without the indwelling of God is like the bush in Horeb when it was only a bushbut when the Father and the Son come to him, then it is with him as when the bush burned with fire yet was not consumed! The Lord brings Heaven to you when He comes to youand you are rich beyond the intents of bliss. All things are yours, for you are Christs and Christ is Gods, and Christ and God have come to make Their abode with you!   
Now, according to our Lords promise, We will come to him, and will make Our abode with him, it is implied that there they mean to stay. Let me take your thoughts back, for a minute, to the earlier links in this blessed Gospel chain and remind you that it is only, if a man loves Me, and it is only, if he keep My words, that the Saviors promise applies. We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him. Have the Father and the Son come to your heart? Then I charge you, do nothing that might cause them to depart from you even for a moment. If you ever get into conscious enjoyment of the Divine Indwelling, be jealous of your heart lest it should ever depart from your Lord, or drive Him from you. Say, with the spouse, I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, that you stir not up, nor awake my Love, until He pleases.   
But, perhaps you ask, can we keep Him? Can we always keep Him? I believe you can. By the blessed help of the Divine Spirit who has taught you to love Him and to keep His words, you may have near and dear fellowship with your Lord by the month and by the year together! I am sure that we have too low a standard of the possibilities of Christian fellowship, Christian enjoyment and Christian living. Aim at the highest conceivable degree of holiness and though you will not be perfect, never excuse yourselves because you are not! Always aim at something higher and yet still higher than you have already reached. Ask the Lord to come and abide with you forever. You will be happy Christians if you attain to this privilege and stay in that condition. And we shall be a blessed Church if the most or all of us should attain to it. I mean to go in for this blessing, by Gods gracious helpwill not you, my Brother, my Sister? Can any of you be content to live a lower life than is possible to you? I hope you will not be, but that you will reach all of these steps that I have pointed out to you and ask God in prayer to help you to surmount them. Lord, help me to love Jesus. Set my soul on fire with love to Him. Lord, enable me to keep all His words and never to trifle with His Truth in anything. And then, Father, look upon me with complacency. Make me such that You can take delight in me. See the resemblance to Your Son in me, because you have made me to be like He and then, Father, and Savior, come and abide with me forever and ever. Amen. Such a prayer as that, truly presented, will be answered and the Lord shall get glory from it! But, alas, many of you have nothing to do with this text because you do not love Christ! And the first thing you have to do is not to think about loving Him, but about trusting Him, for you know that the only way of salvation is by trusting Christ. So, if you do not trust Him, you are not in the way of salvation. Have you ever thought of what is involved in being an unbeliever? The Apostle John says, He that believes not God has made Him a liar because he believes not the record that God gave of His Son. Do you really mean to make God out to be a liar? Surely you cannot! The very thought is too horrible to be entertained for a moment! Well, then, believe His record concerning His Son. That record declares that He is the Propitiation for our sins. Then if you rely upon that Propitiation and trust to Him who made it, you are saved!  
I often have the remark made to me by an anxious soul, But, Sir, I cannot believe. I wish I could. This is the answer which I generally give to the person who says thatWhat? You cannot believe? Come, now, let us have that matter out. You cannot believe God? Could you believe me? Of course, the answer is, Oh, yes, Sir, I can believe you! I replyYes, I suppose that is because you have confidence in my character and believe that I would not tell you a lie. Then, in the name of everything that is good and reasonable, how is it that you dare say that you cannot believe God? Is He a liar? Has He ever given you any cause to say to Him, I cannot believe You? What do you mean? Give me some reason why you cannot believe God! What has He done that you cannot believe Him? Well, they do not quite see it in that light but, still, they return to that sentence, I cannot believe. Well now, Sinner, if Jesus Christ were present and He were to say to you, Trust Me and I will save you. Believe My promise and you shall enter into eternal life. Would you look Him in the face and say, I cannot believe You? And if He asked you the question, Why can you not believe Me? What would be your reply? Surely a man can believe what is true. There have been times, with me, since I have known the Savior, when it seemed to me as if I could not doubt my Lordas if I could not find a reason, even if I ransacked Heaven, earth and Hell, why I should doubt Him. I proclaim that I do not know any reason why I should not trust Christ! I cannot conceive of any. Well, will men continue this monstrous, unjust, ungenerous conduct? Alas, they will.   
But, says someone, if I do trust my soul to Christ, will He save me? Try Him and see. You have His own promise that He will cast out none who come to Him. So, if you believes in the Lord Jesus Christ this very momentthis very moment you are saved! What more need I say? May the Blessed Spirit cause you to cease, by your unbelief, from practically making God a liar and may you now come and trust in Jesus, the Substitute and Surety for His people! So shall you rest your weary hearts upon His loving bosom and it shall be well with you forever and ever. May God bless you all, for Jesus Christs sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 14:15-31.**

Verses 15, 16. If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever. Is it not very sweet to think that the Spirit of God is given to the Church in answer to the prayer of Christ? Prayer is a holy exercise, for Jesus prayed. And what a powerful influence prayer has, for His prayer has brought to us another Comforter.

17. Even the Spirit of Truth whom the world cannot receive, because it sees Him not, neither knows Him. This poor world will not receive anything which it cannot see. It is ruled by its sensesit is carnal and fleshlyand minds not the things that are unseen. It cannot discern them.

17, 18. But you know Him, for He dwells with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. That expression, I will not leave you comfortless, might be rendered, I will not leave you orphans.

19. Yet a little while, and the world sees Me no more; but you see Me: because I live, you shall live also. What a wealth of meaning these words contain! The sentences are very simple, but they are also sublime. The gorgeous language in which some orators indulge is, when the meaning of it is condensed, like great clouds of steam which produce but a few drops of water! But here you have vast Truths of God pressed into a small compass and those that seem most plain are really the most deep. Because I live, you shall live also. As surely as Christ lives, so must His people! They cannot die, for He lives to die no moreand they live in Him.

20. At that day you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. Mysterious triple unionChrist in the Father, we in Christ and Christ in us. This is a complete riddle to all who have never been taught by the Spirit of God.

21, 22. He that has My commandments, and keeps them, he it is who loves Me: and he who loves Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him. Judas (not Iscariot)said unto Him, Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself unto us, and not unto the world? He really did answer the question, though perhaps not directly. This is the process by which He manifests Himself unto His people and not unto the world

23, 24. Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man loves Me, He will keep My words; and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him. He that loves Me not keeps not My sayings: and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Fathers which sent Me. There is Divine Authority at the back of every word uttered by the Man, Christ Jesus. His message comes not from Himself, alone, but from the Eternal Father as well.

20-28. These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatever I have said unto you. Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you; not as the world gives, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. You have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, I go unto the Father: for My Father is greater than I. And truly so He was, for Christ had, for a while, laid aside His own greatness and taken the position of a Servant.

29, 30. And now I have told you before it comes to pass, that when it is come to pass, you might believe. Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world comes, and has nothing in Me. His words must come to an end, for He was going to perform His mightiest deeds. He could converse no longer, for He was going from converse to conflict. He must meet His great enemy now and leave His dearest friends.

31. But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave Me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence. And so He went to the Garden of Gethsemanea brave, gentle, confident, victorious spirit straitened till He had accomplished the great work of our redemption!

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #1842 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE PRIVATE TUTOR   
NO. 1842

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, MAY 24, 1885, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**He that loves Me not keeps not My sayings: and the Word which you hear is not Mine, but the Fathers which sent Me. These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, Whatever I have said unto you.   
John 14:24 26.**

ALL through this thrice-blessed chapter, man cuts a very sorry figure. Whoever it is that speaks, whether it is Philip, or Judas, or Thomas, each one displays his own ignorance, either by asking an unwise question or by making a mistaken request. Yet, Brothers and Sisters, these Apostolic men were, by no means, inferior persons, but so superior that we sink into insignificance in comparison with them! Jesus made them heralds of His Gospel, master-builders of His Church and, if they displayed such ignorance, even when the Lord Jesus Christ, Himself, had personally spoken to them, we must not wonder that we are apt to blunder. Neither should we despair if we find ourselves dull and slow. If those fathers of the Church so greatly needed to be taught of the Holy Spirit, how much more do we? If they could receive nothing except by the Spirit of God, how can we hope to be wise apart from His instructions? Our position should be sitting with Mary at the Masters feet, varied with bowing into the dust before the Lord under a humble sense of our folly. The chapter before us is well watered with streams of comfort, but I confess it is always a valley of humiliation to me, as I see what poor creatures even the chief of saints are when left to themselves.

But, at the same time, how wonderfully, throughout this passage, do we see the loving kindness of our God in condescending to the weaknesses of His people. In one verse of our text, the 26th, we have the whole Trinity at work upon the BelieverThe Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name. There we have the Holy Spirit, the Father and the Son, uniting Their sacred energies for the illumination of the chosen! Each Divine Person seeks to make the Other to be more fully knownthe Son speaking what He hears from the Fatherand the Spirit taking the things of the Son and revealing them to us! The whole Trinity working in us to will and to do according to the Divine pleasure. What we are, my Brothers and Sisters, is of small consequence compared with what He is who works all our works in us!

What if we are nothing but clay? The great Potter knows how to fashion us to His praise. The great item is not what the clay is, but what the Potter can make out of it. Let us not despond because of what we are by nature, but let us rejoice as we remember the wisdom and power of God who has begun a good work in us and will not cease from His working till He has perfected His design! We must comfort one another with these thoughts. Lie low and be more and more teachablebut be hopeful, for you shall be taught. Confess your own ignorance, but confide in the Lords power to teach you. Rest assured that even for you there is a noble destinyGod shall reveal Himself to you and in youand you shall not only know for yourself, but shall declare to principalities and powers in the heavenly places the manifold wisdom of God!

In handling my text at this time, I desire to be entirely under the power of the Spirit of God. Not with enticing words of mans wisdom would I preach. Not with the garnishing of oratory would I foolishly dream of lending power to the Omnipotent Word of God, but with all simplicity I would speak plainly that which the Holy Spirit teaches by our text.

It appears to me that there are three things, here, worthy of patient observation. One is, the test of a true BelieverHe that loves Me not keeps not My sayings. A second is, the need of a true Believerhe needs to be taught of the Holy Spirit and to have his memory refreshed by the same gracious SpiritHe shall bring all things to your remembrance. The best disciple needs help in his understanding and in his memory. Thirdly, let us think of the privilege of a true BelieverThe Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatever I have said unto you.

I. Let us begin with THE TEST OF A TRUE BELIEVER and let each one consent to be tested. Let each man put himself into the scale that he may know his weight, for the Lord ponders the heart. He who never judges himself will perish in the judgment of the Last Great Day.

I would draw your attention to the fact that in this passage and elsewhere in Scripture, men are divided into two classes and not a word is said of a neutral or intermediate class. The 21st verse says, He that has My commandments, and keeps them, he it is that loves Me. And the 24th verse says negatively, He that loves Me not keeps not My sayings. Evidently there are two sorts of persons in that part of the world which is visited by the Gospelhe that loves Christ and he that loves Him not. If you once hear the Gospel, you can never be indifferent to it. You must either be its friend or its foe, its disciple or its opposer. If once the Lord Jesus Christ crosses the orbit of your life, you can never, again, be neutral. You must either reject Him or receive Himbelieve Him or call Him a liar. I would urge home upon each of you that simple but solemn Truth of God, lest any person should think himself omitted from the range of my discourse. I would so spread the net that no fish may remain outside its meshes!

The Gospel must, in the nature of things, be to you who hear it, either a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death. By this Gospel you shall be judged and it shall either bring you where there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, or it shall leave you where you are condemned, already, because you have not believed upon the Son of God! Do not, therefore, hope to live and die as if there were no Christ! Attempt not to say, He is nothing to me. Though you pass by the Cross and refuse to look on Christ, yet the Crucified One looks on you and casts His shadow on your path. His blood will be upon you, either to cry out against you, as a murderer of the Son of God, or else to be your cleansing from all sin! As to the Person of your Lord, it is evident that you either love Him or do not love Himone of the two it must be. What is your condition at this hour? Sitting among the people of God in this house on this Sabbath, are you lovers of the Lord Jesus, or are you His enemies?

May God bless that stroke of the winnowing fan, so that by it the chaff may be separated from the wheat. But the test is this, the loving of Christ. Loving Christ is not the way of salvationthat can only be ascribed to faith, as it is written, He that believes on Me has everlasting life. But the flower which comes out of the seed of faith is love. And faith is not true faith unless it works by love and so purifies the heart.

Observe that the love is personalHe that loves Me not. He speaks not, here, of love to doctrine, but of love to HimselfHe that loves

Me. There is a personal Christ and He is to be loved by each one of us individually. Do not think of Christ as an historic person who came and went away, whose memory may be dear, but who cannot personally be the object of a present love. If you are truly His disciple and a partaker of His salvation, you love Him. You realize Him as a living Personas much so as your own self, as your dear wife or your near friendand your heart, in deed and in truth, is bound to Him. The tendrils of your affection must lay hold on Jesus, climbing upwards toward God by laying hold upon His Son. You may not always be able to say that you are sure that you love Him because your agony to be right may create in you a painful anxiety and even a morbid jealousy as to your own sinceritybut you do love Him if you are called by His Grace. But if you do not love Him, you have never tasted of His power to save.

When I read those words just now, He that loves Me not, I felt as if I must repeat the words of Paul and say, Let him be Anathema Maranathacursed at the coming of the Lordfor is it not an awful thing for any heart to refuse to love Jesus? The most lovable of all beings is Jesus! It is unnatural not to love One so amiable. As streams of water naturally flow into the lowest part of the valley, so one would have thought that the condescension of Jesus for our sakes made it natural for the love of men to run towards Him and concentrate itself within Him! Alas, our nature is now unnatural and it is only as the Spirit of God creates a new love in the heart that we yield our love to the ever-blessed Savior! If we are not lovers of the Lord Jesus, the Spirit of all Grace has not made us to know and trust Christ, for if we knew Jesus and trusted Him, our heart must be wedded to Him. Christ trusted must be Christ loved! We must love God when once the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit.

Judge yourselves, thendo you love Jesus truly and supremely? He says, He that loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. He claims the first place in the hearts of His people. He is an allengrossing Savior who will never be satisfied till He has monopolized all our affections and carried our hearts away to abide with Him in the treasury above. Let it be a matter, then, of personal trial with each one of you. Hear your risen Lord saying, Do you love Me? Not to Simon, alone, but to you, John, and to you, Mary, He says, Do you love Me? He stands here this morning, as once He stood by the lake of Galilee, and He puts this loving enquiry to each disciple, Do you love Me? Is His adorable Person the object of your intense regard? Can you fall at His feet and say, Lord, You know all things. You know that I love You. Show me what You would have me to do.

Furthermore, as we look at this text, we observe that, inasmuch as it is not always possible to gauge the emotions and the affections, a further test is given usHe that loves Me not keeps not My sayings. I may know, therefore, whether I love the Lord Jesus Christ by answering this further question, Do I keep His sayings? What does this mean? It means, first, have we a reverent regard for all the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ? Do we receive them as being our standard of doctrine and our rule of life? Remember that, in effect, all that is in the Old Testament as well as in the New must be considered to be the sayings of Christ, for He says that He came not to destroy the Law, but to establish it. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but not one tittle of the Law shall fail. The whole record of Inspiration is endorsed by Christ and may be said to be His sayings.

Now, do you accept these sacred Scriptures as your Infallible guide? Remember, the sayings of Jesus are the Word of the Father. Mark how Jesus says, The Word which you hear is not Mine, but the Fathers who sent Me. I tremble as I see, in this day, such a trifling with the Word of Godsuch a haste to criticize this and question that! There are degrees of inspiration, so we are told, and if that is so, we can be sure of nothing, since we have, first, to decide some subtle question as to the measure of the inspiration! As well have no Bible as such a Bible! Brothers and Sisters, the Word of the Lord shall have no such treatment from me and I trust it will not be so served by any of you, for if so, you will rob yourselves of comfort and offer grievous disrespect to your Divine Lord! I hope we can declare concerning all His sayingsYour Word was found and I did eat it, and it was unto me as my necessary food. More to be desired are these sayings than gold, yes, than much fine goldthey are sweeter, also, than honey and the honeycomb. Did a saying come from Christ? Has Jesus set forth a Truth in these Scriptures? Then it is not ours to judge, not ours to doubt, but ours to accept with implicit faith! The authority of Jesus stands to us in the place of reasoning. We so reverence Him that we reverence His sayings as being the Truth of God, themselves.

To keep His sayings means, further, to make careful storage of them in the memory. To keep these sayings must mean to lay them up in the heart. The blessed Virgin kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart, and so does every Christian. Your Word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against You. It is a blessed thing when we are not content to hear Gods Word on the Lords-Day, only, but listen to its echoes every day in the week. We constantly chew the cud by meditation and so we are nourished. We delight to know the meaning of the Word by keeping it continually before our minds. We keep the heavenly object long before the sensitive plate of our mind till it is perfectly photographed there and we, ourselves, are changed by it from glory to glory as by the image of the Lord. Oh, Brothers and Sisters, unless we reverence the Word and hoard it up as the choicest of treasures, we have no proof that we love Christ!

Further than this, to keep Christs sayings must mean that, having learned them and retained them in the memory, we also further keep them in the mind by frequent contemplation. There is a great failure in this respect, I am afraid, among many professors. But those who fervently love Jesus and are sanctified to His service delight to be much engaged in meditating upon the sayings of Jesus. Our earthly cares are our burden, but our heavenly thoughts are our rest. What are human sciences but glimpses at transient and shadowy things? But spiritual meditation yields us views of eternal and substantial Truths of God! As I walk through my house and rejoice in the comforts of my home, I say to myself, These are only mine for a little while. God has prolonged my life, but at any moment these visible things may melt away and I may be where things are real, though they are now invisible.

Everything that has to do with this world is a vain show! But as for the world to come, he that has a possession therein has true riches! Should not our thoughts go most after that which is most? Should we not give the best of our consideration to that which is best? The most of our time to that which is not of time, but of eternity? I am sure he that loves Jesus delights to think upon the choice Words which fell from His lips. We sit down under His shadow, for He is to us the Tree of Life and not a single leaf of His shall wither, nor the least of His sayings fall to the ground.

Still, I have no doubt that the main meaning of keeping Christs sayings is found in obeying Him. Dear Friends, I do not want to say anything that will be severe, but yet I shall put to you a question which ought to alarm many professors. Did you ever spend a whole day, from morning to night, in distinctly and resolutely doing that which would honor Christ? I do not mean did you give up your business? Did you quit your family? Such strange conduct would not honor Jesus, but would do the reverse! But have you, day after day, thought and acted as if Jesus were your Master and you His servant? Is it habitual with you to say, I will only do that which Christ would do if He were in my place? His example shall be my Law. I will not be ruled by the hope of personal advantage or selfish comfortto me the supreme rule shall beWhat would Jesus do? What would Jesus have me to do?

I am afraid certain professors fancy that to hold a sound creed, to attend a faithful ministry and to subscribe, now and then, to charitable works, is about the whole of religion. But you utterly miss the mark if you judge such matters to be the chief items of godliness. The chief matter is to love Christ so that we live for Him and honor Him by obedience to Him! We cannot serve Christ by following our own whims. He who follows his own vagaries is a vagrantonly he who obeys Jesus is His follower. By doing what Jesus bids usby catching His Spirit, by seeing things in His way of seeing them and by acting both towards man and towards God in His way of actingwe may make men see what a glorious Savior we have! We ought to so display the sweet fruit of the Holy Spirit in our lives that men may be filled with admiration of our Lord! May God help us to do this, for if we do not keep our Lords sayings by our holy living, we have no proof that we love Christand if we do not love Him, then we are not His disciples!

I beg you, my fellow Brothers and Sisters, to apply this text to yourselves! Is the Lord Jesus reverenced by you as your Teacher? Do you bow before the authority of His Word? Do you turn to the Bible and say of it

*This is the judge that ends the strife,*

*Where wit and reason fail?*   
Have you subjected your intellect to His teaching? The loose thinkers of the present day imagine that they may believe what they like and think what they please. But it is not so. They do as good as say, Our minds are our own. God shall never rule over us. But this becomes not a saint. Our Lord Jesus will be King of our entire nature, or of none of it! I claim the province of the understanding for my Lord, for it is a part of His empire which He will not leave in the hands of the enemy! We are as responsible for our beliefs as for our acts! We are never in full subordination to our Lord till we yield ourselves devoutly and reverently to His instruction, calling Him Master and Lord, because so He is!

Brethren, do you yield your whole lives to Jesus? Do you aim at perfect obedience? Do you repent your failures? Do you cry to Him daily, My Master, mold me to Your will, for to bear Your image is my ambition. I would re-live Your life and be Your representative on earth, even as You are my Representative in Heaven. Oh, that I could say of Your Father and my Father, I do always the things which please Him!

II. So much for the test of discipleship. Now, in the second place, I beg you to follow me while I speak for a minute or two upon THE NEEDS OF A TRUE BELIEVER.

The Believer, though he truly loves his Lord is, nevertheless, a most necessitous person and sadly full of needs. He does not need any better Gospelthe Lord Jesus Christ taught us the best Gospel that could be and, indeed, there can be no other. When Paul spoke of another Gospel, he added, which is not another; but there are some that trouble you. We desire nothing wiser, fuller, or better than the doctrine which our Lord once delivered to the saints. I heard of a mother speaking to her boy the other day words of truth and soberness. Her hopeful and eager son was tempted to run after certain loyalties of doctrine and practice and she said to him, What we have heard from our minister is enough for me, for it is according to Scripture. Your father and mother have lived on this Gospel and it has helped them through a thousand troubles, even to this day. And your dear old grandfather and grandmother lived on the same Gospel and died upon it triumphantly! Therefore, hold fast by it. We have tried it and proved it, therefore do not depart from it.

That was common-sense talk. I am afraid of the new gospel. I have not proved it, but what I have seen of its results in others makes me tremble! Let those who will, go to sea in ships of reed or of cardboardheart-of-oak suffices for me! Such vessels have carried men to the ends of the world and home again for many years and in these, alone, will I cross the ocean. Those who seek after the novelties of this conceited century seek to push their Lord from His place, that a philosopher may fill His Throne! They seem to say, Stand back, You Galilean! You were good enough for the dark ages, but we need a brighter light for these brighter times. I return to what I said beforewe need no better Gospel than that which God Himself has set forth in the Person of His Son Jesus Christ.

These disciples to whom our Lord spoke did not need any better Preacherthey could not imagine a better. Never man spoke like this Man. What power and authority there was in Him and what an unction of the Holy One was upon Him! I cannot say that of you, for you, beloved Friends, might often sigh for an abler preacher and it may be that in some places where you live, your Sabbaths are a bondage to you because the pure Gospel is not declared and the sheep are not fed. But in the case of these Apostles, they could not have had a better Preacher and yet, for all that, because the Holy Spirit was not yet fully given and was not dwelling in them, they had really learned very little. You see the Lord Jesus Christ says of Himself, These things have I spoken unto you. He does not say that He had actually taught them. The last Words of my text are, All things whatever I have said unto you. All that Jesus had done, if we view Him merely as a Preacher, was to speak and to say. But He could not teach the heart, apart from the Holy Spirit! Between Christ on earth and His disciples what a distance there was! In His condescension He came very near to them, yet you always perceive a gulf between the wise Master and the foolish disciples. Now the Holy Spirit annihilates that distance by dwelling in us!

The best instructed of the Apostles failed to understand his Lord while He merely spoke to them. Often the disciples ran away with the words which He had uttered and dwelt upon their letter, altogether missing their spiritual meaning. Frequently when they obtained a glimpse of the spiritual meaning, they beclouded it with some prejudice or tradition of their own, which, like smoke, obscured their vision. As to memory, they displayed but little of that faculty towards spiritual thingsthey were constantly forgetting what the Lord had told themand acting in a manner directly the opposite of His precept and example.

Externally, all was providedoutward ministries of the noblest order were vouchsafed. But they needed something within theman inward and effectual Teacher, a secret and powerful Remembrancer! Yes, more, they required to be caused to enjoy what they knew and rememberedthey needed the Comforter to extract for them the honey of consolation from the honeycomb of doctrine! Their Lord had taught them all manner of comfortable Truths and yet He had to say to them, Let not your heart be troubled. He had supplied them with the best arguments for courage and yet they were afraid. They required a Helper who would make them understand the Truth, remember the Truth and enjoy the Truth. And this is just what you and I stand in need of every hour, for we may sit under the most edifying preacher and remain unedified if we look to his words, only. We may hear the best doctrine and yet be unable to get at it so as to receive it and feel the power of it. Truth without the Spirit of God profits not the soul.

Even if you understand, you may forget. I dare say you have often to lament that the good Word of God slips away from you and this is a great evil. Why do we forget? Is it not largely through ignorance and lack of understanding? When a child does not understand his lesson, he soon forgets it. He who does not obtain a clear view of the Truth of God will fail to remember it, just as you soon forget a person whom you have only seen casually for a few moments and in a dim light. We cannot easily hold in the memory that which we have not firmly grasped with the mind. Again, we forget heavenly things because we are so occupied with worldly thingsour cares, our joys, our pleasures, our pursuits often crowd the things of God into a corner and even tread them down with heedless fury! We forget our eternal prospects because we are thinking of our immediate interests. Our circumstances compel us to think of lower objects, but we need Divine help to abide in communion with the higher matters. We need Someone to bring these things to our remembrance and to elevate us to a superior region of mind and heart.

At times we forget our Lords sayings and become bewildered by many afflictions. Trouble follows troublewe go from darkness to deeper darkness in our experiencesand we are so worried that we forget. When we most need the promise, we are most apt to forget it. There are good solid steps all through the Slough of Despondbut when a man is passing through that horrible place, he is usually so hurried and confused that he cannot see the steppingstones, but slips into the deep mire where there is no standing. It is ill for us to be in a storm and our anchor at home. The promise is admired when we do not require it, but how often is it forgotten when it would be of the utmost service! We need a Prompter, a Friend out of sight to suggest the proper word, or else we blunder and flounder and do not act our parts aright. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to refresh our memories.

Sometimes, I am afraid, our memories fail us because we are not particularly anxious to remember. Certain precepts are so contrary to the carnal mind that if we can forget them we are sure to do so. You know how easy it is, in your family reading, to omit parts of Gods Word which are too close and personal. We are afraid of the razor which cuts too close to the skin. Have you not felt, in the morning, when your servants have been gathered together, that you could not well read a certain passage because you had been out of temper, or unkind, or in some other way out of proper form? You feared that they would say, Our master and the Bible do not agree. In your own private thoughts, a precept occurs to you, but you feel it convenient to ignore it because it would stand in the way of a design which you are cherishing. You intend to go through with your purpose and, therefore, you shut your eyes to an inconvenient text.

But if we are under the guidance of the Spirit of God, He will bring to our remembrance the duty in its proper time and we shall bring forth our fruit in its season. It is extremely easy to be wise after folly and to be calm after the danger is over. We find the candle when the night is ended. We cry, Dear me, if I had felt, yesterday, what I feel today, how differently I would have acted! We are so often a little behind the market. We lock the door after the horse is stolen. Fruit out of season is always deficient in flavornever are the scent and the taste so perfect as in the middle of the season. Oh, that we may bring forth our fruit in its due seasonpatience in tribulation, courage in danger, holiness in life and hope in death! We fail to do this because that evil nature which is in us makes us forget at the precise moment what we ought to remember. It is the office of the Holy Spirit to bring before us the sayings of Christ in their due order and time. Do you not need this?

III. Hoping to retain your prayerful attention, I proceed to notice THE PRIVILEGE OF THE TRUE BELIEVER. It is the true disciples privilege to possess, in the Holy Spirit, a private Tutor, a Prompter and a Comforter.

The Lord Jesus says, The Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things. Christ, in His sayings, gave us our class book, complete and Infallible, but through our dullness, we need more. That young man has gone to college. He has with him all necessary books and in them is to be found all that he will need to learn. Even thus the Lord Jesus has given us, in His sayings, all that we need to know. But the young mans father wishes him to become a learned man and, therefore, he engages a private tutor for himone who will teach him what the books contain. With his tutors help, his books are of far greater use to him than before. If any passage is difficult, the tutor explains it. He puts the youth into the way of reading his books so as to get the full value of them. Spiritually, this is the office of the Holy Spirit He finds us the key wherewith to open up the mystery which otherwise would be out of our reach.

He really teaches us. To teach you is a very different thing from speaking to you. A person may speak to a company of young people and yet teach them nothing. If I am anxious to instruct a Brother on any point, I do not merely speak to him, but I go over the ground carefully, set out each point distinctly, repeat my statements deliberately and illustrate them appropriately. The Spirit of God, when He takes the child of God out of the company and speaks privately to his heart, goes over the Truth of God with him till it is made clear and happily apprehended. We need to have the Truth of God opened up to the understanding, impressed upon the heart, made real to the apprehension, applied to the mind, worked into the affections and endeared to the soul. It is one thing to hear the Word of God, but it is another thing to learn the Word of Godit is one thing to be told, but quite another thing to be taught.

The Spirit teaches the saints, either at once or by degrees, all the Truths of Christ. Some parts of that whole you will never learn, except upon a sick bed, or in deep depression of spirit, or in bereavement and adversitywhile other Truths will only be learned on the bright mountains of assurance and communion with God. It is the Spirits province to burn Truth into the soul, to engrave it upon the renewed heart and make the mind sure and certain as to what it knows. No knowledge is so sure as that which the Holy Spirit communicates to our spirit. Inward teaching is effectual teaching. A man taught of God knows and cannot be made to question what he knows. Time was, whenever I heard a skeptical remark, I felt wounded and somewhat shaken. I am no longer shaken by these wandering winds. There are certain things of which I am as sure of as my own existence! I have seen, tasted and handled themand I am past being argued out of them by those who know nothing about them.

I am a lost man if the old, old Gospel is not true! There is no way of salvation for me if it is not of Grace through faith in the atoning Sacrifice! And as I know that I am not lost, but am surely a saved man, I know that the Word which has saved me is the Truth of God! Those who are familiar with spiritual realities defy denialthey set their inward consciousness against 10,000 skepticismsif they cannot convince others, they are convinced themselves. We must be taught by the Spirit of God in a secret, personal, unquestionable, effectual manner! We must be made to feel the power of the Truth of God by a spiritual inoculation with it, so that it enters into our very life and becomes part and parcel of ourselves.

It is promised us that the Comforter will teach us all thingsthat is, all the things which Jesus said and did. Have we realized this far-reaching privilege? There is a great variety in the knowledge of Christ. Nobody need think that he will exhaust it. There is, moreover, a proportion in the things of Christ, and we need to know all that our Lord has set forth. Jesus does not teach only doctrine, though some professors crave doctrine and doctrine, alone. Jesus does not teach all practiceHe teaches practice wondrouslybut He also declares doctrine! Our Lord does not teach either doctrine or practice without experience, but He makes a perfect blend to our edification. The way with some of Gods people is either to have nothing but doctrine, or else nothing but practice, or else nothing but experienceand this warps and spoils them. Give yourself up to the Spirit of God and He will teach you all thingshere a little and there a littlehere a little of what you should know, there a little of what you should feel and then, again, a little of what you should do.

Remember that especially in the doing part of it, the Spirit of God must be your Teacher. A lad is put apprentice to a handicraft. How does he learn it? Why, by seeing how his master does it and by doing it, himself! At first he spoils the material and his master needs to have much patience with himbut, at last, practice makes perfect and the apprentice becomes a journeyman. The Spirit of God, with wonderful condescension, puts us to practice a little patience. We soon get weary of that task. When He gives us an opportunity of producing lovelove to some poor wretched waif on lifes rough seawe are apt to grow chilled by his ingratitude and wearied with our non-success. The Holy Spirit drills us in heavenly marching till we keep step with our Lord and men take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus and have learned of Him.

Brothers and Sisters, you are to keep your Lords sayings and never go beyond them, but to do this will need the private tutoring of the Holy Spiritand you must not be satisfied unless He wakens you morning by morning and opens your ears to hear what He has to say, bringing home to your heart and conscience the things that make you wise unto salvation.

As we need something beside this, it is a mercy that we have it. We require that our memories be strengthened. What wretched memories we have as to Divine things! As I have already said, we recollect when it is too late and thus our memories serve, rather, to minister to our regret than to our improvement. It should not be so and if we will put ourselves under the teaching of the Spirit of God it shall not remain so. He will strengthen our memories spiritually. He often brings the Truth of God to our minds do you not find it so? While you are sitting here, this morning, flashes of the Light of God have been around you. Branch roads have opened up as we have proceeded. Vistas of the Truth of God have rejoiced your vision. You have cried with wonder, I never saw that before! That is the Spirit of God! Frequently a doctrine comes home to you with the force of a new discoveryyou had heard the Truth, before, but you had never seen itbut the Spirit brings it to your remembrance with singular vivacity and force!

He refreshes the mind by vivid recollections. He refreshes the heart by melting gratitude. I have known times when my memory of the love of Christ has made me sit down and weep for very joy! Oh, what gratitude wells up in the heart when the Holy Spirit brings all that Christ did to remembrance and we hear Him say from His Cross, I did all this for you what have you done for Me? It is the Spirits work to refresh the memory of the heart as well as the memory of the mind. Often He refreshes the memory of the consciencenot quite so pleasant an operation. I have been doing, for years, wrong things without knowing them to be wrong. I have been neglecting a manifest duty for a long time, but all of a sudden that duty has been brought to my remembrance as one of the things which Jesus told me. I bless the Holy Spirit for thus sanctifying me by giving me a higher standard of holiness and making me more particular about things which I glossed over with but slight attention This is a part of the work of the Holy Spirit of God, to bring all things to your remembrance, whatever He has told you.

I am sure the Spirit of God often blesses us by bringing things to the memory of our hope. Perhaps this is an odd way of putting it, for how can hope have a memory? But I mean this, that hope seems to forget that the Lord has said, I will never leave you, nor forsake you, Hope seems to forget that

*There is a land of pure delight,*

*Where saints immortal reign.*   
And sometimes the Spirit of God brings all that glorious revelation of the world to come before our minds. Have you never felt Glory begun below? Have not the pearly gates seemed to stand, not ajar, but wide openand have you not, in spirit, walked down the streets of gold and worn your crownand cast it at your Saviors feet? Then you have said to yourself, I can bear this pain. I can put up with these depressions and these inconveniences, for I know that there is laid up for me, in Heaven, a crown of life that fades not. The Spirit of God thus brings all things to our remembrance!

I shall say no more, but pray the Spirit of God to come upon you this very day and bring to your remembrance all things that Christ has ever said to you. There will be a mixture of sunny memories and sorrowing memories, but they will be blessed memories, all of them! I thought, when I was trying to prepare a subject for this morning, All that I have preached for these many years is taken from me and printed, so that I cannot repeat itwhat shall I do? And then this Truth of God came to me, He shall teach you. He shall teach you, and I begged Him to teach me that I might teach you. I thought, Alas, I have had many bright and sparkling thoughts at times, but they do not come just now. I sat still, waitingand then the fact came to me that the Holy Spirit would bring all things to my remembrance whatever the Lord Jesus had said. I find my natural memory to be less powerful than it used to be in the days of my youth. Shall I, therefore, be allowed to forget when I am teaching? No, He shall teach you, and bring all things to your remembrance. How beautiful!

I have noticed old people whose memories have been sadly feeble. I knew one who forgot his children. But I never knew an old saint, yet, who forgot the name of the Savior, or failed to remember His love! Sometimes the Holy Spirit bears such witness in the heart that the memory is very strong about Divine things even when it fails about spiritual things. So, my dear old Friend, you that the youngsters sometimes amuse themselves with because your memory has got to be like an old sieve that lets everything throughit will not let your Lord throughyou will always feel the music of His name! You will never forget your Well-Beloved if you live to be as old as Methuselah! Memory, though it leaves no other name, shall leave that name recorded there! Christs love is not hung upon us like a garland on a tree, but it is cut into us and, as the tree grows, the letters grow deeper and broader every day! The Holy Spirit, who is the life of Believers, writes more and more clearly upon that life the glorious and blessed name of Jesus!

I wish that any here who do not know Christ would cry for the Spirit of God to teach Him to them. If you long to be saved, pray that by His Spirit the Lord Jesus may bring you into the bond of the Covenant, for His loves sake. Amen.

**PORTIONS OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON John 14:15-31; 16:1-14.**   
HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK152, 455, 458.

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THE TEACHING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT   
NO. 315

**DELIVERED ON SABBATH MORNING, MAY 13, 1860, BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT EXETER HALL, STRAND.

**But the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance,   
whatever I have said unto you.**

**John 14:26.**

THERE are many choice gifts comprehended in the Covenant of Grace, but the first and richest of them are these twothe gift of Jesus Christ for us and the gift of the Holy Spirit to us. The first of these I trust we are not likely to undervalue. We delight to hear of that unspeakable giftthe Son of God, who bare our sins and carried our sorrows and endured our punishment in His own body on the tree. There is something so tangible in the Cross, the nails, the vinegar, the spear, that we are not able to forget the Master, especially when so often we enjoy the delightful privilege of assembling round His table and breaking bread in remembrance of Him.

But the second great gift, by no means inferior to the firstthe gift of the Holy Spirit to usis so spiritual and we are so carnalis so mysterious and we are so materialthat we are very apt to forget its value, yes and even to forget the gift altogether. And yet, my Brethren, let us ever remember that Christ on the Cross is of no value to us apart from the Holy Spirit in us. In vain that blood is flowing, unless the finger of the Spirit applies the blood to our conscience. In vain is that garment of righteousness worked out, a garment without seam, woven from the top throughoutunless the Holy Spirit wraps it around us and arrays us in its costly folds.

The river of the water of life cannot quench our thirst till the Spirit presents the goblet and lifts it to our lip. All the things that are in the Paradise of God itself could never be blissful to us so long as we are dead Soulsand dead souls we are until that heavenly wind comes from the four corners of the earth and breathes upon us slain, that we may live. We do not hesitate to say that we owe as much to God the Holy Spirit as we do to God the Son. Indeed, it were a high sin and misdemeanor to attempt to put one Person of the Divine Trinity before another. You, O Father, are the source of all grace, all love and mercy towards us. You, O Son, are the channel of Your Fathers mercy and without You Your Fathers love could never flow to us. And you, O SpiritYou are He who enables us to receive that Divine virtue which flows from the Fountainhead, the Father, through Christ the Channeland by Your means enters into our spirit and there abides and brings forth its glorious fruit. Magnify, then, the Spirit, you who are partakers of itpraise, laud and love His name always, for it is seemly to do so.

My work this morning is to set forth the work of the Holy Spirit, not as a Comforter, or as a Quickener, or as a Sanctifier, but principally as a Teacher, although we shall have to touch upon these other points in passing.

The Holy Spirit is the great Teacher of the Fathers children. The Father begets us by His own will through the Word of Truth. Jesus Christ takes us into union with Himself, so that we become in a second sense the children of God. Then God the Holy Spirit breathes into us the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. Having given us that spirit of adoption, He trains us, becomes our great Educator, cleanses away our ignorance and reveals one Truth of God after anotheruntil at last we comprehend with all saints what are the heights and depths and lengths and breadthsand know the love of Christ which passes knowledge. And then the Spirit introduces the educated ones to the general assembly and Church of the firstborn whose names are written in Heaven.

Concerning this Teacher, these three thingsfirst, what He teaches. Secondly, His methods of teaching. And thirdly, the nature and characteristics of that teaching.

I. First, then, WHAT THE HOLY SPIRIT TEACHES US. And here, indeed, we have a wide field spread before us, for He teaches to Gods people all they do that is acceptable to the Father and all they know that is profitable to themselves.

1. I say that He teaches them all that they do. Now, there are some things which you and I can do naturally, when we are but children without any teaching. Who ever taught a child to cry? It is natural to it. The first sign of its life is its shrill feeble cry of pain. Ever afterwards you need never send it to school to teach it to utter the cry of its grief, the well-known expression of its little sorrows. Ah, my Brethren, but you and I as spiritual infants, had to be taught to cry. For we could not even cry of ourselves, till we had received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. There are cries and groans which cannot be uttered in words and speechsimple as this language of the new nature seems to be.

But even these feeblest groans, sighing, cries, and tears are marks of education. We must be taught to do this, or else we are not sufficient to do even these little things in and of ourselves. Children, as we know, have to be taught to speak and it is by degrees that they are able to pronounce first the shorter and afterwards the longer words. We, too, are taught to speak. We have none of us learned, as yet, the whole vocabulary of Canaan. I trust we are able to say some of the words. But we shall never be able to pronounce them all till we come into that land where we shall see Christ and shall be like He; for we shall see Him as He is.

The sayings of the saints, when they are good and true, are the teachings of the Spirit. Marked you not that passageNo man can say that Jesus is the Christ but by the Holy Spirit? He may say as much in dead words, but the Spirits saying, the saying of the soul, he can never attain to, except as he is taught by the Holy Spirit. Those first words which we ever used as ChristiansGod be merciful to me, a sinner, were taught us by the Holy Spirit. And that song which we shall sing before the ThroneUnto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever, shall but be the ripe fruit of that same tree of knowledge of good and evil which the Holy Spirit has planted in the soil of our hearts.

Further, as we are taught to cry and taught to speak by the Holy Spirit, so are all Gods people taught to walk and act by Him. It is not in man that walks to direct his steps. We may take the best heed to our life, but we shall stumble or go astray unless He who first set us in the path shall guide us in it. I taught Ephraim also to go, taking them by their arms. He makes me to lie down in green pastures: He leads me beside the still waters. To stray is natural. To keep the path of right is spiritual. To err is human. To be holy is Divine. To fall is the natural effect of evil. But to stand is the glorious effect of the Holy Spirit working in us, both to will and to do of his own good pleasure.

There was never yet a heavenly thought, never yet a hallowed deed, never yet a consecrated act acceptable to God by Jesus Christ, which was not worked in us by the Holy Spirit. You have worked all our works in us. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them.

Now as it is with the simple deeds of the Christian, his crying, his speaking, his walking, his actingall these are teachings of the Holy Spiritso is it with the higher efforts of his nature. The preaching of the Gospel, when it is done right, is only accomplished through the power of the Holy Spirit. That sermon which is based upon human genius is worthless. That sermon which has been obtained through human knowledge and which has no other force in it than the force of logic or of oratory, is spent in vain. God works not by such tools as these. He cleans not spirits by the water from broken cisternsneither does he save souls by thoughts which come from mens brains, apart from the Divine influence which goes with them.

We might have all the learning of the sages of Greece, no, better still, all the knowledge of the twelve Apostles put togetherand then we might have the tongue of a seraph and the eyes and heart of a Saviorbut apart from the Spirit of the living God, our preaching would yet be vain and our hearers and ourselves would still abide in our sins. To preach rightly can only be accomplished by the Holy Spirit. There may be a thing called preaching that is of human energy, but Gods ministers are taught of the Holy One. And when their word is blessed, either to saint or sinner, the blessing comes not of them, but of the Holy Spirit and unto Him be all the glory, for it is not you that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaks in you.

So is it with sacred song. Whose are the wings with which I mount towards the skies in sacred harmony and joy? They are Your wings, O Holy Dove! Whose is the fire with which my spirit flames at times of hallowed consecration? Yours is the flame, O fiery Spirit! Yours. Whose is the tongue of fire which rested on the apostolic lips? Yours was that cleft tongue, You, Holy One of Israel! Whose is that dew which falls upon the withered blade and makes it smile and fire? Yours are those holy drops, You Dew of God. You are that womb of the morning from where these beauties of holiness proceed. You have worked an in us and unto You

would we give well-deserved thanks. So, then, all the doings of the Christian, both the little and the major doings, are all the teachings of the Holy Spirit.

2. But now, fartherall that the Believer truly knows which is profitable to himself is taught him by the Holy Spirit. We may learn very much from the Word of God morally and mentally, but the Christian philosopher understands that there is a distinction between soul and spirit. He knows that the mere natural soul or intellect of man may instruct itself well enough out of the Word of God, but that spiritual things are only to be spiritually discerned. He knows that until that third, higher principlethe spiritis infused into us in regeneration, we have not even the capability or the possibility of knowing spiritual things.

Now it is this third, higher principle, of which the Apostle speaks when he speaks of body, soul and spirit. Mental philosophers declare there is no such thing as the third partthe spirit. They can find a body and a soul, but no spirit. They are quite rightthere is no such thing in natural men. That third principlethe spiritis an infusion of the Holy Spirit at regeneration and is not to be detected by mental philosophy. It is altogether a subtler thinga thing too rare, too heavenly to be described by Dugald, Stewart, or Reid, or Brown or any of those mighty men who could dissect the mind, but who could not understand the spirit.

Now, the Spirit of God first gives us a spirit and then afterwards educates that spirit. All that our spirit knows is taught it by the Holy Spirit. Perhaps the first thing that we learn of is sinHe reproves us of sin. No man knows the exceeding sinfulness of sin but by the Holy Spirit. You may punish a man, you may tell him of the wrath of God and of sin but you cannot make him know what an evil and a bitter thing sin is till the Holy Spirit has taught it to him.

Tis an awful lesson, indeed, to learnand when the Holy Spirit makes us sit down upon the stool of penitence and begins to drill this great Truth of God into usthat sin is damnation in the budthat it is Hell in the germit is then when we begin to perceive it. Then we cry out, Now I know how vile I am, my soul abhors itself in dust and ashes! No man, I repeat it, will ever know the sinfulness of sin by argument, by punishment, by moral discipline, or by any means apart from the education of the Holy Spirit. It is a truth beyond the reach of human intellect to know how base a thing sin is. The spirit alone, engrafted and given by the Holy Spiritthat spirit alone can learn the lesson and only the Holy Spirit can teach it.

The next lesson the Spirit teaches us is the total ruin, depravity and helplessness of self. Men pretend to know this by nature, but they do not know it. They can only speak the words of experience as parrots speak like men. But to know myself utterly lost and ruined, to know myself so lost, that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing, is a knowledge so distasteful, so hateful, so abominable to the carnal intellect, that man would not learn it if he could. If he has learnt it, it is a clear proof that God the Holy Spirit has made him willing to see the Truth of God and willing to receive it.

We sometimes hear great preachers telling us that there is something grand left in man yet. They say that when Adam fell he might have broken his little finger, but did not ruin himself entirelythat man is a grand beingin fact a noble creature and that we are all wrong in telling men they are depraved and thundering out the Law of God at themam I astonished that they should speak thus? No, my Brethren, it is the language of the carnal mind the whole world over and in every age. No wonder that a man is eloquent upon this pointevery man needs to be eloquent when he has to defend a lie.

No wonder that glorious sentences have been uttered and flowery periods poured forth from a cornucopia of eloquence upon this subject. A man need exhaust all logic and all rhetoric to defend a falsehoodand it is no wonder that he seeks to do it, for man believes himself to be rich and increased in goods and to have need of nothingtill the Holy Spirit teaches him that he is naked and poor and miserable.

These lessons being learned, the Spirit proceeds to teach us further of the nature and character of God. God is to be heard in every wind and seen in every cloud. Gods goodness and Gods Omnipotence, the world clearly manifests to us in the works of creation, but where do I read of His grace, where do I read of His mercy, or of His justice? There are lines which I cannot read in creation. Those must have ears, indeed, who can hear the notes of mercy or of grace whispering in the evening gale.

No, Brethren, these parts of Gods attributes are only revealed to us in this precious Book and there they are so revealed that we cannot know them until the Spirit opens our eyes to perceive them. Only He can enable us to understand the inflexibility of Divine justice and to see how God exacts punishment for every jot and tittle of sin. Only the Holy Spirit can enable us to know that that full justice does not eclipse His equally full mercybut that the two move around each other, without for a single instant coming into contact, or conflict, or casting the slightest shadow one or the other. To see how God is just and yet the Justifier of the ungodly and so to know God that my spirit loves His nature, appreciates His attributes and desires to be like Hethis is a knowledge which astronomy cannot teachwhich all the researches of the sciences can never give to us.

We must be taught of God, if we ever learn of Himwe must be taught of God, by God the Holy Spirit. Oh, that we may learn this lesson well, that we may be able to sing of His faithfulness, of His covenant love, of His immutability, of His boundless mercy, of His inflexible justice. Oh, that we may be able to talk to one another concerning that incomprehensible One and may see Him even as a man sees His friendand may come to walk with Him as Enoch did all the days of our life! This, indeed, must be an education given to us by the Holy Spirit.

But not to tarry on these points, though they are prolific of thought, let us observe that the Holy Spirit specially teaches us of Jesus Christ. It is the Holy Spirit who manifests the Savior to us in the glory of His Person the complex Character of His Manhood and of His Deity. It is He who tells us of the love of His heart, of the power of His arms, of the clearness of His eyes, the preciousness of His blood and of the prevalence of His plea.

To know that Christ is my Redeemer is to know more than Plato could have taught me. To know that I am a member of His body, of His flesh and of His bonesthat my name is on His breast and engraved on the palms of his handsis to know more than the Universities of Oxford or Cambridge could teach to all their scholars, learn they ever so well.

Not at the feet of Gamaliel did Paul learn to say, He loved me and gave Himself for me. Not in the midst of the Rabbis, or at the feet of the members of the Sanhedrim, did Paul learn to cryThose things which I counted gain, I now count loss for Christs sake. God forbid that I should glory save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. No, this must have been taught as He Himself confessesnot of flesh and blood, but of the Holy Spirit.

I need only hint that it is also the Spirit who teaches us our adoption. Indeed, all the privileges of the new covenant, beginning from regeneration, running through redemption, justification pardon, sanctification, adoption, preservation, continual safety, even unto an abundant entrance into the kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christall is the teaching of the Holy Spirit. Especially that last point, for eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for them that love Him. But God has revealed them unto us by His Spirit, for the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. He leads us into the truth of joys to come, carries our spirit upwards and gives us

*That inward calm within the breast,   
The surest pledge of glorious rest,   
Which for the Church of God remains,  
The end of cares, the end of pains.*

II. And now I come to the second point, which is thisTHE METHODS BY WHICH THE HOLY SPIRIT TEACHES GODS CHILDREN THESE PRECIOUS THINGS.

Here we must remark that we know nothing of the precise way of operation because the Spirit is mysterious. We know not from where He comes nor where He goes. But still let us describe what we can perceive. And first, in teaching Gods people, one of the first things the Spirit does is to excite interest in their minds. I frequently find that when men are being educated for the ministry, the hardest thing is to set them going.

They are like bats on the ground. If once a bat gets on the earth he cannot fly until he creeps to the top of a stone and gets a little above the earth and then he gets wing and can fly well enough. So there are many who have not got their energies arousedthey have talent but it is asleepand we want a kind of railway whistle to blow in their ears to make them start up and rub away the film from their eyes so that they may see.

Now it is just so with menwhen the Spirit of God begins to teach them, He excites their interest in the things which He wishes them to learn. He shows them that these things here a personal bearing upon their souls present and eternal welfare. He so brings precious Truths of God home, that what the man thought was utterly indifferent yesterday, he now begins to esteem inestimably precious Oh, says he, theology! Of what use can it be to me? But now the knowledge of Christ and Him crucified has become to him the most desirable and excellent of all the sciences. The Holy Spirit awakens his interest.

That done, He gives to the man a teachable spirit. There be men who will not learn. They profess that they want to know, but you never found the right way of teaching them. Teach them little by little and they say Do you think I am a child? Tell them a great deal at once and they say You have not the power to make me comprehend! I have been compelled sometimes to say to a man, when I have been trying to make him understand and he has said I cannot understand you, Well, Sir, I am thankful it is not my duty to give you an understanding if you have none.

Now, the Holy Spirit makes a man willing to learn in any shape. The disciple sits down at the feet of Christ. And let Christ speak as He may and teach Him as He will, whether with the rod, or with a smile, he is quite willing to learn. Distasteful the lessons are, but the regenerated pupil loves to learn best the very things he once hated. Cutting to his pride the doctrines of the Gospel, each one of them may bebut for this very reason he loves them. He cries, Lord, humble me. Lord, bring me down. Teach me those things that will make me cover my head with dust and ashes. Show me my nothingnessteach me my emptiness. Reveal to me my filthiness. the Holy Spirit thus proceeds with His work awaking interest and enkindling a teachable spirit.

This done, the Holy Spirit in the next place puts the Truth of God in a dear light. How hard it is, sometimes, to state a fact which you perfectly understand yourself, in such a way that another man may see it. It is like the telescope. There are many persons who are disappointed with a telescope, because whenever they walk into an observatory and put their eye to the glass, expecting to see the rings of Saturn and the belts of Jupiter, they have said, I can see nothing at all. A piece of glass and a grain or two of dust is all I can see!

But, says the astronomer, when he comes, I can see Saturn in all her glory. Why cannot you? Because the focus does not suit the strangers eye. By a little skill, the focus can be altered so that the observer may be able to see what he could not see before. So is it with language. It is a sort of telescope by which I enable another to see my thoughts, but I cannot always give him the right focus. Now the Holy Spirit always gives the right focus to every Truth of God. He sheds a light so strong and forcible upon the Word, that the spirit says. Now I see it, now I understand it.

Even here, in this precious Book, there are words which I have looked at a hundred times, but I could not understand them, till at some favored hour, the key-word seemed as if it leaped up from the midst of the verse and said to me, Look at the verse in my light, and at once I perceived not always from a word in the verse itself, but sometimes in the contextI perceived the meaning which I could not see before. This, too, is a part of the Spirits trainingto shed a light upon the Truths of God.

But the Spirit not only enlightens the Truth of God, but He enlightens the understanding. Tis marvelous, too, how the Holy Spirit does teach men who seemed as if they never could learn. I would not wish to say anything which my brother might be grieved at. But I do know some Brethren, I wont say they are here today, but they are not out of the placesome Brethren whose opinion I would not take in anything worldly

on any account. If it were anything to do with pounds, shillings and penceanything where human judgment was concernedI should not consult them. But those men have a deeper, truer and more experimental knowledge of the Word of God than many who preach it, because the Holy Spirit never tried to teach them grammar and never meant to teach them business. He never wanted to teach them astronomy. But He has taught them the Word of God and they understand it.

Other teachers have labored to beat the elements of science into them but without success, for they are as thick and addled in they brains as they can be. But the Holy Spirit has taught them the Word of God and they are clear enough there. I come in close contact with some young men. When we are taking our lessens for illustration out of the sciences, they seem to be all profound. But when I ask them a question to see if they have understood, they are lost. But, mark you, when we come to read a chapter out of some old Puritan bookcome to theologythose Brethren give me the smartest and sharpest answers of the whole class.

When we once come to deal with things experimental and controversial, I find those men are able to double up their opponents and vanquish them at once, because they are deeply read in the Word of God. The Spirit has taught them the things of Christ, but He has not taught them anything else. I have perceived, also, that when the Spirit of God has enlarged the understanding to receive Bible truths, that understanding becomes more capable of receiving other truths.

I heard, some time ago, from a brother minister, when we were comparing notes, the story of a man who had been the dullest creature that was known. He was not more than one grade above an idiot, but when he was converted to God, one of the first things he wanted to do was to read the Bible. They had a long, long trek to teach him a verse, but he would learn it, he would master it. He stuck at it as hard as ever he could, till he was able to read, In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. That man was by-and-by asked to engage in prayer. At first he hardly put a sentence together. By-and-by he arrived at a considerable degree of fluency, because he would do it. He would not stand still, he said, in the Prayer Meeting and not have a word to say for his Master.

He began to read his Bible much and to pray with a great deal of profit and acceptableness to those that heard and after awhile, he actually began to speak in the villages and became sometime after an honored and acceptable pastor of one of our Baptist Churches. Had it not been for the Spirit of God first expanding the understanding to receive religious truth, that understanding might have been cramped and fettered and fast bolted to this very day. And the man might have been ever after an idiot and so have gone down to his gravewhile now he stands up to tell to sinners round, in burning language, the story of the Cross of Christ. The Spirit teaches us by enlightening the understanding.

Lest I weary you, let me hurry on through the other points. He teaches us also by refreshing the memory. He shall bring all things to your remembrance. He puts all those old treasures into the ark of our soul and when the time comes, He opens it and brings out these precious things in right good order and shows them to us again and again. He refreshes the memory and when this is done, He does betterHe teaches us the Word, by making us feel its effect and that, after all, is the best way of learning. You may try to teach a child the meaning of the term sweetness. But words will not avail. Give him some honey and he will never forget it.

You might seek to tell him of the glorious mountains and the Alps that pierce the clouds and send their peaks, like white-robed ambassadors up to the courts of Heaven. Take him there, let him see them and he will never forget them. You might seek to paint to him the grandeur of the American continent, with its hills and lakes and rivers, such as the world has never seenlet him go and view it and he will know more of the land than he could know by all your teaching, when he sits at home.

So the Holy Spirit does not only tell us of Christs loveHe sheds it abroad in the heart. He does not merely tell us of the sweetness of pardonHe gives us a sense of no condemnation and then we know all about itbetter than we could have done by any teaching of words and thoughts. He takes us into the banqueting house and waves the banner of love over us. He bids us visit the garden of love and makes us lie among the lilies. He gives us that bundle of camphor, even our Beloved, and bids us place it all night betwixt our breasts. He takes us to the Cross of Christ and He bids us put our finger into the print of the nails and our hands into His side and tells us not to come faithless, but believing, and so in the highest and most effectual manner He teaches us to profit.

III. But now I shall come to my third point. Although I feel as if I wished my subject were somewhat less comprehensive, but indeed it is a fault which does not often happento have too much rather than too little to speak of. But when we come upon a topic where God is to be glorified, then here, indeed, our tongue must be like the pen of a ready writer, as we speak of the things that we have made touching the King.

I am now to speak to you about the CHARACTERISTICS AND NATURE OF THE HOLY SPIRITS TEACHING. And first I would remark that the Holy Spirit teaches sovereignly. He teaches whom He pleases. He takes the fool and makes him know the wonders of the dying love of Christ, to bring aspiring wisdom low and make the pride of man humble and abase itself. And as the Spirit teaches whom He wills, He has His own hours of instruction and He will not be limited and bound by us.

And then again He teaches as He willssome by affliction, some by communion. Some He teaches by the Word read, some by the Word spoken, some by neither, but directly by His own agency. And so also the Holy Spirit is a Sovereign in that He teaches in whatever degree He pleases. He will make one man learn much, while another comprehends but little. Some Christians wear their beards earlythey come to a rapid and high degree of maturity and that on a sudden. Others creep but slowly to the goal and are very long in reaching it. Some Christians in early years understand more than others whose hairs have turned gray.

The Holy Spirit is a Sovereign. He doe not have all His pupils in one class and teach them all the same lesson by simultaneous instruction.

But each man is in a separate class, each man learning a separate lesson. Some beginning at the end of the book, some at the beginning and some in the middlesome learning one doctrine and some another, some going backwards and some forwards. The Holy Spirit teaches sovereignly and gives to every man according as He wills. But then, wherever He teaches, He teaches effectually.

He never failed to make us learn yet. No scholar was ever turned out of the Spirits school incorrigible. He teaches all His children, not some of themAll your children shall be taught of the Lord and great shall be the peace of your childrenthe last sentence being a proof that they have been effectually taught. Never once did the Spirit bring home the Truth of God to the heart and yet that heart fail to receive it. He has modes of touching the secret springs of life and putting the Truth of God into the very core of the being. He casts His healing mixtures into the fountain itselfnot into the streams.

We instruct the ear and the ear is far removed from the heart. He teaches the heart itself and therefore his every word falls upon good soil and brings forth good and abundant fruithe teaches effectually. Dear Brothers and Sisters, do you feel yourself to be a great fool sometimes? Your great Schoolmaster will make a good scholar of you yet. He will so teach you that you shall be able to enter the kingdom of Heaven knowing as much as the brightest saints. Teaching thus sovereignly and effectually, I may add, He teaches infallibly. We teach you errors through want of caution, sometimes through over zeal and again through the weakness of our own mind.

In the greatest preacher or teacher that ever lived there was some degree of error and hence our hearers should always bring what we say to the Law and the Testimony. But the Holy Spirit never teaches errorif you have learned anything by the Spirit of God, it is pureunadulterated, undiluted Truth of God. Put yourself daily under His teaching and you shall never learn a word amiss, nor a thought awry, but become infallibly taughtwell taught in the whole Truth of God as it is in Jesus.

Further, where the Spirit thus teaches infallibly He teaches continually. Whom once He teaches, He never leaves till He has completed our education. On and on and on, however dull the scholar, however frail the memory, however corrupt the mind, He still continues with His gracious work, till He has trained us up and made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.

Nor does He leave us till He has taught us completely. For as our text says, He shall teach you all things. There is not a Truth of God so high that it shall not yet be mastered, nor a doctrine so hard that it shall not yet be received. High up, high up, tower the heights of the hill of knowledgebut there, when thereyour feet shall stand. Weary may be the way and weak your knees, but up there you shall climb and one day with your forehead bathed in the sunlight of Heavenyour soul shall stand and look down on tempests, mists and all earths clouds and smokeand see the Master face to face and be like He and know Him as He is. This is the joy of the Christian, that he shall be completely taught and that the Holy Spirit will never give him up till He has taught him all truth.

I fear, however, that this morning I weary you. Such a theme as this will not be likely to be suitable to all minds. As I have already said, the spiritual mind alone receives spiritual things and the doctrine of the Spirits agency will never be very interesting to those who are entire strangers to it. I could not make another man understand the force of an electric shock unless he has felt it. It would not be likely at all that he would believe in those secret energies which move the world, unless he had some means of testing for himself.

And those of you that never felt the Spirits energy are as much strangers to it as a stone would be. You are out of your element when you hear of the Spirit. You know nothing of His Divine power. You have never been taught of Him and therefore how you should be careful to know what truths He teaches!

I close, therefore, with this sorrowful reflection. Alas, alas, a thousand times alas, that there should be so many who know not their danger, who feel not their load and in whose heart the light of the Holy Spirit has never shone! Is it your case, my dear Hearer, this morning? I do not ask you whether you have ever been educated in the school of learning. That you may be and you may have taken your degree and been first in honors but you may still be as the wild asss colt that knows nothing about these things.

Religion and the truth of it is not to be learnt by the head. Years of reading, hours of assiduous study, will never make a man a Christian. It is the Spirit that quickens. The flesh profits nothing. Oh, are you destitute of the Spirit of the living God? For oh, I charge you to remember this, my Hearerif in your soul mysterious and supernatural influences of the Holy Spirit have never been shed abroad, you are an utter stranger to all the things of God. The promises are not yours. Heaven is not yours. You are on your road to the land of the dead, to the region of the corpse where their worm dies not and their fire is not quenched. Oh that the Spirit of God may rest upon you now!

Remember, you are absolutely dependent upon His influence. You are in Gods hand today to be saved or to be lostnot in your own hands, but in His. You are dead in sins. Unless He quickens you, you must remain so. The moth beneath your finger is not more absolutely at your mercy than you are now at the mercy of God. Let Him but will to leave you as you are and you are lost. But oh, if mercy speaks and says, Let that man live, you are saved. I would that you could feel the weight of this tremendous doctrine of sovereignty. It is like the hammer of Thor, it may shake your heart however stout it is and make your rocky soul tremble to its base

*Life, death and Hell and worlds unknown, Hang on His firm decree.*

Your destiny hangs there now. And will you rebel against the God in whose hand your souls eternal fate now rests? Will you lift the puny hand of your rebellion against Him who alone can quicken youwithout whose gracious energy you are dead and must be destroyed? Will you go this day and sin against light and against knowledge? Will you go today and reject mercy which is proclaimed to you in Christ Jesus? If so, no fool was ever

so mad as you are, to reject Him without whom you are dead and lost and ruined. O that instead thereof there may be the sweet whisper of the Spirit saying, Obey the Divine command, believe on Christ and live!

Hear the voice of Jehovah, who cries, This is the commandment, that you believe in Jesus Christ whom he has sent! Thus obedient, God says within Himself, I have set My love upon him, therefore will I deliver him. I will set him on high because he has known My name. And you shall yet live to sing in Heaven of that sovereignty which, when your soul trembled in the balances, decided for your salvation and gave you light and joy unspeakable. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, died on Calvarys Cross, and whoever believes on Him shall be saved.

Unto you therefore which believe He is preciousbut unto them which are disobedient the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner and a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense. Believe that record true! Cast down your weapons. Yield to the sovereignly of the Holy Spirit. And He shall assuredly prove to you that, in that very yielding, there was a proof that He had loved you. For He made you yield. He made you willing to bow before Him in the day of His power.

May the Holy Spirit now rest on the word I have spoken, for Jesus sake!   
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THE GREAT TEACHER AND REMEMBRANCER   
NO. 3353

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, MAY 8, 1913.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON THURSDAY EVENING, AUGUST 16, 1866.

**But the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatever I have said unto you. John 14:26.**

THE Savior, when He departed from this world, provided for all the needs of His people, not so much by giving them divers benefits, but by promising them the Presence of a gracious Person who should supply them all that their spiritual needs might demand. I trust there are many of us who know in some degree the value of the promise, I will send the Comforter unto you, and that we know that when that Comforter comes, He brings us all good things. We have not to look in one place for quickening and in another place for comfort, in another for instruction and in a fourth for illumination. But when we receive the Spirit, we have all things in one! I may say of Him, as of Jesus Christ, In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. In Jesus it dwelt in a real human Nature, physical as well as spiritual, but in the Holy Spirit we have the same fullness of Deity, but He comes in and dwellsresidesin His people!

Our Savior here directs us to one particular blessing, which the coming of the Holy Spirit would bring us, namely, that of Divine Instruction. In endeavoring to enter in some measure into the text, tonighttoo briefly to enter into it fullywe shall, first of all remark that the text suggests to us

I. THE VALUE OF ALL THAT JESUS CHRIST HAS SPOKEN.

For He tells us that the Holy Spirit shall bring to our remembrance all things whatever He has said unto us.   
When the Savior was with His disciples, it is very possible that many of His choice sayings fell to the ground for lack of attention on their part. They did not, perhaps, know that every word of His had a fullness in it that should have been treasured up by them as priceless. But now He tells them that it shall be the Holy Spirits office to teach them all such Truth and to bring all their meanings to their remembrance. Brothers and Sisters, there is a great danger nowadays in not attaching sufficient importance to the teaching of Scripture. You will sometimes hear persons speak very disparagingly of doctrinal Truth and others will smile at anything like dispensational Truth. Some are inclined to throw experimental teaching in the background and some few speak very sadly about the practical Truth of God. But our Lord here speaks of all things whatever I have said unto you, and He also speaks of the Spirit teaching us all things. We may, therefore, believe that every Truth of God that is revealed in Scripture has its proper place and its importance. And we may gather this from the fact that Christ has taken the trouble to speak it. We do not believe that He has uttered one foolish wordno morenot one useless word, for in the whole compass of His teaching there is not to be found a single passage which should have been left unsaid. There may be repetitions, but there are no redundancies. He may have taught the same Truth in several shapes, but He has never taught it once too often. He has never revealed a Truth which it were better to conceal, just as He has never concealed a truth which it would have been better to reveal. If my Lord has taught anything, it must be worth my while to learn it! If Christ lifts the veil, it is my privilege to lookand what He manifests to me I ought not to be slow to gaze upon.

Moreover, Brothers and Sisters, in addition to the importance which must attach to these things because Christ has spoken them, there is thisthat He now sends the Holy Spirit to teach them to us. If you say that any one part of the Truth of God is unimportant, you do as good as say that to that extent the Holy Spirit has come upon an unimportant or valueless mission! You perceive it is declared that He is to teach us all things, but if some of these all things are really of such minor importance and so quite non-essential, then surely it is not worth while disturbing our minds with them. And so to that degree, at any rate, we accuse the Holy Spirit of having come to do what is not necessary to be done! And I trust that our minds recoil with holy repulsion from such a half-blasphemy as that. Beloved Brothers and Sisters, He teaches us all things, because it is necessary for us to learn all thingsand so He comes to bring to our remembrance not part, but, in turn, the whole of our Lords wondrous teaching! That teaching is essential to our knowledge of Divine things, to our comfort and progress in spiritual things that remembrance is part of our souls discipline and advance.   
I wish that some of my friends would get this very simple and very old Truth of God into the depths of their minds and hearts, for then they would surely study a great many things that they now overlookand I think they would not be so apt to excuse their own lack of diligence in the school of Christ, by saying, Well, there are some all-important Doctrines. We have studied them and that is enough. Brothers and Sisters, when a boy goes to school, he may say, If I learn arithmetic, I shall be able to be a tradesman and that is what I shall be. I do not want to read that dry Latin book. I do not care to read that book of poetry. It does not matter about my writing such a very elegant round hand. But the schoolmaster says, My boy, you are put under my teaching to learn all things and it is not for you to pick and choose what class you will attend. Now, we are scholars under the tuition of the blessed Spirit and it is not for us to say, I will learn the Doctrine of Justification by Faith, and when I know that, I shall not trouble my mind about Election. I shall not raise any question about Final Perseverance. I shall not enquire into the ordinances, whether Believers Baptism or infant Baptism is rightI take no interest in these thingsI have ]earned the essential matter and I will neglect the rest. You will not say this if you are an obedient disciple, for do you not know that the ministers of Christ have received a commission to teach all things that Christ has taught them, and do you think that our commission is frivolous and vexatious? Do you think that Christ would bid us teach you what it is no need of you to learn, or, especially, that the Holy Spirit would, Himself, come to dwell in the midst of His Church and to teach them all things, when out of those, all things, there are, according to your vain supposition, some things that were quite as well, if not better, left alone? Brothers and Sisters, whatever the Lord has spoken as a Master concerns His servants! Whatever He has delivered as a Prophet, concerns His discipleswhatever He has spoken as a Friend, concerns us, His friendsand whatever He has taught us as Lord concerns everyone of us as members of His body, of His flesh and His bones!   
I must again reiterate this Truth of God. I do not think I can leave it without still trying to further impress it upon your minds. There is a tendency, among us all, I suppose, to choose some part of the Truth of God and attach undue importance to that, to the neglect of other Truths.   
It is a grave question if this is not the origin of various divisions which are to be found in the Church of Christnot so much heresy, as the attaching of disproportionate importance to some Truth of God, to the disparaging or neglecting of others equally necessary. Some Brother speaking to me the other day, declared of a certain Truth, You cannot have too much of a good thing. Whereupon I remarked, that a nose was a good thing, but it might be possible to so exaggerate it that you would spoil the beauty of the face. A mouth is a good thing and yet it may be very possible to have such a mouth that there would be no particular beauty about the visage, for the beauty of the man consists in proportion, and the beauty of Divine Truth consists in the proportion in which every part of it is brought into view. Now, there are some who exaggerate one feature and some another. There are some Brothers who are fond of what is called the high side of Doctrine. I am fond of it, too, very fond of it, but there is a temptation to bring that out and to neglect, perhaps, the practical part of the Gospel and to cast into the background, possibly, the invitations of the Gospel and those Truths which concern our usefulness in the world. Then, on the other hand, there are some who are so enamored of experience that nothing but experimental Truth will suit themthey must be always harping upon that one string and they look down with contempt upon those who hold fast Doctrinal Truth, which is very wrongand shows that they have not yet been led into all the Truths of God!   
Alas, how many are so taken up with practical teaching that they grow legal for lack of having the salt of the Doctrines of Grace to keep them right. But oh, if it were possible for our minds to hold all the Truth of God, as far as a finite mind could grasp it! If we could but cast aside the prejudices of education and, perhaps, of constitution, too, and say to the Holy Spirit, My Lord, I will bind myself neither to this party nor to that. I will subscribe neither to this formula nor to that. I am prepared to receive Your mind into my mind. I am prepared to give up much that I hold dear if You will show me that it is not according to Your willand I am prepared to receive the Gospel from You, as You shall be pleased to show it to me! It is all Truth and not some Truths of God that the Holy Spirit comes to teach! To teach His children Truth in all its harmony, Truth in all its parts, Truth, indeed, as a whole!   
But it may be said, There must be some Truths which are not so essential as others! That is granted. There are some Truths that are so vital to salvation and peace with God. And there are some others that do not vitally concern the regeneration and conversion of the souland upon these, men may be in error, and yet not risk their souls for all eternity. But still, even these Truths are part of the whole body of Truth, and the body cannot do without its head, its heart, though it might lose a limb. Yet is that a reason why I should chop off a limb, or consent to have it maimed, because I could still exist without it?   
I could exist without an eye. Shall I not, therefore, mind being blinded? There may be a bone in my body, possibly there are several, the use of which even the anatomist does not know. There are some nerves, especially nerves in connection with the organs of secretion, the use of which are not known to the best physiologists, but nobody, I suppose, would like to dispense with them because each man who thinks, must feel that that God who made the man knew best how to make him perfect and how to adapt him to the position in which he would be placed. There may be bones or nerves in the human system which will never be used but once in our livesand yet if they were not there, we might not be able to get through that particular juncture. So is it with the Truths of Scripture. There may be a Truth which I shall never need to use and which may never have a practical turn to serve in my life, but onceand then if I do not happen to know that Truth just at that time, I may entail on myself a host of sorrows through my own ignorancesorrows which I ought to have prevented.   
The Holy Spirit comes to teach all the Truth of God and I beg yet again, for the fourth time, to reiterate that all Truth must be necessary for you and for me, or else the Spirit of God would not have come to teach it to us, and that while we may give more prominent importance to the greater and more vital Truths, yet there is not one Truth in Scripture to which we are allowed to say, Be still! Be quietwe do not need you. Brothers and Sisters, how many of you might be happy if you did but study Doctrinal Truth! You go lean and starved through the world because your minister does not preach the Doctrines of Grace, does not give you the full weight of the Truths of the Sovereign Grace of God.   
Still, if you but studied them for yourselves, you might yet have bright eyes and an elastic, bounding footstep, and rejoice in the everlasting love of God which never leaves His people, but preserves and glorifies them in the end!   
And some, too, are always groaning from a sense of inward corruption and very properly studying their own hearts, but they might live gladsome, triumphant lives if they did but learn a little more of the liberty wherewith Christ makes His people free, and seek to drink in the precious Truths of our standing in Christ and our perfection in Him. It is the willful neglect or refusal to believe some majestic Truth of God that is the cause of nearly all our doubts and fearsand a great many other pieces of mischief that keep us from serving and honoring our Lord as He deserves to be served and honored by those who are not their own, but are bought with a price.   
This first point we may now leave, if the Holy Spirit will but bring it home with power to our souls, for this Truth of God, among others, must be taught us by Him. We now come to a second point which is clearly in the text, namely, not only the value of all Truth that our Lord Jesus Christ has spoken, but   
II. THE NEED OF THE HOLY SPIRIT TO TEACH US ALL THE TRUTH.   
But cannot an honest and a willing mind learn all the Truths of God that are in Scripture without the teaching of the Holy Spirit? I infer that it cannot from the fact that the

Holy Spirit is provided. There is nothing that is unnecessary in the Covenant of Graceand the Divine Power is never unnecessarily exerted. It is constantly remarked of the miracles that there is not one of them that can be dispensed withand God never interferes to do out of the course of Nature what might be done according to the ordinary laws of Nature. If the Christian were fully equipped to know and understand the Divine mind without the teaching of the Holy Spirit, then the Holy Spirit would not have been given. We should not find the Holy Spirit here unless it were necessary that He should be here. Even with Christ for a Teacher, markso that there was no fault in the Teacherwith Christ for a Teacher, the disciples did not learn these Truths without the teaching of the Holy Spirit! I infer, therefore, that much more is that teaching now necessary and that the Spirit of God should abide with us, to teach us Truth, and to bring the things which we have learned to our remembrance. And why? Is it not because there is a radical defect in us as disciples? Are we not frequently inattentive? Do we not sometimes feel a lack of interest in the Truths of God which we receive from the Word, which I may now call the lips of Christ? A child may be very plainly taught, but if you cannot get its attention, if you cannot catch its will and interest it, it will not learn muchthat which you teach it will glide like oil over a slab of marbleit does not penetrate and permeate and, consequently, is not properly and thoroughly learned. And often on the Lords-Day you will hear most delightful Truths, but if you are not interested in them, it does not catch your mind.   
And in reading Scripture, how seldom do we show as much interest as we do in reading a letter from a friend? With what glistening eyes will some persons read the will of their relativesand they never forget what they read there because mind and heart are deeply interested.   
But alas, how often do we turn from these sacred pages without enough interest to learn what is in them!   
We are not so eager to drink in their spirit. We do not bring our souls up to the Truth and it is not any wonder, therefore, if we do not learn those Truths of God which are so spiritual that they can only be grasped by a soul in active, alert exercise!   
Besides this, we do not learn because of our ready prejudice against the special Truth we ought to learn. A great part of Gods Truth is very unpalatable to human natureto learn it is something like taking bitter medicinepeople do not choose it with enthusiasm.   
There are some Truths which would always be unpalatable, even to Christians, Christians as they are, if it were not for the sugar which sometimes goes with the Truth, and but for this it would be very nauseous to them. There are some minds which seem, more than others, to kick against certain points of Divine Truth, either from their prejudices, their education, or the nature and force of their constitutionand it is only the Spirit of God who can irresistibly come and convince the understanding! Ah, Friends, when the scholar does not want to know, it needs a God to teach himand sometimes our minds do not wish to know the Truth. I should not like to say a hard thing of Gods people, but I believe there are many of them who do not want to know too much. I have often thought that it has been the case with myself, and I believe it is the case with others. There is an awkward Truth which, if it were learned, would throw us out of our present comfortable position and might even necessitate a change of our ecclesiastical connections if we were to know itand so we do not want to know it! We do not read any book that might make us know it. We try to look at things on our own side if we can, and do not look fairly at the subject, nor enquire into it. It must, therefore, need the Spirit of God to teach us when a Truth of God is so unpalatable and we are so unwilling to learn it! Then, besides this, Beloved, when we recollect the intense spirituality of truth and how our carnal natures are always prone to adulterate it with our own predilections and the notions of the flesh. When all things around us bring the Truth of God down from its high spiritual atmosphere, where alone it can flourish, into the smoky, cloudy region of our materialism. When they bring down food worthy of angels to become poor bread even for mortals, then we see how desperately we need the Holy Spirit to help us as learners in the school of Christ!   
We seize the fair fruit of Divine Truth with a careless, hasty hands, mar its heavenly bloom, never knowing its richest beauty and essence and then we feel how true of us are Pauls words, Inspired of the Holy Spirit, written to certain Christians, Not as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, and babes in Christ Jesus.   
These, then, are a few of the reasons why the Spirit of God is needed. There are plenty more, of which we will speak another day, but I think every Christian knows experimentally that he never does fully learn the Truth and hold it tenaciously except by the teaching and sustaining Grace of God the Holy Spirit. I like our young people to learn the Westminster Assemblys Confession of Faith. It is a form of sound words that is well worth committing to memory, but even Christian people, when they know them, will find that unless those Truths are, one by one, brought home to the soul, they have only the shell of Truth, but do not know the life and inner essence of it. We must have everything we truly learn burnt into us by the Holy Spirit! It must be taught us sometimes by painful experience, at other times by blissful enjoymentsometimes by a marvelous illumination, a light shining upon a passage in such a way that we see it as we never saw it beforeand though we may have read it 20 times, we now for the first time in our lives see its true meaning and rejoice! Why, dear Friends, what is the ministry without the Spirit of God? Do you not often come and go, and find no comfort in attending a place of worship? And even the Bible, itself, without the Spirit of God is but a lantern without a light! And what is even the Mercy Seat, except the Holy Spirit is there, enabling us to drink into the very life and soul of the Divine teaching? It is not that Book as it is there on the paperit is that Book as it must be written on the fleshy tablets of our heart which becomes to us the Word of God, the word of our salvation in which we rejoice and upon which we often feed!   
This second truth you know, and will never doubt, that we need the Holy Spirit to teach us Truth of God. The third thing that is in the text is thisthe Holy Spirit is said not only to teach us, but   
III. TO BRING TO OUR REMEMBRANCE THE TRUTH WHICH WE HAVE RECEIVED.   
Mark! The Holy Spirit does not now reveal fresh Truth beyond what is already in the Word of God. There is a special curse pronounced upon any who shall add to this Bookand you may rest assured that the Holy Spirit will not so transgress in a matter which He has peremptorily forbidden all His children to commit! When persons start up as Prophets, or Prophetesses, and tell us that they have had special visions from the Lord and they know what is going to happen next year, we always understand that their proper destination is Bethlehem Hospital [London insane asylum] and we begin immediately to shun them and their books! We are persuaded that the Holy Spirit makes no such fresh revelations to men, but teaches us what Christ taught, bringing all these things to our remembrance! What Christ has taught, and only that, it is His joyous work to make plain and clear and powerful to us!   
Why do we need to have the Truths of God thus spoken brought to our remembrance? Is it not that we often trust our memories not to forget these Truths, but, he who trusts his own heart is a fool, and so is he who relies absolutely on his own memory. For anything bad, alas, we may trust it only too wellwe are sure to recollect the thing far better forgotten. But if it is anything very good and soul-inspiring, memory has a paralysis in the fingers and cannot retain it in their grasp! You may remember a great many things in businessthese are sure to write themselves deeply on the memorybut Divine things which concern the future state are often written so illegibly that they are very readily blurred, blotted out! We need the Holy Spirit to bring these things to our remembrance.   
And then, again, we are so constantly beset with cares that it is little marvelous that the things of God should slip away from us. You have but one day in the week, as it were, devoted to these thingsone day of building and six of pulling down! With many it is one days storing and six days scattering. It is but a slight advance that we make towards Heaven. Believe me, it is one of the greatest joys of my heart to see you here so constantly at Prayer Meetings and on Lecture Nights. It always seems to me to be one of the best signs of vital godliness that can well be exhibited, except a holy life, to see people willing to come out to the weeknight services. Any hypocrite will come on Sundays, but to come on weekdays seems to me to be a favorable sign and a proof of sincerity. But even then how little do we get! Perhaps there is trouble in the family from the first thing in the morning till the last thing at night it is nothing but hard work and there is the looking for the wherewithal we shall be clothedand we do not always cast our care on Him who cares for us. So the thorns too often choke up the seed and did not the Holy Spirit bring these things to our remembrance, they might quickly slip away altogether.   
There is, again, Brothers and Sisters, another reason for needing to be reminded of these Truths of God, namely, because we forget what we do not thoroughly apprehend. I have a notion that as a rule, what a man thoroughly understands, through and through, he does not forget. When you have mastered a fact or truth, seen it from all points, grown familiar with it, it is not easy to let it slip. You may hold a joint of meat in your hand and be very hungry all the while. But cook your joint, eat it, and properly digest what you eat, and it is yours and hunger goes. The man who receives the Truth of God in the mere letter of it may quickly forget it, but he who has received it in the spirit, understood it, digested it, assimilated it, will never altogether lose its nourishing and power! When a Truth is understood, it is somewhat like it was with the boy from whom the priest took away his New Testament. Ah, said the boy, but what will you do with the 10 chapters that I have learned by heart? You cannot take those away.

Memory does not readily lose the things she really understands. And when the heart has penetrated into the marrow of the Truth of God and the Truth of God into the marrow of the heart, it abides! But, alas, with the most of Divine things, we do not seek to enter into them as we should. We hear them and that is all. We hear, but we do not understand and, therefore, the Spirit of God is needed to ring the bells of Heaven again and again in our ears and to make us hear the same Truth over and over again, bringing to remembrance what Christ has told us.   
If it is asked how He does this, the answer is that He does it by instrumentality, as well as by His own immediate action. He does it through the preaching of the Word! The Word of God brings to your mind the old Truths of God that you have heard ever since you were a boy, or girl and, thank God, they have not lost their preciousness, but are just as sweet to your ears now, as they were when you heard them from old Dr. So-and-So, who has now gone home to Heaven! Thank God you still love that Truth whenever it is brought to your remembrance. I like to use the same Bible always in my study, and to mark it so that I may afterwards know the places which once filled me with delight and comfort. And sometimes the good old Book which we have studied so long will thus bring things to our remembrance. Then there is communion with Christian Brothers and Sisters. Sometimes even an illiterate Christian Brother may set a Truth in such a light as you never saw it in before, just like some of those fine old pieces of architecture which are very fine from one point of view, but some day you are taken to another point and you say, Well, I think it is even more beautiful from this place of revealing than from the other. So my conversation with Christian Brothers and Sisters often sheds for me a new light upon long-known and precious Truths. But over and above all this, I believe that the Holy Spirit does actually come into contact with our spirits, apart from human instrumentality, and that when we are walking by the way, sitting in the house, or in our chamber of prayer, flashes sudden light upon the Truth and so we learn what we knew not before and, turning to Gods Word, we perceive it to be blest Truth that was always there, but which we had not seen until the Holy Spirit opened our eyes! Brothers and Sisters, if we do not experimentally know what it is to have the Truth of God as it is in Jesus brought to our remembrance by the Holy Spirit, we must not rest satisfied until we do, for this is one of the marks and evidences, as well as one of the privileges of the child of God, that the Holy Spirit is his personal Teacher. All your children shall be taught of the Lord, and again and again does the adorable Third Person of the Divine Trinity teach us the things of Christ and bring them constantly to our remembrance!   
I am sorry that I cannot enter more fully into this point for need of time, but we must now close with the last point which is a question for us all   
IV. HOW FAR HAS THIS OFFICE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT BEEN PERFORMED IN US?   
I will first ask those of you who profess to be the people of God. Has the Holy Spirit taught you anything? Is that a hard question? It is one that was asked of oldHave you received the Holy Spirit since you believed? I am solemnly afraid that there are some professors who are content to have been convicted of sin, to have been led to trust in Christ, but who, after that, are utterly indifferent to the Holy Spirit as their Teacher. They sit in the House of God, but they do not apply their minds to learn the Truth. They pin their faith to somebodys sleeve and are content to believe according to the last speaker they hear, so that they will one day believe one thing, and another day another thing and so are carried about with every wind of doctrine! Brothers and Sisters, these things ought not to be! Receiving Christ as a Priest, we ought also to receive Him as a Prophet. And if we are quickened by the Holy Spirit, we ought also to seek to be illuminated and instructed by Him. Have you and I felt the Holy Spirit at work with us, endearing Doctrine and making it more precious to us? Have we, indeed, ever sought His influence, or have we, though professing Christians, lived thoughtlessly in this respect? Do you not think that if we have done so, we have grieved the Holy Spirit? What grieves a man more than to deny the importance of the office and work for which he lives? What should grieve the Holy Spirit more than this, among other things, to forget His office as our Instructor and to ignore altogether the great purpose for which He is to be found in the midst of the Christian Church at all times? Surely we should be seeking with all our prayers to pray, Teach me, O God! And lead me in the plain Truth! And we should long to sit with Mary at the Masters feet. Do you really study your Bibles, my dear Brothers and Sisters? Why you can scarcely bring out a magazine or a newspaper, nowadays, and make it pay, even with religious people, without a tale! It is one of the signs of the times that feeble fiction reading is as common among Christians as among others, and that our young disciplesyoung men and women bothmust have a sensational novel in a religious form, or they will not read at all!   
Time was when Christian women, as well as men, read history, studied the fascinations of science and cultivated their best qualities of mind and heart. And Christian men in days past, in the Puritan and later ages, sought to be acquainted with solid literature, as well as with the Word of God. But it seems to be the last mark of the degeneracy of Gods people that they must have their ears tickled with a straw and cannot read solid Truth. You need not wonder that we cannot breed men on chaff, or that they are blown about with every wind of Doctrine when this is the food on which they live. There are certain silkworms which grow the color of the leaves they feed on and you may depend upon it that those who live on this frivolous literature will lead frivolous lives, and those who take nothing but these milk-and-water tales will not be likely to have about them anything solid or robust, or anything vigorously real! Do not talk to me of reading such things! Brothers and Sisters, when you and I have read our Bibles through so as to find nothing there to interest us, it is high time that we asked God to teach us how to read them! It is a sign of a lack of Grace if the Bible is a dry Book. It is a dry Book, a very dry Book, to a graceless soulbut it has more in it than all the rest of the volumes in the world put together! And the more it is studied, the more will the interest of the student in it increase. Besides, we have such an abundance of other Christian literature that no Christian ought to say he is obliged to read the other poor stuff. We have no time to spare for this, when the soul is starving and dying for lack of knowledge! Let us pray the Holy Spirit to lead us into the Word of God and then give ourselves to its earnest and loving study.   
But this question will scarcely refer at all to some now present. My dear Hearers, are you among those who have no interest in these things?  
It is not likely that you should desire the Holy Spirit to instruct you. There are, I fear, some here who have no hope and are without God in the world. The mere statement of the fact ought to excite us all to prayer for such. But, alas, it is so commonly known that there are many out of Christ and without hope, that we do not feel distressed about it as we should. If there were fewer unregenerate sinners than there are, we would probably be more concerned about them. If there were only a dozen unconverted persons in the world, all the Church of God would be praying for their conversion, but because there are many millions of them, they are so common that we do not look upon them with the awe, the tenderness and the yearning sympathy which we ought to feel.   
There are some here to whom the Holy Spirit is an unknown Person, who have never been made alive unto God by Him and, consequently, cannot desire that they may be instructed by Him. Oh, that the blessed Spirit would come and convince them of their sin in not believing, which is the greatest of all sinsand the very sin of which the Spirit comes to convince men! He shall convince them of sin because they believe not on Me. Oh, may He convince them of this sin and then may they understand that there is nothing for them to do, but that Christ has done it for themand that all they have to do is to receive the finished work, to wear the finished robe, to look to Jesus Christ and to find life in the look! Pray for them, Brothers and Sisters, that the Holy Spirit may help their infirmities, that they may know Christ and may come to Him! May God bless the Gospel to them whenever it is preached! And when they are told that the Son of Man came into the world to seek and to save that which was lost, may they cry unto Him and trust Him, for this is the vital part of the business and, trusting in Him, they shall enter into eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord!

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **ROMANS 9:26-32.**

The Jews thought that God must certainly save them. They thought they had a birth claim. Were they not the children of Abraham? Surely they had some right to it! This Chapter battles the question of right. No man has any right to the Grace of God. The terms are inconsistent. But that same Grace delights to save and bless even the perverse and rebellious who will yield to its blessed power!

Verse 26. And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, You are not My people; they shall be called the children of the living God. That in the very same place where their sins made it patent and palpable they were not Gods peoplein that very same place shall men confess that they are the children of the living God! Oh, what has not Grace done?

27-29. Isaiah also cries out concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel is as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved: For He will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth. And as Isaiah said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodom, and been made like unto Gomorrah. God has a people, then, even in Israel with all its rejection! And He always will have, for He will never make the seed of Abraham to be as Sodom and Gomorrah! He will love His own and glorify Himself in the midst of His people.

30. What shall we say then? Why, say this  
30. That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. For thousands of years they worshipped brutish idols and blocks and stones. Their philosophy was mixed with filthiness. Their lives were abhorrent to God. Even these, at last, have attained righteousness, even the righteousness which is by faith, for the Gospel being preached among the Gentiles, they have believed in Jesus and they are saved!   
31. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness. Israel followed after the law of righteousness with many ceremonies and external washings, wearing of phylacteries and bordered garments. Alas, poor Israel!  
32. Why? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the Law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone. And God is determined that they that are of the Law shall not inherit it! He has made it a Sovereign Decree that the Believer shall be justified and saved, but no one else. They sought it not by faith, but as it were, by the works of the Law.

Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307  
PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #5 New Park Street Pulpit 1

THE COMFORTER   
NO. 5

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON SABBATH EVENING, JANUARY 21, 1855, BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT NEW PARK STREET CHAPEL, SOUTHWARK.

**But the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatever I have said unto you. John 14:26**

GOOD old Simeon called Jesus the Consolation of Israel. And so He was. Before His actual appearance His name was the Day-Star, cheering the darkness and Prophet of the rising sun. To Him they looked with the same hope which cheers the nightly watcher, when from the lonely castle top he sees the fairest of the stars and hails her as the usher of the morn. When He was on earth, He must have been the consolation of all those who were privileged to be His companions. We can imagine how readily the disciples would run to Christ to tell Him of their griefs and how sweetly with that matchless intonation of His voice, He would speak to them and bid their fears be gone. Like children, they would consider Him as their Fatherand to Him every need, every groan, every sorrow, every agony, would at once be carried and He, like a wise physician, had a balm for every woundHe had mingled a cordial for their every care! And readily did He dispense some mighty remedy to allay all the fever of their troubles. Oh, it must have been sweet to have lived with Christ! Surely sorrows, then, were but joys in masks because they gave an opportunity to go to Jesus to have them removed! Oh, would to God some of us may say that we could have lain our weary heads upon the bosom of Jesus! And that our birth had been in that happy era when we might have heard His kind voice and seen His kind lookwhen He said, Let the weary ones come unto Me.

But now He was about to die. Great prophecies were to be fulfilled and great purposes were to be answered. And therefore Jesus must go. It behooved Him to suffer, that He might be made a Propitiation for our sins. It behooved Him to slumber in the dust awhile, that He might perfume the chamber of the grave to make it

*No more a morgue to fence*

*The relics of lost innocence.*   
It behooved Him to have a Resurrection, that we who shall one day be the dead in Christ, might rise first and in glorious bodies stand upon earth. And it behooved Him that He should ascend up on high, that He might lead captivity captivethat He might chain the fiends of Hellthat He might lash them to His chariot wheels and drag them up high Heavens hill, to make them feel a second overthrow from His right arm when He should dash them from the pinnacles of Heaven down to deeper depths beneath. It is right I should go away from you, said Jesus, for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come. Jesus must go. Weep, you disciples. Jesus must be gone! Mourn, you poor ones who are to be left without a Comforter. But hear how kindly Jesus speaksI will not leave you comfortless, I will pray the Father and He shall send you another Comforter, who shall be with you and shall dwell in you forever. He would not leave those few poor sheep alone in the wilderness. He would not desert His children and leave them fatherless. Albeit that He had a mighty mission which did fill His heart and hand. Albeit that He had so much to perform that we might have thought that even His gigantic intellect would be overburdened. Albeit He had so much to suffer that we might suppose His whole soul to be concentrated upon the thought of the sufferings to be endured. Yet it was not sobefore He left, He gave soothing words of comfort. Like the Good Samaritan, He poured in oil and wine. And we see what He promisedI will send you another ComforterOne who shall be just what I have been, yes even more. He shall console you in your sorrows, remove your doubts. He will comfort you in your afflictions and stand as My vicar on earth, to do that which I would have done, had I tarried with you.

Before I discourse of the Holy Spirit as the Comforter, I must make one or two remarks on the different translations of the word rendered, Comforter. The Flemish translation, which you are aware is adopted by Roman Catholics, has left the word untranslated and gives it, Paraclete. But the Paraclete which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things. This is the original Greek word and it has some other meanings besides Comforter. Sometimes it means the monitor or instructorI will send you another Monitor, another Teacher. Frequently it means Advocate. But the most common meaning of the word is that which we have hereI will send you another Comforter. However, we cannot pass over those other two interpretations without saying something upon them.

I will send you another Teacher. Jesus Christ had been the official Teacher of His saints while on earth. They called no man Rabbi except Christ. They sat at no mens feet to learn their doctrines. But they had them direct from the lips of Him who spoke as never man spoke. And now, He says, when I am gone, where shall you find the great infallible Teacher? Shall I set you up a Pope at Rome, to whom you shall go and who shall be your infallible oracle? Shall I give you the councils of the church to be held to decide all knotty points? Christ said no such thing. I am the Infallible Paraclete or Teacher, and when I am gone, I will send you another Teacher and He shall be the Person who is to explain Scripture. He shall be the authoritative Oracle of God who shall make all dark things light, who shall unravel mysteries, who shall untwist all knots of Revelation and shall make you understand what you could not discover, had it not been for His influence. And Beloved, no man ever learns anything aright, unless he is taught of the Spirit. You may learn election and you may know it so that you shall be damned by it, if you are not taught of the Holy Spirit. For I have known some who have learned election to their souls destruction. They have learned it, so that they said they were of the elect, whereas they had no marks, no evidences and no work of the Holy Spirit in their souls. There is a way of learning the Truth of God in Satans college and holding it in licentiousness. But if so, it shall be to your souls as poison to your veins and prove your everlasting ruin. No man can know Jesus Christ unless he is taught of God. There is no Doctrine of the Bible which can be safely, thoroughly and truly learned, except by the agency of the one authoritative Teacher. Ah, tell me not of systems of divinity, tell me not of schemes of theology, tell me not of infallible commentators, of most learned and most arrogant doctors. But tell me of the Great Teacher who shall instruct us, the sons of God and shall make us wise to understand all things! He is the Teacher. It matters not what this or that man says. I rest on no mans boasting authority, nor will you. You are not to be carried away with the craftiness of men, nor sleighs of wordsthis is the authoritative oracle, the Holy Spirit resting in the hearts of His children.

The other translation is advocate. Have you ever thought how the Holy Spirit can be said to be an Advocate? You know Jesus Christ is called The Wonderful, The Counselor and Mighty God. But how can the Holy Spirit be said to be an Advocate? I suppose it is thusHe is an Advocate on earth to plead against the enemies of the Cross. How was it that Paul could so ably plead before Felix and Agrippa? How was it that the Apostles stood unawed before the magistrates and confessed their Lord? How has it come to pass that in all times, Gods ministers have been made fearless as lions and their brows have been firmer than brass, their hearts sterner than steel and their words like the language of God? Why, it is simply for this reasonthat it was not the man who pleadedbut it was God the Holy Spirit pleading through him.   
Have you ever seen an earnest minister, with hands uplifted and eyes dropping tears, pleading with the sons of men? Have you never admired that portrait from the hand of old John Bunyan? A grave person with eyes uplifted to Heaven, the best of books in his hand, the Law of Truth written on his lips, the world behind his back, standing as if he pleaded with men and a crown of gold hanging over his head. Who gave that minister so blessed a manner and such goodly matter? From where came his skill? Did he acquire it in college? Did he learn it in a seminary? Ah, no. He learned it of the God of Jacob! He learned it of the Holy Spiritfor the Holy Spirit is the great Counselor who teaches us how to advocate His cause aright!

But, besides this, the Holy Spirit is the Advocate in mens hearts. Ah, I have known men reject a Doctrine until the Holy Spirit began to illumine them. We who are the advocates of the Truth are often very poor pleaders. We spoil our cause by the words we use. But it is a mercy that the brief is in the hand of a special Pleader who will advocate successfully and overcome the sinners opposition. Did you ever know Him to fail once? Brothers and Sisters, I speak to your souls! Has not God in old times convinced you of sin? Did not the Holy Spirit come and prove that you were guilty, although no minister could ever get you out of your selfrighteousness? Did He not advocate Christs righteousness? Did He not stand and tell you that your works were filthy rags? And when you had well-near still refused to listen to His voice, did He not fetch Hells drum and make it sound about your ears, bidding you look through the vista of future years and see the Throne set, the Books open, the sword brandished, Hell burning, fiends howling and the damned shrieking forever? And did He not thus convince you of the judgment to come? He is a mighty Advocate when He pleads in the soul of sin, of righteousness and of the judgment to come. Blessed Advocate! Plead in my heart, plead with my conscience! When I sin, make conscience bold to tell me of it. When I err, make conscience speak at onceand when I turn aside to crooked ways, then advocate the cause of righteousness and bid me sit down in confusion, knowing my guiltiness in the sight of God!

But there is yet another sense in which the Holy Spirit advocates and that is He advocates our cause with Jesus Christ, with groaning that cannot be uttered. O my Soul, you are ready to burst within me! O my heart, you are swelled with grief. The hot tide of my emotion would wellnear overflow the channels of my veins. I long to speak, but the very desire chains my tongue. I wish to pray, but the fervency of my feeling curbs my language. There is a groaning within that cannot be uttered. Do you know who can utter that groaning, who can understand it and who can put it into heavenly language and utter it in a celestial tongue so that Christ can hear it? Oh, yes, it is God the Holy Spirit! He advocates our cause with Christ and then Christ advocates it with His Father. He is the Advocate who makes intercession for us, with groaning that cannot be uttered!

Having thus explained the Spirits office as Teacher and Advocate, we come now to the translation of our versionthe Comforter. And here I shall have three divisions. First, the Comforter. Secondly, the comfort. And thirdly, the comforted.

I. First, then, the COMFORTER. Briefly let me run over in my mind and in your minds, too, the characteristics of this glorious Comforter. Let me tell you some of the attributes of His comfort so that you may understand how well adapted He is to your case.

And first, we will remark that God the Holy Spirit is a very loving Comforter. I am in distress and need consolation. Some passerby hears of my sorrow and he steps within, sits down and tries to cheer me. He speaks soothing words. But he loves me nothe is a strangerhe knows me not at all. He has only come in to try his skill. And what is the consequence? His words run over me like oil upon a slab of marblethey are like the pattering rain upon the rock. They do not break my grief. It stands unmoved, as adamant because he has no love for me. But let someone who loves me dearly as his own life come and plead with me. Then truly his words are music. They taste like honey. He knows the password of the doors of my heart and my ear is attentive to every word. I catch the intonation of each syllable as it falls, for it is like the harmony of the harps of Heaven. Oh, there is a voice in loveit speaks a language which is its ownit is an idiom and an accent which none can mimic! Wisdom cannot imitate it, oratory cannot attain unto it. It is love, alone, which can reach the mourning heart! Love is the only handkerchief which can wipe the mourners tears away. And is not the Holy Spirit a loving Comforter? Do you know, O saint, how much the Holy Spirit loves you? Can you measure the love of the Spirit? Do you know how great is the affection of His soul towards you? Go, measure Heaven with your span. Go, weigh the mountains in the scales. Go, take the oceans water and count each drop. Go count the sand upon the seas wide shoreand when you have accomplished thisyou can tell how much He loves you! He has loved you long, He has loved you well. He loved you always and He still shall love you. Surely He is the Person to comfort you, because He loves you. Admit Him, then, to your heart, O Christian, that He may comfort you in your distress!

But next He is a faithful Comforter. Love sometimes proves unfaithful. Oh, sharper than a serpents tooth is an unfaithful friend! Oh, far more bitter than the gall of bitterness to have a friend to turn from me in my distress! Oh, woe of woes, to have one who loves me in my prosperity forsake me in the dark days of my trouble. Sad, indeed, but such is not Gods Spirit! He always loves me and loves even to the enda faithful Comforter! Child of God, you are in trouble, a little while ago you found Him a sweet and loving Comforter. You obtained relief from Him when others were but broken cisterns. He sheltered you in His bosom and carried you in His arms. Oh, why do you distrust Him now? Away with your fears! For He is a faithful Comforter. Ah, but you say, I fear I shall be sick and shall be deprived of His ordinances. Nevertheless, He shall visit you on your sick bed and sit by your side to give you consolation. Ah, but I have distresses greater than you can conceive of, wave upon wave rolls over me. Deep calls unto deep at the noise of the Eternals waterspouts. Nevertheless, He will be faithful to His promise. Ah, but I have sinned. So you have, but sin cannot sever you from His love. He loves you still! Think not, O poor downcast child of God, that He loves you less because the scars of your old sins have marred your beauty. Oh, no. He loved you when He foreknew your sin. He loved you with the knowledge of what the aggregate of your wickedness would be. And He does not love you less now. Come to Him in all boldness of faith. Tell Him you have grieved Him and He will forget your wandering and will receive you again. The kisses of His love shall be bestowed upon you and the arms of His Grace shall embrace you. He is faithfultrust Him. He will never deceive you, Trust HimHe will never leave you.

AgainHe is an unwearied Comforter. I have sometimes tried to comfort persons that have been tried. You now and then meet with the case of a nervous person. You ask, What is your trouble? You are told and you try, if possible, to remove it. But while you are preparing your artillery to battle the trouble, you find that it has shifted its quarters and is occupying quite a different position. You change your argument and begin again. But lo, it is again gone and you are bewildered. You feel like Hercules cutting off the ever-growing heads of the Hydra. And you give up your task in despair. You meet with persons whom it is impossible to comfort, reminding me of the man who locked himself up in fetters and threw the key away, so that nobody could unlock him. I have found some in the fetters of despair. O, I am the man, they say, who has seen affliction. Pity me, pity me, O my Friends. And the more you try to comfort such people, the worse they get. And therefore, out of all heart, we leave them to wander alone among the tombs of their former joys. But the Holy Spirit is never out of heart with those whom He wishes to comfort. He attempts to comfort us and we run away from the sweet cordial. He gives some sweet draught to cure us and we will not drink it. He gives some wondrous potion to charm away all our troubles and we put it away from us. Still He pursues us. And though we say that we will not be comforted, He says we shall be and when He has said, He does it. He is not to be wearied by all our sins, not by all our murmurings.

And oh, how wise a Comforter is the Holy Spirit! Job had comforters and I think he spoke the truth when he said, Miserable comforters are you all. But I dare say they esteemed themselves wise. And when the young man, Elihu, rose to speak, they thought he had a world of impudence. Were they not grave and reverend seniors? Did not they comprehend his grief and sorrow? If they could not comfort him, who could? But they did not find out the cause. They thought he was not really a child of God, that he was self-righteous. And they gave him the wrong medicine. It is a bad case when the doctor mistakes the disease and gives a wrong prescription and so, perhaps, kills the patient. Sometimes, when we go and visit people we mistake their diseasewe want to comfort them on this pointwhereas they do not require any such comfort at all. They would be better left alone than spoiled by such unwise comforters as we are. But oh, how wise the Holy Spirit is! He takes the soul, lays it on the table and dissects it in a moment. He finds out the root of the matter. He sees where the complaint is and then He applies the knife where something is required to be taken away, or puts a plaster where the sore is. And He never mistakes. Oh, how wise, the blessed Holy Spirit! From every comforter I turn and leave them allfor You are He who alone give the wisest consolation!

Then mark how safe a Comforter the Holy Spirit is. All comfort is not safe. Mark that. There is a young man over there very melancholy. You know how he became so? He stepped into the House of God and heard a powerful preacher and the Word of God was blessed and convinced him of sin! When he went home, his father and the rest found there was something different about him. Oh, they said, John is mad. He is crazy, and what said his mother? Send him into the country for a week, let him go to the ball or to the theater. John! Did you find any comfort there? Ah, no, they made me worse, for while I was there, I thought Hell might open and swallow me up. Did you find any relief in the gaieties of the world? No, you say, I thought it was an idle waste of time. Alas, this is miserable comfort, but it is the comfort of the worldling! And when a Christian gets into distress, how many will recommend him this remedy and the other. Go and hear Mr. So-and-So preachhave a few friends at your houseread such-and-such a consoling volume. And very likely it is the most unsafe advice in the world. The devil will sometimes come to mens souls as a false comforter and he will say to the soul, What need is there to make all this ado about repentance? You are no worse than other people. And he will try to make the soul believe that what is

presumption is the real assurance of the Holy Spirit. Thus he deceives many by false comfort. Ah, there have been many, like infants, destroyed by elixirs given to lull them to sleep. Many have been ruined by the cry of peace, peace, when there is no peacehearing gentle thingswhen they ought to be stirred to the quick. Cleopatras asp was brought in a basket of flowers. And mens ruin often lurks in fair and sweet speeches. But the Holy Spirits comfort is safe and you may rest on it. Let Him speak and there is a reality about it. Let Him give the cup of consolation and you may drink it to the bottom, for in its depths there are no dregs, nothing to intoxicate or ruinit is all safe.

Moreover, the Holy Spirit is an active ComforterHe does not comfort by words, but by deeds. Some comfort by, Be you warmed and be you filled, giving nothing. But the Holy Spirit gives. He intercedes with Jesus. He gives us promises, He gives us Grace and so He comforts us. Mark againHe is always a successful Comforter. He never attempts what He cannot accomplish!

Then to close upHe is an ever-present Comforter, so that you never have to send for Him. Your God is always near you and when you need comfort in your distress, behold, the Word is near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart. He is an ever-present help in time of trouble. I wish I had time to expand these thoughts. But I cannot.

II. The second thing is the COMFORT. Now there are some persons who make a great mistake about the influence of the Holy Spirit. A foolish man who had a fancy to preach in a certain pulpit, though in truth was quite incapable of the duty, called upon the minister and assured him solemnly that it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he was to preach in his pulpit. Very well, said the minister, I suppose I must not doubt your assertion, but as it has not been revealed to me that I am to let you preach, you must go your way until it is. I have heard many fanatical persons say the Holy Spirit revealed this and that to them. Now that is very generally revealed nonsense! The Holy Spirit does not reveal anything fresh. He brings old things to our remembrance. He shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have told you. The canon of Revelation is closed. There is no more to be added. God does not give a fresh Revelation, but the rivets of the old one. When it has been forgotten and laid in the dusty chamber of our memory, He fetches it out and cleans the picture. But He does not paint a new one. There are no new Doctrines, but the old ones are often revived! It is not, I say, by any new Revelation that the Spirit comforts. He does so by telling us old things over again. He brings a fresh lamp to manifest the treasures hidden in Scripture. He unlocks the strong chests in which the Truth has long lain and He points to secret chambers filled with untold riches. But He comes no more, for enough is done. Believer, there is enough in the Bible for you to live upon forever. If you should outnumber the years of Methuselah, there would be no need for a fresh Revelation. If you should live till Christ should come upon the earth, there would be no necessity for the addition of a single word. If you should go down as deep as Jonah, or even descend as David said he did, into the belly of Hell, still there would be enough in the Bible to comfort you without a supplementary sentence. But Christ says, He shall take of Mine and shall show it unto you. Now let me just tell you briefly what it is the Holy Spirit tells us.

Ah, does He not whisper to the heart, Saint, be of good cheer. There is One who died for youlook to Calvarybehold His wounds. See the torrent gushing from His side. There is your Purchaser and you are secure. He loves you with an everlasting love and this chastisement is meant for your good. Each stroke is working your healingby the blueness of the wound your soul is made better. Whom He loves He chastens and scourges every son whom He receives. Doubt not His Grace because of your tribulation, but believe that He loves you as much in seasons of trouble as in times of happiness. And then, moreover, He says, What is all your suffering compared with that of your Lords or what, when weighed in the scales of Jesus agonies, is all your distress? And especially at times does the Holy Spirit take back the veil of Heaven and lets the soul behold the Glory of the upper world! Then it is that the saint can say, Oh, you are a Comforter to me!

*Let cares like a wild deluge come,   
And storms of sorrow fall;   
May I but safely reach my home,   
My God, my Heaven, my All.*

Some of you could follow, were I to tell of manifestations of Heaven. You, too, have left sun, moon and stars at your feet while in your flight. Outstripping the tardy lightning, you have seemed to enter the gates of pearl and tread the golden streets, borne aloft on wings of the Spirit. But here we must not trust ourselves, lest, lost in reverie, we forget our theme.

III. And now thirdly, who are the COMFORTED persons? I like, you know, at the end of my sermon, to cry out, Divide! Divide! There are two parties heresome who are the comforted and others who are the comfortless ones. Some who have received the consolation of the Holy Spirit and some who have not. Now let us try and sift you and see which is the chaff and which is the wheat. And may God grant that some of the chaff may this night be transformed into His wheat!

You may say, How am I to know whether I am a recipient of the comfort of the Holy Spirit? You may know it by one rule. If you have received one blessing from God, you will receive all other blessings, too. Let me explain myselfif I could come here as an auctioneer and sell the Gospel off in lots, I should dispose of it all. If I could say, here is Justification through the blood of Christ, free, giving away, gratismany a one would say, I will have Justificationgive it to me. I wish to be justified, I wish to be pardoned. Suppose I took Sanctification, the giving up of all sin, a thorough change of heart, leaving off drunkenness and swearing? Many would say, I dont want that. I should like to go to Heaven, but I do not want that holiness. I should like to be saved at last, but I should like to have my drink. I should like to enter Glory, but then I must have an oath or two on the road. No, but Sinner, if you have one blessing, you shall have all! God will never divide the Gospel. He will not give Justification to that man and Sanctification to another. He will not give pardon to one and holiness to another. No, it all goes together! Whom He calls, them He justifies. Whom He justifies, them He sanctifies. And whom He sanctifies, them He also glorifies. Oh, if I could lay down nothing but the comforts of the Gospel, you would fly to them as flies do to honey. When you come to be ill, you send for the clergyman. Ah, you all want your minister, then, to come and give you consoling words. But if he is an honest man, he will not give some of you a particle of consolation. He will not commence pouring oil when the knife would be better. I want to make a man feel his sins before I dare tell him anything about Christ. I want to probe into his soul and make him feel that he is lost before I tell him anything about the purchased blessing! It is the ruin of many to tell them, Now just believe on Christ and that is all you have to do. If, instead of dying they get better, they rise up whitewashed hypocritesthat is all. I have heard of a city missionary who kept a record of two thousand persons who were supposed to be on their deathbed, but recovered and whom he would have put down as converted persons had they died. And how many do you think lived a Christian life afterwards out of the two thousand! Not two! Positively he could only find one who was found to live afterwards in the fear of God! Is it not horrible that when men and women come to die, they should cry, Comfort, comfort? and therefore their friends conclude that they are children of God, while, after all, they have no right to consolation, but are intruders upon the enclosed grounds of the blessed God. O God! May these people ever be kept from having comfort when they have no right to it! Have you the other blessings? Have you had conviction of sin? Have you ever felt your guilt before God? Have your souls been humbled at Jesus feet? And have you been made to look to Calvary, alone, for your refuge? If not, you have no right to consolation! Do not take an atom of it. The Spirit is a Convincer before He is a Comforter. And you must have the other operations of the Holy Spirit before you can derive anything from this!

And now I have done. You have heard what this babbler has said once more. What has it been? Something about the Comforter. But let me ask you, before you go, what do you know about the Comforter? Each one of you before descending the steps of this Chapellet this solemn question run through your soulsWhat do you know of the Comforter? Oh, poor Souls, if you know not the Comforter, I will tell you what you shall knowyou shall know the Judge! If you know not the Comforter on earth, you shall know the Condemner in the next world, who shall cry, Depart you cursed into everlasting fire in Hell. Well might Whitfield call out, O earth, earth, earth, hear the Word of the Lord! If we were to live here forever, you might slight the Gospel. If you had a lease of your lives, you might despise the Comforter. But Sirs, you must die! Since last we met together, probably some have gone to their long last home. And before we meet again in this sanctuary, some here will be among the glorified above, or among the damned below! Which will it be? Let your soul answer. If tonight you fell down dead in your pews, or where you are standing in the gallerywhere would you be?In Heaven or in Hell?

Ah, deceive not yourselveslet conscience have its perfect work. And if, in the sight of God, you are obliged to say, I tremble and fear lest my portion should be with unbelievers, listen one moment and then I have done with you. He that believes and is baptized shall be saved and he that believes not shall be damned. Weary Sinner, hellish Sinner, you who are the devils castaway, reprobate, profligate, harlot, robber, thief, adulterer, fornicator, drunkard, swearer, Sabbath-breakerlisten! I speak to you as well as the rest. I exempt no man. God has said there is no exemption here.

Whoever believes in the name of Jesus Christ shall be saved. Sin is no barrieryour guilt is no obstacle. Whoeverthough he were as black in sin as Satan, though he were filthy as a fiend whoever this night believes, shall have every sin forgiven, shall have every crime erased, shall have every iniquity blotted out. He shall be saved in the Lord Jesus Christ and shall stand in Heaven safe and secure!

That is the glorious Gospel. May God apply it home to your hearts and give you faith in Jesus!   
*We have listened to the preacherTruth   
By Him has now been shown.   
But we need a GREATER TEACHER,   
From the everlasting Throne   
APPLICATION is the work of God alone.*

Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software.   
PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #247 The New Park Street Pulpit 1

THE BEST OF MASTERS   
NO. 247

**DELIVERED ON SABBATH MORNING, APRIL 10, 1859, BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,**  
AT THE MUSIC HALL, ROYAL SURREY GARDENS.

**Peace I leave with you, My peace l give unto you: not as the world gives, give I unto you. John 14:27.**

THE Gospel of John is peculiarly the history of Jesus, the Son of God. Matthew deals with Jesus as the Prince of the house of David. Mark treats of Him as the Servant of servants. And Luke views Him as the Son of Man. But John, with eagle eye, looks beyond all the clouds of His humanity, and seeing the clear shining of His Divinity, writes of Him especially as the Son of God, the Word, that in the beginning was with God and was God. It seems but right, then, that since Jesus came from Heaven, He should sometimes put both Himself and His cause in contrast with that which is of the earth. You will find through several chapters wherein our Savior is addressing His disciples, He continually contrasts Himself, His gifts and His love, with those of the world. He came from Heaven that He might fight and wrestle with an evil and a wicked world. That He might rescue His people from it. That He might cleanse the world and, at last, might present the earth itself to Himself, to be the new Heaven and the new earth, wherein righteousness should dwell.

I say, it seems but right, that in a Gospel which particularly views Christ as of heavenly origin and as very God of very God, that there should frequently be a contrast between Christ and the world, between the kingdom which is from Heaven and the kingdoms of this earth. Now, our text presents us with one contrast between Christ and the world Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you. Not as the world gives, give I unto you. He gives in a more Divine fashion than the world can ever give, even when its hand is most laden with its gifts.

Now, I shall take my text this morning and endeavor to talk of it thuslyfirst, viewing it with regard to the peace which Christ givesHe does not give peace as the world gives it. Secondly, I shall take a larger view of the subject and look upon all the gifts of Christ and say that, not as the world gives, does He bestow His mercies on us. And then close with a practical inference from the whole subject.

I. First of all, IN THE MATTER OF PEACE, Christ gives us peace, but not as the world gives it. For, in the first place, the world gives peace in a complimentary style. It was usual among the Orientals, for the wayfarer to say to the person whom he met, Peace be to you. And generally, when a

house was entered, the benediction of peace was bestowed by every person who stepped across the threshold. These were often but vain and empty expressions of compliment. Those very utterances might proceed from the lips of an enemy. The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart. His Words were softer than oil, yet were they drawn swords. It is the same with the world today. Everyone salutes us in writing with a, Dear Sir, or a, My dear Sir, and concludes, Yours very truly, and, Yours sincerely. We call all, friends, and if we meet but casually we express the utmost anxiety with regard to one anothers health and we carefully enquire after each others families. Perhaps we shall no sooner have passed by the person than we shall forget his existence and certainly shall entertain no anxious thoughts with regard to his welfare, nor any loving remembrance of him. The world gives very largely when it gives compliments.

Oh, what blessings would descend upon all our heads if the blessings uttered could be blessings bestowed. Even when the Good bye is given, which translated means, God be with youif that could be but true and if God could be with us, in answer to that prayer, so little understood, how rich might we be! But alas, the way of the world is, Be you warmed and be you filled. But it has not that which should warm, nor that which should fill. It is a world of wordshigh-sounding, empty, all-deceiving words. Now, not so, does Christ give. If He says, Peace be with you, His benediction is most true and full of sweet sincerity. He left His own peace in Heaven, that He might give the peace which He enjoyed with His Father to us in this world of sorrow, for thus He puts it, My peace I give unto you. Christ, when He blesses, blesses not in word only, but in deed. The lips of truth cannot promise more than the hands of love will surely give. He gives not in compliment.

Furthermore, even when the worlds wishes of peace are sincere, what are they but mere wishes? If I am met by my most sincere friend and he wishes to give a benediction, he cannot bestow one. Tis Gods to bless His people with peace. We may bless with the wish but not with the deed. It may be our desire that every mercy should cluster round the head of our friendthat his pillow should be smooth, that his path should be easy, that his heart should be happy, that his end may be peace. But we must leave it with God to fulfill our prayers. If our power were equal to our will, how richly would we bless our friends with the priceless jewel of peace. But Christ says, Not as the world gives, give I unto you. His wishes for us shall be accomplished and He Himself shall work them out.

Does He wish for us that we may be sanctified? Lo, He will sanctify us and present us without spot, or wrinkle, or any such things. Is it His will that we should be with Him where He is? It shall be done and we shall behold His glory and we shall share in it. There was never a wish in Christs heart with regard to His people that merely ended in a wish. The wish is but the bow stringthe blessing is the arrow shot from it. Christ has not an empty bow, but His quiver is filled with arrows and every time He wishes, He fits a blessing on the string and sends it to us. Oh, rest assured that not as the world gives, with the empty wish, the deceitful brook, the empty well, does Christ give to us. He gives a fullness and a reality in all that He bestows.

Yet, furthermore, I may remark that, with regard to peace, the world gives only peace in prospect. There is not a man alive who is not hoping for better times. Even boys believe that better times are comingtimes of rest and peace. The man who is just beginning in business expects that he shall take his rest and be much at ease, when he shall have succeeded in establishing a connection. Or if he finds that, as business increases, cares multiply, he hopes that, in a little time, the whole matter will become more steady, and that by the employment of honest persons, much of the care may be taken from him. And that time comes. But he finds that, even then, there are fresh cares which have arisen as the others have died out. He then looks forward to the time when, in his green old age, he shall retire to some country retreat and there spend the rest of his days in peace. For the most part that is but a vision and gray age in its retirement has its troubles still. Still, when men grow old, trouble is as young as ever and man finds just as much to prick and wound in the thorns of earth as when for the first time he trod its soil.

We are all intending and beginning to be peaceful. We are all going to be happy by-and-by. We have all made up our minds that soon we will have done with desiring more and then we will make our rest. This is the miraculous mistake of manthat he is always beginning to live. But he never does live. He always intends to be satisfied, but he never is. He always means to sit down in content, but that period never arrives. He has always something to vex him, but still hopes the day shall come when he shall be vexed no more.

Now, not as the world gives, does Christ give to us. The world puts before us a mirage in the desert. We see before us what we fancy to be springs of water and spreading palm treesand we rush forward, but it is not there. It is only a few rods ahead and on we go, full wearily and footsore and now it is a little further on. Still we hurry on, but as we progress the vision flies before us, and we never reach it. Not thus does Christ bless. He gives and gives now. He gives in present foretaste and will give assuredly in the world which is to come. Yes, even now, the true Christian can say he has peace in Christ.

Oh, there are some of us who know what it is to be so content and happy when our thoughts are exercised upon our standing in Christ, that we could say we have not a wish beyond. We could sit still forever and rest in Him. Verily, we can testify that they who have believed do enter into rest. We have seen the billows roar, we have marked the storm gathering,

we have seen the black clouds big with tempest, gathering overhead. And we have been enabled to defy all these things and to find rest in Christ, notwithstanding. No, and when the clouds have emptied out their horrors, when the lightning has scathed the brow of darkness and the thunder has rolled tremendous through the sky, we have known what it is, even then, to rest in the bosom of Christ as a babe upon the breast of its mother. We have had a quiet and a perfect rest while the world has been in arms abroad.

Christ gives a real peace, not a something that we have to hunt for tomorrow, but a thing that we have now. And the true Believer can say that when he is enabled to see himself in Christ, he has all he wants. He can rest on beds of spices, feed among the lilies of satisfaction and neither ask nor wish for anything beyond. Peace I give unto you. Not as the world gives, I give unto you.

Yet againI remark once more, that all the peace which the world ever did give to any man was a delusion. I know some who possess the worlds peace. I would to God that peace were broken. Some of you are content with yourselves. You are good enough you say, or, if not good enough, tis easy to amend. You fold your arms and you say, Why make myself miserable about religion? Why trouble myself about the interests of another world? Ah, Man, I would to God you could be made wretchedthat you could be made miserable, for mark, your sleep is the sleep of death! It is one of the devils great devices for destroying souls, to satisfy mento give them the drug of indifference, the tincture of procrastination and so to stultify and stupefy them, that they go on from day-to-day, careless and reckless, till in Hell they lift up their eyes. Why, if you are concerned about your souls there is hope for you. The way to peace lies through distress. You must first be agitated before you can be pacified.

But, if you now say, peace, peace, I tell you there is no peace. And if you now say, be quiet, be still, hush! I warn you, that all the quiet of which you boast is nothing but the hush before the hurricanewhen the world seems as if it stands still in terror. When the birds droop their wings upon the trees and cease their noteswhen the very lion hides himself in the thicket and when he roars no more, but is still waiting for the rushing wings of tempest. Here is a picture of your vaunted peace! Your calm is but a prelude of an eternal storm. The sunshine of today is but the index of the awful shower of tomorrow, a shower of red rain of vengeance and of hail mingled with fire. Oh, the peace the world gives is delusive. They that rest there, rest upon a bed of death.

But the peace which Christ gives is no delusion. When the Christian can sit down and say I have nothing to fear. I have nothing to trouble menothing to tremble at, neither for this world, nor for the next, he is not saying one word more than he has good ground for saying. No he is not going so far as he might go. He may say

*Now let earths old pillars shake,   
And all the wheels of nature break.   
My steadfast soul shall fear no more,   
Than solid rocks when billows roar.*

That peace has no pretense in it. It is not pompous. It is a reality. Profound though it is, it is not one whit more profound than it is warranted to be. The Believer rests upon a solid rock and all the waves of trouble can never make that rock give way, or shake the foundation of his peace. Not as the world gives, give I unto you.

II. Now having touched upon the first point, I come to the second IN THE MATTER OF GIVING. Take a broad view of it. In whatever the world gives, Christ does not give after the same fashion.

In the first place, the world gives scantily. Even the worlds best friends have had cause to complain of its contemptible treatment. In reading the biographies of mighty men whom the world honors, you will be soon convinced that the world is a most ungrateful friend. If you should devote your whole life to serve the world and make it happy, think not the world would ever return you so much as a dolt. Robert Burns is an instance of the worlds fine gratitude. There was the worlds poethe sung the roaring tankards foaming. He sang the loves of women and the joys of lustthe world admired him, but what did the world do for him? He might drag along his whole life in almost poverty. When the time comes for Robert Burns to be honored, (which was all too late for a buried man,) how did they honor him? He had poor relatives. Look to the subscription list and see how magnificent the donations they received! They honored him with libations of whiskey which they drunk themselves. That was all they would give him. The devotion of the Scotch drunkards to their poet is a devotion to their drunkenness, not to him. Doubtless there are many truehearted men who bewail the sinner as much as they admire the genius, but the mass like him none worse for his faults. However, if it had been ordained and decreed that every drunkard who honored Burns should go without his whiskey for a weekthere was not a dozen of them would have done itnot half a dozen. Their honor to him was a honor to themselves. It was an opportunity for drunkenness, at least in thousands of instances.

As I stood by his monument some little time ago, I saw around it a most dismal, dingy set out of withered flowers and I thought, Ah, this is his honor! O, Burns! How have you spent your life to have a withered wreath for the worlds payment of a life of mighty genius and a flood of marvelous song! Yes, when the world pays best, she pays nothing, and when she pays least, she pays her flatterers with scorn. She rewards their services with neglect and poverty. Many a statesman might I quote who has spent his life in the worlds service and at first the world said Go on,

go on, and he was clapped everywhere. He was doing something to serve his time. But he made a little mistake, a mistake perhaps, which will prove not to have been a mistake at all when the books of history shall be read with a clearer eye. Down with him, says the world, we will have nothing more to do with him. All he may have done before went for nothing. One mistake, one flaw in his political careerDown with him, cast him to the dogs, we will have nothing to do with him again.

Ah, the world pays scantily indeed! What will it do for those it loves the best! When it has done all it can, the last resource of the world is to give a man a title (and what is that)? And then to give him a tall pillar and set him up there to bear all weathers, to be pitilessly exposed to every storm. And there he stands for fools to gaze at, one of the worlds great ones paid in stone. It is true the world has paid that out of its own heart, for that is what the worlds heart is made of. The world pays scantily.

But did you ever hear a Christian who complained thus of his Master? No, will he say when I serve Christ, I feel that my work is my wages. That labor for Christ is its own reward. He gives me joy on earth, with a fullness of bliss hereafter. Oh, Christ is a good Paymaster. The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life. He that serves Christ may get but little gold and silver such as this world calls precious, but he gets a gold and a silver that shall never be melted in the last refining fire, that shall glitter among the precious things of immortality throughout eternity. The world pays niggardly and scantily, but not so Christ.

Againif you will serve the world and you wish to have gifts from it, the world will pay you half-heartedly. Now by the world I mean the religious world quite as much as any other part of it. I mean the whole world religious, political, good, bad and indifferentthe whole lot of them. If you serve the world it will pay you half-heartedly. Let a man spend himself for his fellow creatures interests, what will he get for it? Some will praise him, some will abuse him. The men that escape without abuse in this world are the men who do nothing at all. He who is most valiant and useful must expect to be most reprobated and abhorred. Those men who are borne upon the waves of popular applause are not the men whose worth is truereal philanthropists must swim against the stream. The whole list of the worlds benefactors is an army of martyrs. All along, the path of the good is marked with blood and fire. The world does not pay the men that serve it really, except with ingratitude. I say, to come back, even when the world does pay, it pays half-heartedly. Did you ever know a man yet, concerning whom the worlds mind was one? I never heard of any.

Oh, says one, So-and-So is one of the best men of his times. Go down the next street and you will hear it said, He is the biggest vagabond living. Go to one and you will hear him say, I never heard a man of such genius as that is. Oh, says another, mere twaddle. There is such a newspaper, says one, how ably it defends the rights of the people. Oh, says another, mere democracyseeking to pull down everything that is constitutional and proper. The world never made up its mind about any man yet. There is not a soul living concerning whom the world is unanimous.

But when Christ gives anything, He always gives with all His heart. He does not say to his people, There, I give you this, but still I have half-amind to keep it back. No, Christ gives His heart to all His people. There is no double-mindedness in Jesus. If we are enabled by Free Grace to serve Him and to love Him, we may rest quite sure that in the rich reward which His Grace shall give us, His whole heart shall go with every blessing. When Christ blesses the poor needy soul, He does not give with one hand and smite with the other. But he gives him mercies with both His hands both full. He asks the sinner simply to receive all that He is willing to give.

Then again, whenever the world gives anything, it gives mostly to those who do not want it. I remember once, when a lad, having a dog which I very much prized and some man in the street asked me to give him the dog. I thought it was pretty impudent and I said as much. A gentlemen, however, to whom I told it, said, Now suppose the Duke of So-and-So who was a great man in the neighborhoodasked you for the dogwould you give it him? I said, I think I would. He said, Then you are just like all the world. You would give to those who do not want. Who in the whole of this congregation would object to give anything to the Queen? Not a soul of us and yet, perhaps, there is no person in the world who so little needs our gifts. We can always give to those who do not require anything. For we feel that there is some little honor conferred upon usan honor bestowed by the reception.

Now, look at Jesus. When He gives to His friends, He gets no honor from themthe honor is in His own free heart that should lead Him to give to such poor worms. Great men have gone to Christ with mere professions and they have asked Him to be good to them, but then they have at the same time declared that they had a righteousness of their own and did not want much of Him. And He has sent them about their business and given them nothing. He said, I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. But whenever poor, lost sinners have gone to Christ, He has never turned one of them awaynever. He has given all they could possibly want and infinitely more than they thought they could ever expect. Might not Jesus say to us, when we ask Him for the blessings of His Grace, You are impudent in daring to ask. But instead of that, He loves to be asked and He freely and richly givesNot as the world gives. For He gives to those who need it most.

Again, there is another view of the worlds gifts. The world gives to its friends, Any man will help his own friends. If we help not our own relatives and friends then are we worse than heathen men and publicans. But the world generally confines its good wishes and blessings to its class and

kin. It cannot think of giving blessings to its enemies. Did you ever hear yet of the worlds blessing an enemy? Never. It gives its benefactions to its friends and but very scantily even to them. But Christ gives His benefactions to His enemies. Not as the world gives, He may truly say. The world says, I must see whether you deserve it. I must see that your case is a good one. It enquires and enquires and enquires again. But Christ only sees that our case is a bad one and then He gives. He wants not a good case but a bad case. He knows our necessity and, once discovering our necessity, not all our sin can stop the hand of His bounty.

Oh, if Jesus should call to mind some of the hard speeches we have uttered about Him, He would never bless us surely, if it were not that His ways are far above our ways. Why, remember, Man, it is not long ago since you cursed Himsince you laughed at His peopledespised Hs ministers and could spit   
upon His Bible. Jesus has cast all that behind His back and loved you in spite of yourself. Would the world have done that? Let a man get up and rail at his fellows, will they forgive and, after forgiving, will they begin to bless? Will they die for their enemies? Oh, no! Such a thing never entered into the heart of manhood. But Christ blesses rebels, traitors, enemies to His Cross. He brings them to know His love and taste of His eternal mercies. A thousand remarks seem to start up and I scarcely know which to choose. Not as the world gives give I unto you.

The world always gives with a stingy motive. The most of us are compelled to economy. If we give anything away to a poor man we generally hope that he will not come back. If we give him half a-crown it is very often, as we say, to get rid of him. If we bestow a little charity it is in the hope that we shall not see his face again, for really we do not like the same men continually begging at our door when the world is so full of beggars. Did you ever hear of a man who gave a beggar something to encourage him to keep on begging of him? I must confess I never did such a thing and am not likely to begin. But that is just what Christ does. When He gives us a little grace, His motive is to make us ask for more. And when He gives us more grace, it is given with the very motive to make us come and ask again. He gives us silver blessings to induce us to ask for golden mercies. And when we have golden favors, those same mercies are given on purpose to lead us to pray more earnestly and open our mouth wider that we may receive more.

What a strange giver Christ is! What a strange Friend, that He gives on purpose to make us beg more! The more you ask of Christ, the more you can ask. The more you receive, the more you will want. The more you know Him, the more you will desire to know Him. The more grace you receive, the more grace you will pant after. And when you are full of grace, you will never be content till you get full of glory. Christs way of giving is, Of His fullness have we received and grace for gracegrace to make us pant for more gracegrace to make us long after something higher, something fuller and richer still. Not as the world gives, give I unto you.

Againwhen the world gives anything it is almost always with a selfish motive. The Christian man gives, not hoping to receive again. But the world lends that it may borrow. It gives that it may receive. There are many men whose whole lives are a looking after self. They would not like to be told so. But even their benefactions to a hospital, or to a charity, are merely given because the name should be in the list. We know that too many persons would not think of relieving private want unless they thought there was a merit in it and so thought it would stand good for them at last. They would infinitely prefer to do their good in the lumps. I know, at this day, a man that I believe would give twenty pounds, fifty pounds, or a hundred pounds to a charity, but who would let his own relatives starve rather than give them anything, because it would never be knownno one would talk about it. The worlds motive for bestowing a blessing is in order that some rich fruit may flow from it. If the world rewards a warrior, its ostensible reason is that other soldiers may fight bravely. If it rewards some great artist, it is to encourage the profession, that is, to help themselves, by getting others to amuse them as well as this man has done.

There is always an ulterior object in the worlds generosity. Not so in Christs. When He gives us mercies, He has nothing whatever to get from us. It is our delight to live to Him. But our living to Him cannot increase His gloryHe is God over all, blessed forever. He gives us more than He can ever receive. And though we with grateful hearts desire to live to Him, that very gratitude is first His gift. The well of love is filled out of the spring of Godotherwise it had been the grave of mercies and not a fountain of praise.

Now, what more shall I say? I seem to have brought out the most prominent points of the worlds giving, but let me add one more. Not as the world gives, give I unto you. All that the world gives, it only bestows for a seasonit must go back again. You have riches, Man, as the reward of your toils. What shall you be the better for them in a few short months? Your broad acres, your leagues of land shall dwindle into a short six feet of clay. Your mansionwhat shall it shrivel intobut into a small coffin, over which shall be thrown a little dirt to hide your putrid dust and save the world a nuisance? The world will have all back of you. Naked you did come into it and it will take care you shall take nothing out of it, for naked shall you go out of it again.

Oh, Man, you have accumulated knowledge until you have become a walking encyclopedia, but what shall you take with you? What difference shall there be between your hollow skull and that of the meanest peasant, when some wanton sexton, in some future year, shall take it up, or split it with his spade? What shall you be the better for all those big thoughts

that have stretched your skull and all those marvelous conceptions that have made it ache so much, that you could scarcely carry it upon your shoulders? You will go back again to your fellow earth and the worm shall eat you and the philosopher shall taste no sweeter to his tooth than did the peasant.

And, then, whether you are prince or king, or whether you are a poor, ignorant man, the worms shall make no distinction. You shall still rot still be consumednoisome gases and a handful of dust shall be your whole residue. What then can the world give? If it tried it could not give you anything that would last. It cannot give you anything better than air. It can give you nothing that can pass into eternity with you. What? Though it follow you with the trumpet of fame, that trumpet cannot be heard half-way across the Jordan. If all the men in the world clapped their hands in your praise, not one angel, even on the very borders of the celestial world would observe the tumult of applause. The world can give you nothing that you can carry with you. You are at the best a packhorse, that shall carry its burden till it ends its journey and then it must lie down and die. You do but carry a burden on your back, and verily, death shall unload you before you are allowed to enter another world.

How different is Christ in His gifts! What He gives He gives forever. When He bestows mercies they are lasting things. No shadows does He give, but real substanceno fancies, but eternal realities does He bestow. Oh, men of this world, when your gold is meltedwhen your diamonds have dissolved in gaswhen your estates have gonewhen your hopes are lost and when your goods are destroyed, then shall the people of God begin to know their riches. Then shall they shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

*Not as the world gives, give I unto you.*

III. Now this brings me to one PRACTICAL REFLECTION, OR RATHER EXHORTATION TO GODS PEOPLE. If this is true, my Hearers, I beseech you serve not the worldserve none but Christ, for He is the best master. Serve Him with all your might, because He so richly has given and so richly will give. I would not serve the world for the best empire in it. A king once said he wished all his subjects could be kings for a day, for they would soon discover, he said, that the art of governing is not so easy as they think and that a crown is not so soft a thing to wear as they imagine. No, the world may abuse us if it likes. If it abuses us we are not very sad there, because the world is not our master and as long as our own Master is satisfied, we care not for a stranger. If anyone should walk into your garden and say to your gardener, I do not like the arrangement of these beds. I do not like those flowers. You are evidently a careless man. He would say, Well, my master has been round this morning. He did not say much, but I saw a smile of satisfaction on his face. Therefore, what is that to you? It is no business of yours. I am not your servant. I do not serve you.

Now, the world is a bad paymaster to those that obey and serve it. Let every Christian make up his mind that he will have nothing to do with serving the world. If the world scorns and frowns, let him say, It is no business of yours. You are not my master. I do not serve you. If it amuses you to abuse me go on, it will not hurt me. There is even in the mind of Christians at times too much of a tendency to time-serving. We are all so apt to think that we really must bow to public opinion, to this, that and the other. Oh, you will never be happy until the Holy Spirit has brought you to thisthat you will fear God and that you will fear no one elsethat you will serve God with undivided heart. I go furtherI would not even serve the Church if I must have it for a master. I can serve God, I can serve Christ. For Christ is a blessed Master. But I would not advise any of you to make the Church your master. Wherever the Church is we are all bound to serve the Brethren, to serve the Church of Christ as we are bound to assist in a common causebut think not that even the dictum of the Church is to be your judge. Imagine not that even its praise is that which you are to seek.

You are to seek the praise of Christ. His Church may do wrong, his ministers make mistakes, but Christ Himself can never be in error. Serve Christthis is the practical exhortation from the whole subject. My dear Friends, you that love Christ and have been chosen by him from before the foundation of the world, who have been bought with his blood, have been washed and pardoned and forgivenif Christ gives to you, not as the world givesthen I beseech you serve Christ better than worldlings serve the world. Oh, it is astonishing what men have done to serve the world! They have rushed to the cannons mouth and given their life to be food for powder and they have thought they were well rewarded with a little praise. Men, too, have sweated at the furnace. They have spent their livings, have starved their families, to invent some luxuries for the tables of the rich. Men have undergone unheard of labors, toils that positively appall you to read of, merely to become eminent in their profession, to be first in the rank of artisans among which they were numbered.

When the world has a gulf to fill, it never lacks a Curtis to leap into it, but Christ often sees his cause left and deserted by reason of the coldness of his friends. There is many a battle wherein the warriors of Christ turn their backs, though armed and carrying bows. I was thinking yesterday and the thought struck me forcibly, that one thousand eight hundred years ago, or a little more, there were a few men met in an upper chamber for worshipabout four hundred of them. They met and they prayed and they preached and there was a Divine fire kindled in their bosoms. And in a few years, they had preached the Gospel in every language under Heaven and the mass of the world became professedly Christians. Now here is a room, not with four hundred persons, but oftentimes filled with

thousands and yet does the religion of Christ progress as it should? No.

If there were but a little, but a hundredth part of the zeal of Christs disciples that there was in olden times, before another year rolls round, there would be missionaries in every town. The Gospel would be preached in every village of India and China and every other nation accessible to the foot of the missionary. As it is we are an idle generation. A tribe of dwarfs has succeeded to a race of giants and now Christs cause creeps where it once ran and only runs where once it was desirous to fly as with wings of lightning. Oh, that God would make bare His arm! And if ever He does, the first sign of it will be that the Church will begin to serve Christ more zealously. Some will give their blood to die in the preaching of the Word. Others will pour their wealth into coffers of the Church and every living soul numbered in the family of Christ will spend itself and be spent for its Masters honor.

Not as the world gives, give I unto you. O Jesus, not as the worlds followers give, do we desire to give to You. They give their lives but once, we would die daily. They give much of their talent, we would give all. Take our heart and seal it, make it as Your own, that we may live to Your honor and die in Your arms and sit upon Your throne with You forever and ever. Amen

Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #300 The New Park Street Pulpit 1

SPIRITUAL PEACE   
NO. 300

**DELIVERED ON SABBATH MORNING, FEBRUARY 19, 1860, BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT EXETER HALL, STRAND.

**Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. John 14:27.**

OUR Lord was now about to die, to depart from this world and to ascend to His Father. He therefore makes his will. And this is the blessed legacy which He leaves to the faithfulPeace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you.

We may rest well assured that this testament of our Lord Jesus Christ is valid. You have here His own signature. It is signed, sealed and delivered in the presence of the eleven Apostles, who are faithful and true witnesses. Tis true a testament is not in force while the testator lives, but Jesus Christ has died once and for all. And now none can dispute His legacy. The will is in force, because the testator has died. It may however, sometimes happen that a testators wishes in a will may be disregarded and he, powerless beneath the sod, is quite unable to rise and demand that his last will should be carried out. But our Lord Jesus Christ who died and therefore made His will valid rose again and now He lives to see every stipulation of it carried out. And this blessed codicil, Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, is sure to all the blood-bought seed. Peace is theirs and must be theirs, because He died and put the will in force and lives to see the will fulfilled.

The donation, the blessed legacy which our Lord has here left, is His peace. This might be considered as being peace with all the creatures. God has made a league of peace between His people and the whole universe. For you shall be in league with the stones of the fieldand the beasts of the field shall be at peace with you. All things work together for good to them that love God. Providence that was once estranged and seemed to work counter to our welfare, has now become at peace with us. The wheels revolve in happy order and bear us blessings as often as they turn.

The words of our Lord may also refer to the peace which exists among the people of God toward one another. There is a peace of God which reigns in our hearts through Jesus Christ, by which we are bound in closest ties of unity and concord to every other child of God whom we may meet with in our pilgrimage here below. Leaving, however, these two sorts of peace, which I believe to be comprehended in the legacy, let us proceed to consider two kinds of peace, which in our experience resolve themselves into one and which are surely the richest part of this benediction. Our Savior here means peace with God and peace with our own conscience. There is first, peace with God for He has reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ. He has put away the wall which separated us from Jehovah and now there is peace on earth and goodwill toward men. When sin is put away, God has no cause of warfare against His creature Christ has put our sins away and therefore there is a virtual substantial peace established between God and our souls. This, however, might exist without our clearly understanding and rejoicing in it. Christ has therefore left us peace in the conscience. Peace with God is the treaty. Peace in the conscience is the publication of it. Peace with God is the fountain and peace with conscience is the crystal stream which issues from it. There is a peace decreed in the court of Divine Justice in Heaven. And then there follows as a necessary consequence, as soon as the news is known, a peace in the minor court of human judgment wherein conscience sits upon the throne to judge us according to our works.

The legacy, then, of Christ is a twofold peacea peace of friendship, of agreement, of love, of everlasting union between the elect and God. It is next a peace of sweet enjoyment, of quiet rest of the understanding and the conscience. When there are no winds above, there will be no tempests below. When Heaven is serene earth is quiet. Conscience reflects the complacency of God. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, by whom also we have received the atonement.

I propose this morning, if God the Holy Spirit shall graciously assist, to speak of this peace thusfirst, its secret groundwork. Then its noble nature. Thirdly, its blessed effects. Fourthly, its interruptions and means of maintenance and then I shall close by some words of solemn warning to those of you who have never enjoyed peace with God and consequently never have had true peace with yourselves.

I. First, then, THE PEACE WHICH A TRUE CHRISTIAN ENJOYS WITH GOD AND HIS CONSCIENCE HAS A SOLID GROUNDWORK TO REST UPON. It is not built upon a pleasing fiction of his imaginationa delusive dream of his ignorance. But it is built on facts, on positive truths, on essential verities. It is founded upon a rock and though the rains descend and the winds blow and the floods beat upon that house, it shall not fall, because its foundation is secure. When a man has faith in the blood of Christ there is but little wonder that he has peace, for indeed he is fully warranted in enjoying the most profound calm which mortal heart can know. For thus he reasons with himselfGod has said, He that believes is justified from all things, and, moreover, that, he that believes on the Lord Jesus Christ shall be saved.

Now, my faith is unfeignedly fixed in the great substitutionary sacrifice of Christtherefore I am now justified from all things and stand accepted in Christ as a Believer. The necessary consequence of that is, that he possesses peace of mind. If God has punished Christ in my place, He will not punish me again. Being once purged I have no more conscience of sin. Under the Jewish ceremonial mention was made of sin every year. The atoning lamb must be slaughtered a thousand times. But this Man, having made one atonement for sins, forever sat down at the right hand of the majesty in the heavens. How, I ask, can the man tremble who believes himself forgiven? It were strange, indeed if his faith did not breathe a holy calm into his bosom.

Againthe child of God receives his peace from another golden pipe for a sense of pardon has been shed abroad in his soul. He not only believes his forgiveness from the testimony of God, but he has a sense of pardon. Do any of you know what this is? It is something more than a belief in Christ. It is the cream of faith, the full ripe fruit of believing. It is a high and special privilege which God gives after faith. If I have not that sense of pardon I am still bound to believe and then, believing, I shall by and by advance to the seeing of that which I believed and hoped for. The Holy Spirit sometimes sheds abroad in the Believer a consciousness that he is forgiven. By mysterious agency He fills the soul with the light of glory. If all the false witnesses on earth should rise up and tell the man at that time that God is not reconciled to himthat his sins remain unforgivenhe would be able to laugh them to scorn. For says he, the love of God is shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Spirit. He feels that he is reconciled to God. He has come from faith up to enjoyment and every power of his soul feels the Divine dew as it gently distils from Heaven.

The understanding feels it, it is enlightened. The will feels it, it is subjected to the will of God. The heart feels it, it is fired with holy love. The hope feels it, for it looks forward to the day when the whole man shall be made like its Covenant Head, Jesus Christ. Every flower in the garden of humanity feels the sweet south wind of the Spirit, as it blows upon it and causes the sweet spices to send forth their perfume. What wonder, then, that man has peace with God when the Holy Spirit becomes a royal tenant of the heart, with all His glorious train of blessings?

Ah, poor tried Soul, what peace and joy unspeakable would reign in your soul if you did but believe on Christ? Yes, you say, but I want God to manifest to me that I am forgiven. Poor Soul, He will not do that at once. He bids you believe Christ, first, and then He will make manifest to you the pardon of your sin. It is by faith we are saved, not by enjoyment. But when I believe Christ and take Him at His word, even when my feelings seem to contradict my faith, then, as a gracious reward, He will honor my faith by giving me to feel that which I once believed when I did not feel it.

The Believer also enjoys, in favored seasons, such an intimacy with the Lord Jesus Christ, that he cannot but be at peace. Oh, there are sweet words which Christ whispers in the ears of His people. And there are lovevisits which He pays to them, which a man would not believe even though it should be told unto him. You must know for yourselves what it is to have fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. There is

such a thing as Christ manifesting Himself to us as He does not unto the world. All black and frightful thoughts are banished. I am my Beloveds and my Beloved is Mine. This is the one all-absorbing feeling of the spirit. And what wonder is it, that the Believer has peace when Christ thus dwells in his heart and reigns there without a rival, so that he knows no man, save Jesus only. It were a miracle of miracles if we did not have peace. And the strangest thing in Christian experience is that our peace is not more continued and the only explanation of our misery is that our communion is broken, that our fellowship is marred, else would our peace be like a river and our righteousness like the waves of the sea.

That venerable man of God, Joseph Irons, who but a little while ago ascended to our Father in Heaven, says, What wonder that a Christian man has peace when he carries the title-deeds of Heaven in his bosom! This is another solid groundwork of confidence. We know that Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people and the Christian can sometimes cry with the Apostles, Thanks be unto the Father, who has made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. Feeling that God has given him the meetness, he discovers that this preparation is a warrant for the hope that he shall enter into the dwelling place of the glorified. He can lift his eye above and say, Yon bright world is mine, my entailed inheritance. Life keeps me from it, but death shall bring me to it. My sins cannot destroy the Heaven-written indentures, Heaven is mine. Satan himself cannot shut me out of it. I must, I shall be where Jesus is, for after Him my spirit longs and to Him my soul is knit.

Oh, Brethren, it is not a marvel when all is blest within and all is calm above, that justified men possess, a peace with God which passes all understanding. You will perhaps be saying, well, but the Christian has troubles like other menlosses in business, deaths in his family and sickness of body! Yes, but he has another groundwork for his peacean assurance of the faithfulness and covenant fidelity of his God and Father. He believes that God is a faithful Godthat whom He has loved He will not cast away.

All the dark Providences to him are but blessings in disguise. When his cup is bitter, he believes it is mixed by love and it must all end well, for God secures the ultimate result. Therefore come foul, come fair, come all weathers, his soul shelters itself beneath the twin wings of the faithfulness and power of his Covenant God. The sanctified spirit is so resigned to his Fathers will that he will not murmur. To him, as Madame Guyon was wont to sayIt is equal whether love ordain his life or death, appoint him weal or woe.

He is content to take just what his Father sends him, knowing that his Father understands him better than he understands himself. He gives up the helm of his ship to the hand of a gracious God. And he himself is enabled to fall asleep softly in the cabin. He believes that his Captain has power over winds and waves. And when he sometimes feels his ship rocking in the storm, he cries with Herbert

*Though winds and waves assault my keel, He does preserve it. He does steer,   
Even when the boat seems most to reel. Storms are the triumph of His art;   
Sure, He may hide His face, but not His heart.*

No wonder, then, that he has peace, when he can feel this and knows that he who has begun the good work, has both the will and the power to perfect it, unto the day of Christ.

II. Having hurriedly unveiled the secret groundwork of the Christians peace, we must dwell for a few minutes upon ITS NOBLE CHARACTER. The peace of other men is ignoble and base. Their peace is born in the outskirts of sin. Self-conceit and ignorance are its parents. The man knows not what he is and therefore thinks himself to be somethingwhen he is nothing. He saysI am rich and increased in goods, while he is naked and poor and miserable.

Not such is the birth of the Christians peace. That is born of the Spirit. It is a peace which God the Father gives, for He is the God of all peace. It is a peace which Jesus Christ bought, for He has made peace with His blood and He is our peace. And it is a peace which the Holy Spirit works He is its Author and its founder in the soul. Our peace then, is Gods own child and God-like is its character. His Spirit is its sire and it is like its Father. It is My peace, says Christ! Not mans peace, but the unruffled calmthe profound peace of the Eternal Son of God. Oh, if we had but this one thing within our bosoms, this Divine peace, a Christian were a glorious thing, indeed.

And even now kings and mighty men of this world are as nothing when once compared with the Christian. For he wears a jewel in his bosom which all the world could not buya jewel fashioned from old eternity and ordained by Sovereign Grace to be the high blessing, the right royal inheritance of the chosen sons of God. This peace, then, is Divine in its origin. And it is also Divine in its nourishment. It is a peace which the world cannot give. And it cannot contribute towards its maintenance. The daintiest morsels that ever carnal sense fed upon would be bitter to the mouth of this sweet peace. You may bring your much fine corn, your sweet wine and your flowing oil, your dainties tempt us not, for this peace feeds upon angels food and it cannot relish any food that grows on earth.

If you should give a Christian ten times as much riches as he has, you would not cause him ten times as much peace. But probably, ten times more distress. You might magnify him in honor, or strengthen him with healthyet, neither would his honor or his health contribute to his peace, for that peace flows from a Divine source, and there are no tributary streams from the hills of earth to feed that Divine current. The stream flows from the Throne of God and by God alone is it sustained. It is, then, a peace Divinely born and Divinely nourished.   
And let me again remark, it is a peace that lives above circumstances.

The world has tried hard to put an end to the Christians peace and it has never been able to accomplish it. I remember, in my early childhood, having heard an old man utter in prayer, a saying which stuck by meO Lord, give unto your servants that peace which the world can neither give nor take away. Ah, the whole might of our enemies cannot take it away. Poverty cannot destroy it. The Christian in his rags can have peace with God. Sickness cannot mar it. Lying on his bed, the saint is joyful in the midst of the fires.

Persecution cannot ruin it, for persecution cannot separate the Believer from Christand while he is one with Christ his soul is full of peace. Put your hand here, said the martyr to his executioner, when he was led to the stake, put your hand here and now put your hand on your own heart and feel which beats the hardest and which is the most troubled. Strangely was the executioner struck with awe, when he found the Christian man as calm as though he were going to a wedding feast, while he himself has all agitation at having to perform so desperate a deed.

Oh, world! We defy you to rob us of our peace! We did not get it of you and you can not rend it from us. It is set as a seal upon our arm. It is strong as death and invincible as the grave. Your stream, O Jordan, cannot drown it, black and deep though your depths may be. In the midst of your tremendous billows our soul is confident and rests still on Him that loved us and gave Himself for us. Frequently have I had to remark that Christians placed in the most unfavorable circumstances are, as a rule, better Christians than those who are placed in propitious positions.

In the midst of a very large Church of persons in all ranks, with the condition of most of whom I am as thoroughly conversant as man can well be, I have observed that the women who come from houses where they have ungodly husbands and trying childrenthat the young people who come from workshops where they are opposed and laughed atthat the people who come from the depths of poverty, from the dens and kens of our city, are the brightest jewels that are set in the crown of the Church. It seems as if God would defeat naturenot only make the hyssop grow on the wall, but make the cedar grow there, toohe finds his brightest pearls in the darkest waters and brings up his most precious jewels from the filthiest dung hills

*Wonders of grace to God belong,   
Repeat His mercies in your song.*   
And this I have found too, that often the more disturbed a Christian

man is, the purer is his peace. The heavier the rolling swell his griefs and sorrow, the more still and calm and profound is the peace that reigns within his heart. So then, it is peace Divinely born, Divinely nourished and one which is quite above the influence of this poor whirling world.

Further, I must remark briefly upon the nature of this peace, that it is profound and real. The peace of God, says an Apostle, that passes all understanding. This peace not only fills all the senses to the brim till every power is satiated with delight. But it fills the understanding which can take in the whole world and understand many things which are not within the range of visioneven the understanding cannot take in the length and the breadth of this peace. And not only will the understanding fail to compass it, but all understanding is outdone. When our judgment has exerted itself to the utmost, it cannot comprehend the heights and depths of this profound peace.

Have you ever imagined what must be the stillness of the caverns in the depth of the seas? A thousand fathoms beneath the bosom of the floods, where the mariners bones lie undisturbed? Where pearls are born and corals that never see the lightwhere the long lost gold and silver of the merchants lie sprinkled on the sandy floor? Down in the rock caves and the silent palaces of darkness where waves dash not and the intruding foot of the diver has never trodden? So clear, so calm is the peace of God, the placid rest of the assured Believer.

Or lift up your eyes to the stars. Have you ever dreamed a sweet dream of the quietude of those noiseless orbs? Let us mount beyond the realm of noise and riotlet us tread the noiseless highway of the silent orbs. The thunders are far below us, the confused tumult of the crowd defiles not the sanctity of this wondrous quiet. See how the stars sleep on their golden couches, or only open their bright eyes to keep watch upon that storm less sea of ether and guard the solemn boundaries of the reign of peace. Such is the peace and calm that reigns in the Christians bosom. Sweet calm, one calls it. Perfect peace, David styles it. Another one calls it great peace. Great peace have all they that love Your Law and nothing shall offend them.

Last yearI tell you now a secret of my own heartI had one text which thrust itself upon my remembrance many times a day. I dreamed of it when I slept. When I awoke it went with me and I verified it and rejoiced in itHis soul shall dwell at ease. It is my promise now. There is such an easequite consistent with labor, with agony for the souls of men, with an earnest desire for yet greater attainments in Divine life. There is such an easeit is not to be gained by all the appliances of luxury, by all the aggrandizement of wealthan ease in which not a wave of trouble rolls across the peaceful breast. But all is calm and all is clear and all is joy and love. May we evermore dwell in that serene atmosphere and never lose our hold of this peace.

Lest there should be any of you who do not understand what I have said, I will try and say it over again briefly in an example. Do you see that man? He has been taken up before a cruel tribunal. He is condemned to die. The hour draws nearhe is taken to prison and placed there with two soldiers to guard him and four soldiers outside the door. The night comes onhe lies down, but in how uncomfortable a position! Chained between two soldiers! He lies down and he falls asleepnot the sleep of the guilty criminal, whose very sense of dread makes his eyelids heavy. But a calm

sleep which is given by God and which ends in an angelic vision, by which he is delivered. Peter sleeps, when the death sentence is above his head and the sword is ready to penetrate his soul.

See another picture? There are Paul and Silas yonderthey have been preaching and their feet are thrust in the stocks for it. They will die on the morrow. But in the midnight they sing praises unto God and the prisoners hear them. One would have thought in such a loathsome dungeon as that, they would have groaned and moaned all night long, or that at best they might have slept. But no, they sang praises to God and the prisoners heard them. There is the peacethe calm, the quietude of the heir of Heaven.

I might give you another pictureof our ancient Nonconformists, in the days of that most persecuting Queen Elizabeth. She cast into prison among very many others, two of our forefathers, of the name of Greenwood and Barrow. They were caused to lie in that loathsome stinking dungeonthe Clink Prisonshut in one huge room with maniacs, murderers, felons and the likecompelled to listen to their frightful conversation. One day there came a warrant that they must die. The two men were led out and tied to the cart and were about to be taken away to death.

But they were no sooner outside the gate than a messenger rode up. The Queen had sent a reprieve. They were taken back. Calmly and quietly they returned to their prison. And the next day they were taken to Newgate and, just as suddenly, there come a second messenger, to say they must be taken away to Tyburn to die. They were again tied to the cart. They ascended the scaffold, the ropes were put round their necks and they were allowed to stand in that position and address the assembled multitude and bear witness to the liberty of Christs Church and to the right of private judgment among men. They concluded their speech and a second time that wretched Queen sent them a reprieve and they were taken back a second time to the dungeon and there they lay in Newgate.

But only for few days more and then a third time they were taken out and this time they were hanged in reality. But they went as cheerfully to the scaffold on each occasion as men go to their beds and seemed as joyous, as though they were going to a crown, rather than to a halter. Such specimens all the Churches of Christ can show. Wherever there has been a true Christian, the world has tried its best to put out his peace. But it is a peace that never can be quenchedit will live on. With halter about its neck, with the hot pincers tearing away its flesh, with the sword in its very bones, it will live, till, mounting from the burning bush of earth, this bird of paradise shall wear its glittering plumage in the midst of the garden of paradise.

III. Having detained you longer on this point than I thought I should do, I hasten to the third point, THE EFFECTS OF THIS DIVINE PEACE.

The blessed effects of this Divine peace are, first of all, joy. You will notice that the words joy and peace are continually put together. For joy without peace were an unhallowed and an unhappy joythe crackling of thorns under a pot, unsound, mere flames of joy, but not the red glowing coals of bliss. Now, Divine peace gives joy to the Christian. And such joy! Have you ever seen the first gleam of joy when it has come into the eye of the penitent? It has been my happy lot to pray with many a convicted sinner, to witness the deep agony of spirit and deeply sympathize with the poor creature in his trouble for sin.

I have prayed and have exhorted to faith and I have seen that flash of joy, when at last the hopeful word was spoken, I do believe on the Lord Jesus Christ with all my heart. Oh, that look of joy! It is as if the gates of Heaven had been opened for a moment and some flash of glory had blazed upon the eye and had been reflected from there. I remember my own joy, when I first had peace with God. I thought I could dance all the way home. I could understand what John Bunyan said, when he declared he wanted to tell the crows on the plowed land all about it. He was too full to hold, he felt he must tell someone.

Oh, there was joy in the household that day, when all heard that the eldest son had found a Savior and knew himself to be forgivenbliss compared with which all earths joys are less than nothing and vanity. As the counterfeit to the real coin, so are the base joys of earth to the real joy which springs from peace with God. Young man! Young woman! You could have bliss such as you never knew before, you must be reconciled to God through the blood of Christ. For till then, real joy and lasting pleasure you can never know. The first effect of this peace, then, is joy.

Then follows anotherlove. He that is at peace with God through the blood of Christ is constrained to love Him that died for him. Precious Jesus! he cries, help me to serve You! Take me as I am and make me something. Use me in Your cause. Send me to the farthest part of the green earth, if You will, to tell sinners the way of salvation. I will cheerfully go, for my peace fans the flame of love, that all that I am and all I have shall be, must be, forever Yours.

Then next, there comes an anxiety after holiness. He that is at peace with God does not wish to go into sin. For he is careful lest he should lose that peace. He is like a woman that has escaped from a burning house. He is afraid of every candle afterwardslest he should come again into the like danger. He walks humbly with his God. Constrained by grace, this sweet fruit of the Spirit, peace, leads him to endeavor to keep all the commandments of God and to serve his Lord with all his might.

Then again, this peace will help us to bear affliction. Paul describes it as a shoe. As he says, Your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace. It enables us to tread on the sharpest flints of sorrow, yes, on adders and on serpents, also. It gives us power to walk over the briars of this world and our feet are not wounded. We tread the fires and we are not burned. This Divine shoe of peace makes us walk without weariness

and run without fainting. I can do all things when my soul is at peace with God. There are no sufferings that shall move my soul to painno terrors that shall blanch my cheekthere are no wounds that shall compel me to an ignominious fear when my spirit is at peace with God.

It makes a man a giantswells the dwarf to a Goliath size. He becomes mightiest of the mighty. And while the weaklings creep about this little earth, bowed down to the very dust, he strides it like a Colossus. God has made him great and mighty, because He has filled his soul with peace and with overflowing joy.

More might I tell you of the blessed effects of this peace, but I shall be content, after I have simply noticed that this peace gives boldness at the Throne and access to a Fathers Mercy Seat. We feel we are reconciled and therefore we stand no longer at a distancebut we come up to Himeven to His knees. We spread our wants before Him, plead our cause and rest satisfied of successbecause there is no enmity in our Fathers heart to us and none in ours to Him. We are one with God and He is one with us, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

IV. And now I have a practical duty to perform and with this I shall close after having said a few words to those who know nothing of this peace. The practical remarks I have to make are upon the subject of INTERRUPTIONS OF PEACE.

All Christians have a right to perfect peace, but they have not all the possession of it. There are times when gloomy doubts prevail and we fear to say that God is ours. We lose a consciousness of pardon and we grope in the noonday as in the night. How is this? I think these interruptions may be owing to one of four causes.

Sometimes they are due to the ferocious temptations of Satan. There are periods when with unexampled cruelty Satan assaults the children of God. It is not to be expected that they will maintain perfect peace while they are fighting with Apollyon. When poor Christian was wounded in his head and in his hands and in his feet, no wonder that he did groan exceedingly and as Bunyan has it, I never saw him all the while give so much as one pleasant look, till he perceived he had wounded Apollyon with his two-edged sword. Then, indeed, he did smile and look upward. But it was the most dreadful fight that ever I saw.

Mark, there is no such thing as a disturbance of the reality of the peace between God and the soul. For God is always at peace with those who are reconciled to Him by Christ. But there is a disturbance of the enjoyment of that peace and that is often effected by the howling of that great dog of Hell. He comes against us with all his might, with his mouth open ready to swallow us up. And were it not for Divine mercy he would do so. It is but little marvel that sometimes our peace is affected, when Satan is fierce in his temptations.

At another time a want of peace may arise from ignorance. I do not wonder that a man who believes Arminian doctrine, for instance, has little peace. There is nothing in the doctrine to give him any. It is a bone without marrow, it is a religion that seems to me to be cold, sapless, with no marrow, fruitlessbitter and not sweet. There is nothing about it but the whip of the Law. There are no grand certaintiesno glorious facts of Covenant love, of discriminating grace, of Almighty faithfulness and suretyship engagements. I will never quarrel with the man that can live on such stones and scorpions as conditional election, haphazard redemption, questionable perseverance and unavailing regeneration. There may be some, I suppose, who can live on this dry meat. If they can live on it, be it so.

But I believe many of our doubts and fears arise from doctrinal ignorance. You have not, perhaps, a clear view of that Covenant made between the Father and His glorious Son, Jesus Christ. You do not know how to spell the word Gospel without mixing up the word law in it. Perhaps you have not learned fully to look out of self to Christ for everything. You do not know how to distinguish between sanctification, which varies, and justification, which is permanent. Many Believers have not come to discern between the work of the Spirit and the work of the Son. And what marvel, if you are ignorant, that you sometimes lack peace? Learn more of that precious Book and your peace shall be more continual.

Then again this peace is usually marred by sin. God hides His face behind the clouds of dust which His own flock makes as they travel along the road of this world. We sin and then we sorrow for it. God still loves His child, even when he sins. But He will not let the child know it. That childs name is in the family register. But the Father clasps up the book and will not let him read it till he thoroughly repents again and comes back once more to Jesus Christ. If you can have peace and yet live in sin, mark thisyou are unrenewed. If you can live in iniquity and yet have peace in your conscienceyour conscience is seared and dead.

But the Christian manhe sinsbegins to smart. If not at the very moment he falls, it is not long before his Fathers rod is on his back and he begins to cry

*Where is the blessedness I knew   
When first I saw the Lord?   
Where is the soul-refreshing view   
Of Jesus and His Word?*

Once moreour peace may be interrupted also by unbelief. Indeed, this is the sharpest knife of the four and will most readily cut the golden thread of our enjoyments.

And now, if you would maintain unbroken peace, take advice from Gods minister this morning, young though he is in years. Take advice, which he can warrant to be good, for it is Scriptural. If you would keep your peace continual and unbroken, look always to the sacrifice of Christ. Never permit your eye to turn to anything but Jesus. When you repent, my Hearer, still keep your eye on the Cross. When you labor, labor in the

strength of the Crucified One. Everything you do, whether it is selfexamination, fasting, meditation, or prayer, do all under the shadow of Jesus Cross. Or otherwise, live as you will, your peace will be but a sorry thing. You shall be full of disquiet and of sore trouble. Live near the Cross and your peace shall be continual.

Another piece of advice. Walk humbly with your God. Peace is a jewel. God puts it on your fingerbe proud of itand He will take it off again. Peace is a noble garmentboast of your dressand God will take it away from you. Remember the hole of the pit from where you were dug and the quarry of manure from where you were hewn. And when you have the bright crown of peace on your head, remember your sin-black feet. No, even when that crown is there, cover it and your face still with those two wings, the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ. In this way shall your peace be maintained.

And againwalk in boldness, avoid every appearance of evil. Be not conformed to this world. Stand up for Truth of God and rectitude. Suffer not the maxims of men to sway your judgment. Seek the Holy Spirit that you may live like Christ and live near to Christ and your peace shall not be interrupted.

As for those of you who have never had peace with God, I can entertain but one sentiment towards you, namely, that of pity. Poor Souls! Poor Souls! Poor Souls, that never knew the peace which Jesus Christ gives to His people. And my pity is all the more needed, because you do not pity yourselves.

Ah, souls, the day is coming when that God to whom you are now an enemy, shall stare you in the face. You must see Him. And He is a consuming fire. You must look into that blazing furnace and sink and despair. And die. Die, did I say? Worse than that. You must be cast into the pit of damnation, where dying were a blessing that can never be granted.

Oh, may God give you peace through His Son! If you are now convicted of sin, the exhortation is, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Just as you are, you are bid to put your trust in Him that did die upon the tree. And if you do this, your sins shall all be forgiven now and you shall have peace with God. And, before long, you shall know it in your own conscience and rejoice. Oh, seek this peace and pursue it. And above all, seek the Peacemaker, Christ Jesus and you shall be saved. God bless you for Jesus sake. Amen.

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THE CAUSE AND EFFECT OF HEART TROUBLE   
NO. 3076

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, JANUARY 23, 1908.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON THURSDAY EVENING, MARCH 12, 1874.

**Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. John 14:27.**

THERE appeared to be great cause for their heart to be troubled and abundant reason for being afraid, for their Lord was about to be taken from them. What would a few timid disciples be able to do without their Master? He had always been their Teacher, Friend and Guide. When they had been assailed by adversaries, He had always espoused their cause and routed their enemies. They were safe enough as long as He was with them, but what would they be without Him? And, alas, He was going away to die! He was about to be dragged away like a common felon, falsely accused by bribed witnesses and then put to the cruel and shameful death of the Cross. Would not the ignominious death of the Captain be followed by the destruction of the army and the disastrous close of the holy war? The disciples might well be seriously afraid when they knew that their great adversary was very powerful, exceedingly cunning and desperately determined to crush out the new kingdom. It must have sounded somewhat strange in their ears that the Savior should say to them, Do not be troubled about it, and do not be afraid.

I am sure that the tone of voice which He used would prevent them from imagining that He was mocking them. Sometimes when a man is in very great trouble, it sounds almost like mockery to say to him, Let not your heart be troubled. How can I help it? he says. How can I be otherwise than troubled under such a trial as this? You tell me not to be afraid, but if you were in a similar position, wouldnt you be afraid? And we are half inclined not to repeat the exhortation, lest we should seem to be exulting over the weakness of the desponding. But we must not forget that Jesus Christ was, Himself, in trouble at that timeand yet He was perfectly calm. He was about to bear the brunt of the storm, yet He was not afraid and, therefore, being a fellow sufferer with His disciples in the trouble and being Himself the perfect pattern of sublime patience and dauntless courage, He could most properly say to them, Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. And, moreover, there would be such a charm about the way in which He would say it, and such a gracious influence would go with every syllable, that the most cowardly among them must have been strengthenedand the most desponding would endeavor to shake off his fears. May the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, apply to every troubled soul here, our Saviors words of exhortation which form our text, Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

I. And, first, dear Friends, let me remind you that if we are troubled and fearful, THERE IS VERY OFTEN AN EVIL CAUSE AT THE BOTTOM OF IT.

An evil cause? asks one. Yes, an evil cause. Permit me to use a paradox and say that it is not trouble that troubles a man so much as something else that is the secret of the trouble. I have seen many in sore trouble who, nevertheless, have not been troubled. They have been tried, but their heart has not even been wounded in the trial. The more their troubles have come upon them, the higher have they risen in Divine Grace. As their afflictions have abounded, so have their joys abounded through Christ Jesus! Do not tell me that sickness naturally depresses, for I have seen many under various forms of sickness who have been able to sing cheerily upon their beds and to praise God amid the fires! Do not tell me that poverty puts an end to a Christians joy, for it is not so. The golden oil that feeds the lamp of the Christians joy is not drawn from the wells of earthit comes from quite another source. The Christians joy does not spring from what he possesses, nor his sorrow from what he lacks. As his exaltation does not come from the world, so neither does his depression, if he lives near to God. So it is not trouble that troubles saintsit is something far worse than that. Let us see if we can discover what the evil cause of it may be.

With some, it is an unhumbled heart. I am afraid that there are many Christians in great trouble who are so proud that they will not admit that God has a right to deal with them as He is dealing. They think that there ought to be some more lenient dispensations of Providence for them. They imagine themselves to be the kind of persons upon whom the sun should always shine, who ought to walk in silver slippers and whose path should be always smooth. And if it is not so, they fancy that God is dealing harshly with themthat He is not kind to themand they doubt His love. You may tell them that the martyrs suffered far more than they do. You may point them to many of their fellow Christians who are in much worse circumstances than they are, but that will not reconcile them to their own trials. The fact is, there is a self-love about them which has exaggerated itself beyond all due proportions into a sinful selfesteem! And this proud, vain-glorious idea of what they ought to have and ought to be, rebels against the Sovereignty of God and refuses to submit to the will of the Most High!

Remember that our sorrows usually spring out of ourselves and that when self is conquered, sorrow is, to a great extent, banished from the human heart. We may have a rebellious spirit concerning the Providence of God in many ways. I have heard of one whose husband had died and she was wearing mourning for him many years after his death. She refused to be comforted until a member of the Society of Friends said to her very pointedly, Woman, have you not forgiven God yet? and the remark struck home to her. There are some who actually quarrel with God over the loss of husband, or wife, or child, or parent, or friend. Now, in such a quarrel as that, one or the other must bendand it is certain that God cannot! He has done what was right and He had a right to do what He pleased. It is the unhumbled heart which sets up its judgment in opposition to Gods judgment and dares to think that God has been unkind or even unjust. It is this wicked pride which is at the root of some of the worst sorrows which have embittered the lot of mankind! O my dear Friend, shall not God do as He wills with you and with yours? God gives, so shall He not take? Will you receive good at the hands of the Lord and will you not receive what you think to be evil? Are you so different in disposition from Job that you cannot and will not say, The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord? Then I must remind you that the Holy Spirit will never begin to comfort you until this unhumbled spirit of yours is subdued! You must get rid of this rebellion against the Most High, or else your heart must continue to be troubled

*Mortals, be dumb! What creature dares Dispute His awful will?   
Ask no account of His affairs   
But tremble and be still.*

If it is God who has done it, no question can be raised concerning it. If it is God who has done it, no doubt as to the rightness of it can arise in the mind of any intelligent Believer. Brothers and Sisters, if we could see what God sees, we would feel that the heaviest trouble we have ever had was the thing that we would choose above all other things! You probably sometimes think that the course of Divine Providence is very mysterious, but were you as well informed concerning all the circumstances as the Lord is, you would say, That is the course I, myself, would have chosen. I do not doubt that when Believers get to Heaven and look back upon their pathway on earth, and recall Gods dealings with them, they will admire the amazing loving kindness and unerring wisdom of God in arranging all that they have passed throughand that they will feel that they would not have anything altered, but have had it all just as it has happened.

In many others, perhaps in the majority, the cause of heart trouble lies in mistrust of God. This is especially true in reference to being afraid. They are afraid that their present trials will crush them, or that some future trial will cause their destruction. But, Brothers and Sisters, you need not be afraid because of the greatness of your trial, for you must be well aware that others have had greater trials and yet have survived them! Nor need you be afraid because of the severity of your present distress, for you have been in equal distress before and yet have been delivered out of it! The real secret of your being troubled and afraid lies in the fact that you doubt your God. Either you do not think that He is equal to the emergency, or else you conceive that He has forgotten you, or is angry with you, or that His mercy is clean gone and that He will be favorable to you no more.

In any case, you are dishonoring Him by doubting Him. I know that it is the notion of some people that a state of doubting is really a high state of perfection. I heard, the other day, of a man of whom I was told that he had walked in holiness and godliness for many years, yet he had never uttered an expression which could lead anyone to think that he really believed himself to be saved. He did not dare to say that lest he should be guilty of presumption. As I listened to the story, I could not help asking, How long has he lived in this state? Forty years, was the answer. Well then, I replied, he has been living for these forty years in grievous sin, for there is no sin which so dishonors God as does the sin of unbelief. And for a professor of religion to continue, year after year, in such a state as that until it becomes chronic is indeed terrible. Yet, as I said just now, there are some persons who think it right to continue in such a state as this. I do not wonder that their hearts are troubled! Beloved, if you believe in your God, you know that He will bring you through your present trouble and all future trials as well. If you truly love Him, you know that all things are working together for your good. Therefore, let not your heart be troubled! No, it cannot be, for your faith will drive out your fearyour confidence in God will keep your heart from being troubled.

The third evil cause of trouble of heart in some is, I fear, covetousness. I believe in calling things by their right names. I have known persons who have possessed quite enough to guarantee to them according to all human probabilities that they would never lack food and raiment as long as they liveyet they were troubled. Why? Well they were losing some of their money. But why did that trouble them? It was because they had not obeyed that injunction of the Apostle, Having food and raiment let us be therewith content. I have known persons who have had so much money that if they had lived to be as old as Methuselah, they would probably have had plentyyet, when some small loss happened to them, you would suppose that they were so poor that they must go to the workhouse! Although they had abundance left, they were afraid because of their covetousness. A man may be covetous of his own things as well as of the things of other people. He may covet his own goods by grasping them, holding them and making them his godand when the Master comes to take away some of the goods which He has lent to him as His stewardhe is troubled and afraid and cannot endure the loss of that which he has learned to love too well! It is very difficult for man to have much money running through his hands without some of it sticking. It is very sticky stuffand when it once sticks to the hands, they are not clean in the sight of the Lord! Unless a man is able to use money without abusing it, accepting it as a talent lent to him and not as a treasure given to himit will very soon happen that the more money he has, the more troubles he will have. Just in proportion as our substance is increased, our daily cares will be increased. And on that very soil which we most covet will grow the thorns and thistles which will make our bed uneasy by night and our deathbed hard to lie on when we come to die! So beware of covetousness, Brothers and Sisters, for otherwise you will very soon fall into trouble and fear.

Suppose, my Friend, you have more wealth than another man possesses? Then you owe to God more gratitude than that other man does! Besides, if you have more to carry than another man has, probably you also have more care than that other man hasand what is there in that to make you proud? Would even a donkey that has to carry a double load be proud because its burden was twice as heavy as that of another donkey? No, it would not be so stupid! The man who has one stick when he starts on his journey has all that he needs. Shall another man who carries 20 sticks boast over him when only one of them will be any use to him? He that has a sufficiency should be satisfied with it, but he that has more than a sufficiency has no cause to be proud concerning it. If you have more than others have, you have a greater trust and a greater charge than others havetherefore be humbler than others are and wait upon God more than others do. You have a full cup to carry, so you need a steady hand and must beware of having an unsteady head. Ask God to keep you meek and lowly as your worldly circumstances rise, for so you will rise with your circumstances. But if you are exalted and puffed up because God prospers you, you will come down even though your circumstances go up! It is poor prosperity when a man becomes outwardly richer, but inwardly poorerwhen he has more gold, but less Gracewhen he has more land, but less love to God. May God in His mercy preserve us all from such prosperity as that, and also preserve us from the pride which so often accompanies such prosperity! Remember what Paul was Inspired to write to the CorinthiansWho makes you to differ from another? And what have you that you did not receive? Now if you received it, why do you glory as if you had not received it?

I am afraid there are some professors who are troubled and afraid through an unequally bad cause, namely, envy. Alas, some good men have fallen into this gross sin! The Psalmist was envious when he saw the prosperity of the wicked. And he said, Behold, these are the ungodly who prosper in the world; they increase in riches. Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocence. For all the daylong I have been plagued, and chastened every morning. It seemed as if he had the rough side of the road although he feared his God, while the wicked had the smooth path. Yes, and the poor Christians is very apt to get into a similar state of mind and to say, How is it that I have to pine in poverty while Gods enemies are pampered in luxury? Why should I have to go hungry and in rags, while Dives, yonder, is clothed in purple and fine linen and fares sumptuously every day? If any of you have felt like this, the best way to cure you of your daily trouble must be to get you no longer to look with the green eyes of jealousy upon the good things that others have, but to feel that God has a right to give where He pleases. And if He chooses to give an abundance of husks to the swine, you who are His children should be the last to envy them!

I think I have, at least once before, quoted in your hearing an illustration used by William Huntington with reference to those who live by faith, depending upon the daily bounty of God. He says, Their case is something like that of a daughter whose father does not give her a large dowry when she is married, but who gives her what is called in the country, a hand-basket portion. That is to say, one day he will send down to her house a ham. Another time a basket of eggs. Sometimes a sack of flour. But every week something or other is sent to her from her old home, with fathers love, and by these continued tokens of love, the daughter probably gets more than if she had received her portion in a lump sum. And she gets her fathers love sent with it every time. It is possible that if the Lord gave to His people all at once, everything that they would need this side of Heaven, they might afterwards think that He had forgotten them, or they might forget Him! But His daily gifts, bestowed in answer to their prayersand each one coming with their Fathers love stamped upon it, will keep Him constantly in their remembrance! In this way we shall have many loving reminders that He does not forget usand oft-renewed assurances that He changes not and will also not suffer His children to lack any good thing. Let then the fact that God gives us all that we have, sweeten it all and make us satisfied even if that all is sometimes only a scanty supply.

In other cases I am afraid that anger is the cause of heart trouble and fear. Some peopleI will not say some Christians, because where anger abides in the heart, it is very questionable whether the life of God can exist there at the same time! But some professors have grown angry, possibly without reason. And because they could not work their will upon the person who had offended them, they have never been at rest and they have really done themselves serious injury through cherishing such an evil spirit! It is a desperately bad case when a professor of religion begins to feel as Haman did when Mordecai would not bow down to him. It was nothing to Haman that he was the greatest favorite of King Ahasuerus as long as Mordecai at the gate would not cringe before him. You also know how he purposed to rid himself of his enemy and how he was hanged on the very gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. His sad end ought to be a warning to all who are at all like he was in spirit. I implore you, Beloved, to love one another! And if at any time you have been grieved and vexed by others, forgive them. A forgiving spirit is a ready way to please. Your hearts must be troubled if you have in them any vestige of malice, or anger, or enmity, or unkindness toward anybody. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. And if any can have Gods peace to the full in their hearts, it is those who are fully at peace with their fellow men. Search and see, therefore, whether your trouble of heart may not have been caused by something of that sort.

Alas, I must also mention another evil cause of heart trouble and fear. It is that which is displayed by persons of a very fretful disposition, peevish, self-willed, and very exacting of other people. Some of them are good people, too, when they are in their right minds and in a right humor! But when they happen to be in their fits, the best place to be in regard to them is as far off as possible! This kind of disposition may sometimes spring from constitutional peculiarities, or it may be the result of sickness and, therefore, we ought to be very patient with such people. But if any of us are at all afflicted in that way, we ought not to expect too much patience from other people, neither ought we to try their patience more than we can help. It should be our determination, in the name and strength of God, to fight against the propensity to be troubled, vexed, cross and murmuringfor all of us know what a disagreeable thing it is. I do not wonder that God is angry with murmurersand it is not very surprising if we also get vexed with them. Suppose you help a poor man again and again, yet he never shows the slightest gratitude, but always has more complaints and murmurs more each time he comes to you? It will give you no pleasure to have further contact with him. Let us all take care not to fall into that state of minda child of God should not be like that. Certainly he is not like his Master if he is, for you never read of Jesus Christ murmuring or fretting and being peevish. You never heard anyone who really knew Him say that Jesus Christ was one of those exacting people whom nobody could please. Why, on the contrary, He was one of those whom you could scarcely displease! And even when wicked men nailed Him to the tree, He prayed for them, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. [See Sermons # 897, Volume 15THE FIRST

CRY FROM THE CROSS; #2263, Volume 38CHRISTS PLEA FOR IGNORANT SINNERS and #3068, Volume 53UNKNOWN DEPTHS AND HEIGHTSRead/download the entire sermons, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.]

Let not your heart be troubled, for the probability is that if you look below the trouble, you will find that there is underneath it some evil thing which is the real cause of the trouble. Therefore, O you children of God, in whom dwells the Spirit of God, strive against it!

II. Now, in the second place, and brieflyif we are Gods children, we ought not to have our heart troubled and afraid because THERE IS REALLY NO GOOD REASON IN ALL THE WORLD FOR SUCH TROUBLE AND FEAR.

Remember, first of all, that you are forgiven. Nothing ought to be a cause of trouble to a man whose sins are forgiven. There is a poor man, at this moment, lying in prison in the condemned cell. Suppose that you were able to go to him and say, Here is a free pardon for you. If, after that, you were to say to him, You will have to work hard all your life. You will have to live in a poor cottage, I am sure that he would say, I dont care what work I do, nor where I live, so long as I am pardoned! If I do but escape the gallows, you may do anything else that you like with me. So, dear Friend, you are forgiven, you are a child of God, you are an heir of Heaven and you can never be cast into Hell! Cannot you also say, Well, then, you may do what you will with me, so long as I am pardoned? When a mans sins are forgiven, what cause can he have to complain? Rather would we say with the Psalmist, He has not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. And therefore let each one of us say, Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: who forgives all your iniquities; who heals all your diseases; who redeems your life from destruction; who crowns you with loving kindness and tender mercies.

Then next, there is no cause for you Christians to be troubled, for your best interests are perfectly safe. You have not lost your spiritual birthright and you will never lose it! Being children of God, you are children of God forever! You have not lost your redemptionyou were bought with a price and you are free forever. You have not lost your union to Christ. You are still one with Him and because He lives, you shall also live. You have not lost your hopes of Heaven. You have not lost your interest in the eternal joys. You have not lost the justifying righteousness of Christ, nor the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit. All these precious things and many more are yourstherefore you have no cause to be troubled or fearful. If you were going home after this service and you were carrying a very large sum of money in your pocketand if, when you reached your destination, you put your hand in your pocket and found that you had lost your handkerchief. And if you put your hand in your pocket, again, and found that the bag of gold was all right, you would surely not trouble about the loss of your handkerchief! Your money being safethe loss of which would have been your ruinyou would be so delighted that you would not mind about your trivial loss. Suppose we heard of great shipwreck and that among those who were rescued was a man who, as soon as he was brought ashore, set up a great lament because he had lost his hat? Everybody would laugh at him for being so foolishand that is very much like the trouble of a child of God who sits down and frets and worries over insignificant trifles while his immortal interests are all safe! His soul is safe. God is His, Heaven is His. He has not lost any of his real treasures. Therefore let him give heed to the Masters words to His first disciples, Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

Remember, too, O children of God, that the troubles you are now enduring have not come to you by chancethey were laid upon you by the gracious hand of the all-wise Jehovah who is your loving Father and Friend

*To His Church, His joy and treasure,   
Every trial works for good   
They are dealt in weight and measure, Yet how little understood.   
Not in anger,   
But from His dear covenant love.*

Well then, if God sends you your trials, why are you troubled and afraid because of them?

Recollect, too, that your present trials are working for your eternal good, as Paul wrote to the Corinthians, Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Do you not know that your troubles have already been blessed to you? Were you ever so spiritually enriched as you have been in times of storm and in hours of pain? Have you not often thought, when you grew well again, that you would like to go back to the bed of suffering, that you might grow in Grace as you did when you were there? So, as your trials have thus enriched you, why should you be troubled and afraid because of them?

Then, beside this, all the troubles of the children of God will work out to Gods Glory. The poet was right when he represented God, Himself, as saying of His people

*From all their afflictions My Glory shall spring,*

*And the deeper their sorrows, the louder theyll sing.* Will you not, therefore, be glad to be troubled, seeing that thus God is being glorified in you?

Remember, too, that your trials will soon be over and then there will begin the bliss of Heaven which will never, never end. So the Christian pilgrim can sing

*The road may be rough, but it cannot be long.*

*And Ill smooth it with hope, and cheer it with song.* What if the shallows of the night fall grimly around you and the cold blast chills you to your bones? Tis but a little sleep and then morning breaks, and the sun rises in the land where

*Everlasting spring abides,*

*And never-withering flowers*   
and you shall be where no night winds can ever come, or darkness ever again oppress your happy spirits! Therefore, comfort yourselves and comfort one another with these cheering thoughts.

III. Lastly, Believers ought not to be troubled or afraid because, as such a spirit comes from evil and there is no just cause or reason for it, SO IT GENERALLY LEADS TO EVIL.

It leads to evil to yourself. It is a very mischievous thing for a child of God to be constantly troubled and afraid. It makes him selfishhe gets to looking for comfort for himself. It makes him weak, faint, fretful and so leads him to yet further rebellion and murmuring against the Lord. God seems to attach very great importance to His people being happy. You know Isaiah was Inspired to write, Comfort you, comfort you My people, says our God. And David was moved to say, Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, you righteous: and shout for joy, all you that are upright in heart. And again, Let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice before God: yes, let them exceedingly rejoice. While Paul writes to the saints at Philippi, Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice. The oil of joy is to the soul what oil is to the bodyit gives suppleness and helps to make us strong   
He would not have them do so for their own sakes. Genuine Christians may have two Heavens if they willa Heaven below, and a Heaven abovewe may drink of both the upper and the nether springs if Gods Grace shall enable us to believe in God and to believe also in Jesus Christ. So let not trouble be your trouble, for it is an evil thing for yourself.

*Why should the children of a King Go mourning all their days?*

Further, do not let it be your trouble because it leads to evil to your fellow Christians. They see your mournful face and they are very apt to catch the infection. Some of you remember dear old Mr. Dransfield, our beloved elder who has gone to Heaven. Whenever he used to come into this building, it was like the shining of the sun! On a Lords-Day morning when he came into the vestry, if it was a heavy, foggy morning, he would say to me, Well, my dear Pastor, the morning is not very bright, but we can be very happy in our souls even on such a morning as this is. The fog cannot get into our hearts, blessed be God! And then he would be sure to tell me some cheering thing that had happened during the weeksome soul had been convertedor something that would help to gladden us all before we began the service. I have heard of deacons who have always been sure, on the Sabbath morning, to tell the minister any unpleasant thing that had happened during the weekso as to depress his spirit in order that they might feel duly miserable under his ministry during the rest of the morning. Never do that, Brothers and Sisters, but be bright and cheerful for the sake of your fellow Christians. I always think there is quite enough misery in the world without my making any more. There are more than enough wild beasts to howl in this wide wilderness, so I need not do any howling. Let us be among the people of whom it is written, The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them. As Gods great caravan of saints goes traveling through the Sahara of this world, let them make the clarion of holy joy ring out triumphant notes till the desert itself shall rejoice even with joy and singing.

Make it to be so, Beloved. Here is Mr. Ready-to-Halt coming along on his crutches. Smile at him and bid him welcome. Here is Miss MuchAfraid. Do not go to her with the story of the dragons and the giants, but tell her about the great King of the way and about the Celestial City that you have seen from the top of Mount Clear! And if you find anyone who is giving way to despondency so much that he scarcely thinks that he can be a child of God at all, let the very light of your countenance tell him that there is no real reason for a Believers distress of mind and lead him to expect that even he will find precious promises in the Word which shall enable him to rejoice in the Lord! I think that many Christians have scandalized the Lords name and cause before the ungodly. Many professors make it appear that there is not much difference between the Church and the worldbut I believe that there is sufficient power in true religion to lift a Christian right up above the world and to make him live in such a serene atmosphere that, notwithstanding all the briars and troubles that may come upon him, he will be able to say, as David did when he fled from Saul, My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise. Awake, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early.

Moreover, this being troubled and afraid does much mischief among sinners. They hear that we are the children of God, that we have found Grace and favor in the sight of the Lord and they watch to see what sort of people we are. If they see us prosper and see that we are happy, then they say, Yes, we also are happy when we prosper. If they see us at services and meetings and find us rejoicing, they say, Yes, of course, that is a sort of religious dissipation and they are happy. They watch till they catch us on the sickbedand then when pain is sharp upon us, if they see us patient, they say, There is something in religion after all. They wait till we are poor, or till we are bereavedand then if we are calm under losses and crossesand still praise the Lord, they say Ah! There is something real in it. They watch when we come to die and if they can hear us sing some sweet song in the midst of the river, and can witness a calm hallowed peace resting upon us in the last solemn hour, they whisper to one another, There is something real and true here. There is a supernatural power that makes these men able to die as we could not die. Thus they are often led by the Spirit of God to seek Grace for themselvesthat they also may be saved!

Patient Christians and joyful Christians are better preachers in the homes where they live than we can ever be from our pulpits! And happy Christians who at all times, and under all circumstances, wear a cheerful aspect, greatly recommend the Gospel to others. You know that if you saw a man-servant who looked very thin and lean, and as he went about, he seemed to be always wringing his hands in misery and sighing, you would say, That poor fellow must have a hard time of it. He has got a bad master, you may depend upon it. I should think he has small wages and very short commons. He lives in the house, doesnt he? Theres very little to be had there, I am sure. You hear that the gentleman needs another servant and as you read the advertisement, you say, That wont suit me, the poor wretch he already has is such a woe-begone creature that I dont wish to be as he is. How different it is in other households! A bright, cheerful man-servant says, I have, been with my master for many years and the longer I live with him, the better I like him. He is the best master I ever heard or read of. I used to serve another man, but he treated me so shamefully that I ran away from him. But ever since I have been in this house I cannot tell you how happy I have been. I like my masters service, I like his other servants, I like his wages, I like everything about him! And I shall be very glad to see you in the same happy service. Oh! you would say, That place will do well for me if the master will but have me. You know that there are more flies caught with honey than with vinegarand there are more souls brought to Christ by happy Christians than there ever will be by all the dreadful gloom and solemnity which some people find it necessary to put on! I say that because I suspect that some of it is not genuine. There are some who think that it is right to look as if true religion were the summit of misery, but it is not so. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid, lest you should bring up a bad report and make people think that the land which flows with milk and honey is not a good land, but a land that eats up the inhabitants thereof.

To close in a sentence or twoif you are always troubled and afraid, you will bring dishonor upon the name of God and you will make the ways of religion to be evilly spoken of. Let it not be so, O mourning Christian! Ask the Lord to help you to put away the ashes and to take the oil of joy instead of mourning, and the garment of praise in place of the spirit of heaviness

*Sing, though sense and carnal reason   
Gladly would stop the joyful song!   
Sing, and count it highest treason   
For a saint to hold his tongue!   
Sing, for you shall Heaven inherit,   
Sing, and never the song have done   
Sing to Father, Son, and Spirit,   
One in Three, and Three in One!*

My one regret, in preaching this sermon is that I cannot address it to you all. There are some unconverted persons here who are troubled. I hope you will be still more troubled! I cannot say to you, Do not be afraid, for you ought to be even more afraid than you are and you have everything to make you afraid. But though you are troubled and afraid, remember that there is a Savior and that this Savior may be yoursfor whoever believes in Him shall have his sins forgiven and shall be delivered from the wrath to come. If you believe in Him with all your heart, then my text may be addressed to youbut not till then. May God lead you so to believe and then we will say to you, Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Amen.

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LOVES TRANSFORMATIONS A COMMUNION MEDITATION

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**If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, I go unto the Father. John 14:28.**

THE loving Jesus saw a shade of sadness fall upon the faces of the 12 while He talked to them of His departure. Though He was, Himself, to die, with His usual self-forgetfulness He only thought of them and He desired to comfort themto comfort them about the present sorrow of His departure. See how skillfully, how wisely He drew upon their love for their comfort. The most common and usual source of comfort is Christs love to us, but in this instance the most applicable and the most influential source of comfort was their love to Him. He said, therefore, to them, If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, I go unto the Father. It was well and wisely spoken, for He touched them upon a point in which they were very tenderif anything could move them to comfort, it would be His appeal to their loyal love. He had appealed to that, before, when He said, If you love Me, keep My commandments, but now, in softer, sweeter, more tender tones, He seems to say, If you love Me, cease your sorrow and begin to rejoice.

The Lord may give us drink from that same spring. It is a lower spring compared with the upper spring of His own sweet love, but He may cause it to flow most preciously so that when we are not bold enough to drink of the higher stream, we may taste of this. If we are able to say, You know all things, You know that I love You, we may be cheered by that Truth of God. So surely as you do love Me, says Christ, you will rejoice rather than sorrow because I said, I go unto My Father. Oh, what a blessed Master we serve, who quotes our love, not to blame us for its feebleness, but to draw a happy inference from it! So much does He desire our peace, our restfulness in His own dear Self, that even the love we give to Him, He gives back to us and bids us find comfort in it!

Let that stand as a preface. And now I shall deal with the text by way of making some three or four observations upon it.   
I. And the first is thisIT WILL BE MUCH FOR OUR COMFORT TO TRY TO SEE THINGS IN CHRISTS LIGHT. Notice the expression, If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, I go unto the Father.   
Christ had told them that He was about to die. He had said in very plain language on a former occasion, The Son of Man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify Him. But now He looks at the matter in another light. His present view of it is, I go unto the Father. Their view of it was, Jesus is to die. His view of it was, I go unto My Father. Oh, how often our hearts would grow happy if we could but see things in Christs light! Let us try to do so.   
For, here observe, that Christ sees through things. You and I look at them and we see Pilate, Herod, the judgement seat, the scourge, the Cross, the spear, the sepulcherbut Jesus looks through them and He sees the Fathers Throne and Himself exalted upon it. Could we not, sometimes, try to see affairs in Christs light by looking through them? Come, Brothers and Sisters, that present affliction which seems not to be joyous but grievous, nevertheless, afterwards yields the peaceable fruits of righteousness! Can you not look at the, afterwards, and thus discern the end as the Lord does? Your present estate is tossed about and troubled, for you are on a stormy sea, but you are being tossed towards the port and driven, even, by the storm, towards your desired haven! Can you not see through matters as Jesus did? Why dwell always on this life? Can you not see what it leads to? The way may be rough, but it cannot be long. And then comes an eternity of joy! Can you not spy this out? Your Lord did, for though His passage into Glory was infinitely rougher than yours though He had to swim through seas of blood and breast the breakers of Hell, itself, in His death-pangsyet He looked beyond all and said, I go unto the Father. See things in Christs light! See the end as well as the beginning and the middleand you will be comforted!   
Do you not see, too, that the light in which Christ sees things is such that He notices the bearing of things? He says, in effect, If you could see My death as I see itas a going unto the Fatheryou would rejoice. He sees the ultimate result and bearing of things. Oh, if we could always do the same and perceive what will come of our present sorrow! And if we just understood what it tends to and what God means to bring out of it all, then we should not so much see the fire as the pure ingot that comes forth of it! Then we should not so much see the plowing and the scattering of the seed to be buried beneath frost and snow, but we should hear the shouts of harvest and see the yellow sheaves gathered into the garner. Oh, to see Providences in Christs light!   
But I do not mean to dwell upon this. I only want to throw out the thought so that every troubled one may now think of his own case as Christ would think of it. If you have a sorrow, how would Jesus deal with this sorrow if it were His own? If you are, just now, in darkness, what would be Christs outlook from the window of faith? What would He see as coming out of this affliction? There is no better rule for Christian conduct than, What would Jesus do? I was much struck when I saw that question hanging up in our Orphanage girls schoolWhat would Jesus do? Friend, this is what you should do! What does Jesus think about trial? for according to the measure of your capacity, my Brothers and Sisters, that is what you should think of it. Try this holy rule and you will find the major part of your sorrows transformed into joys. A clear understanding of the nature of our trial would lead us to glory in tribulation! All that has to do with Jesus is joyous when seen in His light! If you understood His passion, you would see His Glory. If you understood His tomb, you would see His Resurrection. If you understood His death, you would see His Throne.   
II. Our second observation is thisOUR LOVE OUGHT TO GO TOWARDS OUR LORDS PERSON. If you loved Me, you would rejoice. Come, my dear Friends, gather up your thoughts a minute while I remind you that the best love that we have should go to Jesus Christ, Himself not so much to His salvation, as to Himself, should our hearts fly. If you loved Me, you would rejoice. We do well to love Christs house, His day, His Bible, His Church, His service, His blood and His Thronebut we must, above all these things, love His Person. That is the tender point; we love Him and other things in Him. We love His Church for His sake; His truth because it is His truth; His Cross because He bore it for us and His salvation because purchased by His blood. I counsel you to pull up the sluices of your love and let the full tide flow towards Jesus.   
For, first, He is the source of all benefits. Therefore, in loving Him you value the benefits, but you trace them to their fountainhead. Should we love the gift better than the giver? Should the wife love her jewels better than the beloved one who gave them? It must not be so! Love the very Person of Jesusthe God, the Man, Emmanuel, God With Us. Realize Him as a distinct Existence. Let Him stand before you now with scars of honor in His flesh and triumph in His eyes as we sang just now. Love Him as the Source of your hope, your pardon, your life, your future Glory!   
Loving Him, we learn to prize all His gifts the more, for he that loves the giver values the smallest gift for the givers sake. Your love to the Person of Jesus will not make you think less of the benefits which He bestows, but infinitely more. Shoot at the center of the target. Love Him and, loving Him, you will value all that He gives.   
Loving Jesus, we have Him for our own and that is a great blessing. A man may love gold and not have it. A man may love fame and not have it. But he that loves Christ has Christ, for certainly there was never yet a hand of love stretched out to embrace Him unlawfully! He is the property of all who lay hold of Him with their hearts.   
Love Him, and then you will sympathize with Him. His work will awaken your greatest interest. When His cause seems to decline, you will grieve with Him. And when He wins the day, you will shout the victory with Him. Love Him and you will love the souls of men. Love Jesus and you will seek to bring sinners to Him. Nothing can do you so much good and fit you so well for His service as to love Him. Love Him and you will love His people, for never heart did love Christ and hate His Church. He that loves the Head loves the members. Everyone that loves Him that begat, loves him, also, that is begotten of Him. We know that we love Jesus when we love the Brethren.

Love Christ and you will have a possession which will last forever, for other things expire, but love never fails. Whether there are prophecies, they shall fail; whether there are tongues, they shall cease. But he that loves, possesses a coin that is current in the skies. He shall go on to love forever. When the sun shall be darkened and the stars shall fall from Heaven like withered leaves, he that loves Jesus shall still go on to love and find in that love his Heaven!   
Remember, if you love the Son, the Father will love you. That is a precious Word of His which you will find in the 16th Chapter of John, at the 27th Verse. There is a common Object of love between the Believer and the Father. When you glorify Christ, the Father says, Amen, to what you do. There is no lover of the Christ equal to the Father. The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hands. Therefore love the Son and yield all honor to Him, even as the Father does.   
If you love Him you may well do so. It is necessaryabsolutely necessarythat you should love your own Lord, for I will tell you a secret thing, only to be whispered in the believing earyou are married to Himand what is the marriage state without love? What, then, would the Church be to Christ if she loved Him not? What a wretched farce this union would be if there were no love between the soul and Christ to whom it is united! You are a member of His bodyshall not the hand love the Head? Shall not the foot love the Head? God forbid that we should be without love to Jesus Christlove to His own altogether lovely Self. May God the Holy Spirit work in us abundantly to love Jesus who tenderly says, If you loved Me, you would rejoice!   
III. My third observation is that SOMETIMES OUR SORROWS PUT A QUESTION ON OUR LOVE. Do you not notice that it was because they were very sorrowful, not seeing things in the Masters light, that Jesus said, If you loved Me, you would rejoice? Let us try, tonight, to check the sorrow which may be in our bosoms at this hour, since it may cast an, if, upon our love to Christ.   
Notice that if sorrow about the loss of an earthly thing eats into your heart, it puts an, if, upon your love to Christ. Many are the cries of woeAlas, I have lost my property! I have lost the old house in which my fathers lived. I have lost my job! I have lost my dearest friend! Is it, therefore, true that because of this loss, you have no joy left? Have you lost your Savior? I thought you called Him your Best-Beloved and you said that He was your Allis He also gone? Did I not hear you say, Whom have I in Heaven but You? And there is none upon earth that I desire beside You? Is that true? Oh, over-burdened heart! Oh, heavy spirit! Do you love Jesus? Then why are you disconsolate? An, if, comes up when we think of your despair.   
So, too, when we too much repine under personal affliction, a question is suggested. You may be ill, tonight, or you may be fearing that an illness is coming. Or you may be in pain or weakness. Because you fear that consumption is upon you, your heart is very heavy. Truly, it is a sad thing to be diseased, but who sent you this? Whose will is it that it should be so? Who is the Lord of the house? Is not the grief your Lords will, your Saviors will? You say you love Him and yet you will not let Him have His way and are in a pet with Him and would dispute His love in sending this affliction! Is that so, my Brother? Does not that murmuring of yours put an, if, of question upon your love to your blessed Savior?   
You say, too, that you have been trusting Him and yet you have fallen into difficulties and straits. You do not know which way to turn and you suspect that His Providence is not wise. Do you think so? If you loved Him as you should, would you think so? Is there not an, if, somewhere? I do not mean an, if, about your loving Him, but about your loving Him as you ought! I think if you loved Him as He deserves, you would say, The King can do no wrong. My King is kind, wise, loving. I yield everything into His blessed hands.   
And so your sorrow is occasioned by the fear of death! You go burdened every day about death, do you? That is a poor compliment to the WellBeloved. I thought you loved Him! Love Himand not wish to see His face? It is a dark passage, is it? Oh, if the way were still darker, since He is on the other side, let us pass through it with a song! To be with Him where He isare you reluctant? Reluctant to behold His face? Reluctant to be forever in His bosom? Is there not an, if, somewhere?   
No, your grief is not about your deathit is about those that have died whom you loved. You cannot forgive God for taking away those you loved so well. Who has them, Friend? Who has them? I will tell you. It is One who, when He was here, said, Father, I will that they, also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am. He prayed for them! He died for them! And now He has His own and you are displeased? Do you stand fretting because Christ has His own? What? Are you pettish because what He lent you, for a while, He has taken back? Were not your dear ones always more His than yours? Do you love Him, then, and grudge your child, your baby to Jesus? Do you grudge your mother, your brother, your wife, your husband to Him that bought them with His blood? Oh, I say again, it puts an, if, upon your lovenot on the existence of it, but on the degree of it. If you loved Him, you would rejoice that He sees the travail of His soul and has His saints with Him in Glory.   
IV. That brings me to the closing remark, which contains the gist of the text. All the rest is meant to lead up to it, namely, thisthat OUR LOVE TO OUR DIVINE LORD OUGHT TO BE SUCH THAT HIS EXALTATION, THOUGH IT SHOULD BE OUR LOSS, SHOULD, NEVERTHELESS, GIVE US UNFEIGNED DELIGHT. I will put this very simply before you. There is a daughter of yours in Christ and she is fading away by consumption. She is very happy in the Lord and full of joyful expectation. She is about to die and you are all round the bed. You, her dear mother, stand there weeping most of all. Now, your dear girl shall give you an explanation of my text. She says, Mother, do you not know that I shall soon be with the angels and shall see the face of God, without fault? If you loved me, Mother, you would rejoice to think that I shall be away from all this weakness and this pain. If you love me, you will be glad to think that your child shall be in Glory. Your girls sweet words shall tell you what Jesus meant. He meant, If you loved Me very much. If you loved Menot merely My Presence and the comforts that I bring you, and the charm with which I invest your earthly lifebut if you loved Me, you would say, Blessed Lord, we readily deny ourselves Your company and all the joy it brings because it is better for You to be gone to the Father. It is more glorious for You to be in Heaven than here and, therefore, we rejoice in Your exaltation.   
You see how it was with those disciples. I need not enlarge upon their case. When Jesus had died and risen againand had gone away from His disciples, He took upon Himself the Glory which He had laid aside. The Glory which He had with God before the world was, He reassumed at the time when He entered Heaven! Then, too, as the God-Man, He was invested with a new splendor. The Father said, Let all the angels of God worship Him, and they adored Him. New songs went up from every golden street and all Heaven rang with, Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna! as Christ ascended to His Throne, To the Throne He ascends and there He sits, King and Priest, forever enthroned until His enemies are made His footstool. No more the bloody sweatno more the cruel spearno more the dark and lonesome tomb! He is exalted above all exaltation, higher than the kings of the earth, far above all principalities and powers and every name that is named! We ought to be glad of thisexceedingly glad. These disciples were bound to be glad if they loved Christ, for though they could no more enjoy His company, could not sit at the table with Him, could not walk through the streets with Him any more, yet it was good for Him to be gone to Glory and, therefore, they were compelled to rejoice!   
I want, in conclusion, to draw one or two parallel cases which may be practically applicable to yourselves.   
Suppose, Beloved, that it should always be for Christs Glory to leave you in the dark? Would you not rejoice to have it so? A little while ago it was so with me. A few years ago I remember preaching to you from the text, My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me, and I think that if ever soul of mortal man knew the biter meaning of that cry, I did. I preached hearing the clanking of my own chains while I spoke to you. It was sad work. That night, before I went home, I knew the reason. There came into the vestry a man as nearly insane as man could be. Despair hung like a cloud over his countenance and, as he took my hand, he said, I have never met a man before that seemed to know where I am. Talk with me. I saw him the next day and several days and, by Gods help, saved him from self-destruction. Then did I rejoice because I saw that Christ was glorified! I would lose my Masters company, dark as the day would be to me without itlose it, yes, by the months togetherif it would make Him glorious in the heart of one poor downcast man, or bring a single sinner to His feet!   
Be willing to say the same, Brothers and Sisters. Love Christ and be willing for Him to give you the cold shoulder instead of the kiss of His lips if He might be more glorified! God bring us to reach that state of selfdenial to be willing to forego that greatest luxury of Heaven for which angels themselves pinethe Presence of the Lordif thereby Jesus may be the better served.  
Well, now, suppose that you are going to be laid aside, afflicted, troubled and it should be Gods intent that by this you should become more useful and more fitted for His service? If you love Him, you will rejoice at this. You will accept chastisement with thankfulness and say, Lay on the stripes! Multiply the pain! Only fashion me so that I can glorify You! Make no account of anything else but thisthat You may be exalted in my mortal body whether I live or whether I die!

It is possible, dear Friend, that you are going to be eclipsed by one who has a brighter light than any God has yet given you. None of us like this. Somebody is coming forward who will preach better than you. That Sunday school teacher is going to teach better than you. Somebody near you will display more Grace and more gifts than you. What then? If you love Jesus you will rejoice that it should be so! Do you remember what Paul did? There were some who preached Christ out of contention and ill-will and wanted to get the better of Paul. They desired that their names would be cried up above the Apostles. Ah, said Paul, so long as Christ is preached I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice! Well spoken, Paul!   
I like the valor of the soldier who helped to fill the ditch with his dead body that his captain might march to victory. Throw yourselves into oblivion that Jesus may triumph! It were a small sacrifice for all the Church to die a martyrs death if Jesus were but raised one inch the higher among men! Let us exhibit the self-denying spirit which is born of love. If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, I go unto the Father.   
Suppose that it should also happen that some of you are going to be deprived of all the privileges of hearing the Gospel because you are going away to a foreign land? You are extremely sorry, but suppose that Jesus means to make use of you to advance His Glory among the heathenby naming His name where it was never known before? Then you may rejoice in banishment, rejoice to deny yourselves Gospel privileges, rejoice to be scattered far and wide by mountain, stream and sea so that you might bring forth a harvest to His Glory!  
Brethren, if you should be sinking lower and lower in your own esteem, be not sorry for it. If Christ is rising higher and higher in your esteem, count it all gain! Sink, O self, down to death and the abyss! Sink, sink, till there is nothing left of you! Go down, pride, self-conceit, self-trust, selfseeking! Go even though your going should cause despondency, so long as Christ is crowned! Sink, sink, Soul, if Jesus rises! If you can trust Him better, love Him better and admire Him more, so let it be!   
As you come to His Table, say in your hearts, Lord, make me glad, or make me sad, so long as You are exalted! Lord, let me have Your presence, but let me be without it, so long us You are exalted and extolled!

**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 14: (parts).** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK318, 317, 786. Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #774 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

A SHARP KNIFE FOR THE VINE BRANCHES

NO. 774

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, OCTOBER 6, 1867, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Every branch in Me that bears not fruit He takes away: and every branch that bears fruit, He purges it, that it may bring forth more fruit. John 15:2.**

THESE are the words of Jesus. Unto YOU that believe He is precious, and every word that He speaks is precious for His sake. You will be sure, then, to give every syllable its weight and to let each word fall upon your soul as coming directly from His lips. These are the words of our Lord Jesus just before His departure from the world. We reckon the words of dying men to be worth keeping, and especially of such a matchless Man as our Lord and Master.

It may be said of Him, You have kept the best wine until now, for in this chapter and in that which follows we have some of the choicest, deepest, and richest words that the Master ever uttered. You will endeavor, then, to hear Him speaking as upon the verge of Gethsemane. You will listen to these sentences as coming to you associated with the groans and bloody sweat of His agony.

These are words, moreover, about us, and therefore to be received by us with profound attention. The most of us who are here, are in Christ, some one way or another. The majority of us profess to be Christians. The text, then, is directed to us. When Jesus speaks about anything, it is weighty and demands our ear. But when He speaks about ourselves to ourselves, we must give Him the heart as well as the ear, and give most earnest heed to the things which He speaks to us, lest by any means we let them slip. We may have to regret one day that we did not listen to His voice in love, for we may have to hear it when we must listen to it, when the tones have become those of judgment, and Jesus the Judge shall say unto us, I know you not, even though we shall venture to plead that we ate and drank in His Presence, and that He taught in our streets.

Having, then, your solemn attention, we will read the text again: Every branch in Me that bears not fruit He takes away: and every branch that bears fruit, He purges it, that it may bring forth more fruit. The text suggests self-examination. It conveys instruction, and invites meditation.

I. In the first place, it SUGGESTS SELF-EXAMINATION. I hear in these solemn words the tones of His voice of whom Malachi said, Who may abide the day of His coming? And who shall stand when He appears? For He is like a refiners fire, and like fullers soap. I discern in these two heart-searching sentences, the voice of Him of whom John said, His fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, and gather His wheat into the garner. But He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. Truly the Lords fire is in Zion, and His furnace in Jerusalem. Happy shall that man be who can bear to be thrust into the flames and to be covered with the hot coals of the burning Truths of God here taught! But he shall be found reprobate who cannot bear the trial.

1. Observe that our text mentions two characters who are in some respects exceedingly alike. They are both branches, they are both branches in the Vine: Every branch in Me. How much alike persons may apparently be, who, in Gods sight stand at opposite poles of character! Both the persons described in the text were in Christ: in Christ in different senses, it is obvious, because the first persons were not so in Christ as to bring forth fruit, consequently, as fruit is that by which we are to judge a man, they were not in Christ effectually, graciously, influentially, or so as to receive the fruit-creating sap.

If they had brought forth fruit, their fruitfulness would have been a sign that they were in Christ savingly. Who will venture to say that a man who yields no fruit of righteousness can be really a Christian? Yet they were in Christ in some sense or other, that is to say, the two characters were equally esteemed to be Christians. Their names were enrolled in the same Church registerin the common judgment of men they were equally Christian. According to their own profession they were so. In many other respects which we need not now catalog, they were both in Christ as His avowed disciplesas soldiers professedly fighting under His banneras servants wearing His livery.

These two persons were probably equally sound in their doctrinal views. They held the same precious Truths of God. If they heard falsehood, they were equally earnest to denounce it. When they listened to the Gospel they received it with joy, and so received it as to be willing to assist in the spread of itand even to make sacrifices for its extension. These persons were equally attentive to ordinances. How often has it happened that two persons of widely different states before the Lord have been baptized at the same hour, in the same water, into the same name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit! And they have then broken bread together with equal apparent fervency, and with equal professions of enjoyment and devotion!

These people have been equally fair in their profession. Their moral conduct has, in the judgment of all onlookers, been much the same. They have avoided everything of ill repute and they have, in their measure, sought after that which was comely and lovely in the estimation of men. Ah, there will often be found two who publicly pray alike, have an equal gift in prayerand what is worse, preach with equal earnestness and zeal! And to all appearance their family prayer is maintained with the same consistency. But for all this the end of the one shall be to be cast away as a branch to be burnedwhile the end of the other shall be to bring forth fruit unto perfectionwith everlasting life as the reward.

Ah, Friends, man can counterfeit cleverly, but when the devil helps him he becomes master of the art! You will see pieces of coinage which it is almost impossible for you to discover to be mere counterfeits by their appearance, or even by their ring. In the scales of weight they almost deceive youbut you put them into the fireand then the discovery is made! Doubtless there are thousands in all Christian Churches who have the stamp and the impress of the King upon them. They look like the genuine shekels of the sanctuary who, after all, are only fit to be like bad money, fastened down on the footstool of the judgment seat with a nail driven through themto their everlasting reprobation and disgrace!

How can we tell a bold man from a coward? Two soldiers wear the same uniformsthey talk equally loudly of what they will do when the enemy shall come. It is the battle that tests and proves them. Some peculiar phase of the conflict will bring out the difference. But till the battle comes how easy it is for the base coward to play the hero while, perhaps, the bravest man may modestly shrink into the rear! Our text, then, brings before us two characters apparently alike.

2. Then, in the second place it shows us the distinction between themthe great and solemn difference. The first branch brought forth no fruit. The second branch bore some fruit. By their fruits you shall know them. We have no right to judge of our neighbors motives and thoughts except so far as they may be clearly discoverable by their actions and words. The interior we must leave with God, but the exterior we

may judge, and must judge. There is a sense in which we are not to judge men, but there is another sense in which he would be an arrant fool who did not constantly exercise his judgment upon men. By their fruits you shall know them, is our Lords own canon of sacred criticism. If you would judge men and judge yourselves, this is the one testby their fruits.

Now, then, what do you professors say who are present here today you who are so regular in your attendance upon the means of Divine Grace? Will you now search yourselves to see whether you have any fruit? That you may be helped in such an investigation let me remind you that the Apostle Paul has given us a list of these fruits in his fifth chapter of the Epistle to the Galatians. He says in the 22nd verse, The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.

Nine kinds of fruitall of these should be in us and abound. Let us question ourselves whether we have any of them. Say, Professor, have you brought forth the fruit of love? Searching question, this! I do not ask if you can talk of love, but, do you feel it? I do not say, is love upon your tongue? But, does love rule your heart? Do you love God as a child loves its father? Do you love the Savior from a sense of gratitude to Him who bought you with His blood? Do you feel the love of the gracious Comforter who dwells in you, if you are, indeed, a child of God? What do you know about love to the Brethren?

Do you love the Saints, as Brothers and Sisters in Christ whether they belong to your Church or not? Whether they please you or serve your turn or not? Say, do you love Gods poor? Do you love Gods persecuted and despised ones? Answer, I pray you. What about love to the kingdom of the Lords dear Son, and to the souls of men? Can you sit still and be satisfied with being saved, yourself, while your neighbors are being damned by the thousands? Are your eyes never wet with tears for impenitent souls? Do the terrors of the Lord never get hold upon you, when you think of men plunging themselves into perdition? He that loves not his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? Have you this fruit, then? If not, every branch in Me that bears not fruit He takes away.

Next comes joy. Does your religion ever give you joy? Is it mere matter of duty, a heavy chain for you to drag about like a convict, or is your religion a harp for you to dance to the tune of? Do you ever rejoice in Jesus Christ? Do you know what the joy of the Lord means? Does it ever give you joy to think that He is the same even when the fig tree does not blossom and the herd is cut off from the stall? Do you feel a joy in reading the promises of Gods Word? Have you a joy in secret prayerthat joy which the world never gave youand cannot take away from you? Have you a secret joy, like a spring shut up, a fountain sealed which is only open to you and your Lord, because your fellowship is with Him and not with the sons of sin?

He that never mourned because of sin has never repented, but he who has never rejoiced because of forgiveness cannot have seen the Cross! Come, then, have you produced this fruit of joy? The Lord give it more and more to you! If you have never had it, then hear the sentenceEvery branch in Me that bears not fruit He takes away.

Next follows peace. Oh, blessed fruit! An autumn fruit, mellow and sweet, and fit for an angels tooth. It is the fruit the blessed feed upon in Heavenpeace with God, peace of conscience, peace with ones fellow menthe peace of God which passes all understanding. The peace which keeps the heart and mind through Jesus Christ. Great peace have they which love Your Law: and nothing shall offend them. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ah, my Hearers, some of you make a great deal of noise, perhaps, about religion, and yet never have peace of conscience! This is what ceremonialists never can obtain. We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle of outward ordinances, and carnal, vainglorious, pompous ceremonies. Of our altar, where the finished sacrifice is eaten as a peace offering, they cannot eat. They find no peace after all their masses, and holy offices, and processions, and sacred hours, and priestcraft, and I know not what! Poor slaves, they go down to their graves as much in bondage as everwith the dreary prospect of a purgatorial fire before themno delightful prospect of waking up in the likeness of Christ! They have no sense of the truth of that glorious passage, and you are complete in Him. He that has Christ has this one of His fruits, namely, peace. He who knows no peace with God has good need to tremble.

Mention is next made of long-suffering. I fear there are many professors who have very little of this, a quality which may be viewed in many aspects. There is patience, which bears Gods chastising hand and does not turn against Him, but says, The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. Long-suffering towards Godsuffering long. Then there is long-suffering towards manbearing persecution without apostasy. Bearing slander and reproach without revengebearing the errors and mistakes of mankind with tender compassion. The Believer should have much of this.

Some of us, perhaps, may be naturally quick-tempered. Divine Grace must overcome angry passions. It is not for you to say, I cannot help it. The fruit of the Spirit is long-sufferingyou must help it! If there is no change in your temper, there is no change in you at allyou still have need to be converted. If the Grace of God does not help you, in a measure, to keep under that temper which will be there, but which you must restrain, you have need to go to God and ask Him to make sound work in you, or there is no work of Grace there as of yet. We must have longsufferingor we may be found fruitlessand then woe unto us.

Next in order is gentleness, by which I understand kindness. The Christian is a man of kindness. He recognizes his kindness with his fellow men. He wishes to treat them as his kin. He has compassion for those who are suffering. He endeavors to make his manners kind and courteous. He knows that there is a natural offense in the Cross to carnal men. He does not wish, therefore, to make any offense of his own. He desires in his own life not to be morose, suspicious, harsh, proud or domineering, but he seeks to imitate his Master, who said of Himself, Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.

The Believer in Christ should be gentle towards all men with whom he comes in contact. This is one of the fruits of the Spirit, and, I may add, a fruit of the Spirit in which many professors are terribly deficient. Do not think that I judge you. I judge you notthere is One that judges you, it is this Word of God which we speak. Gentleness is the fruit of the Spirit and if you have it not, you have not this fruit of the Spiritand what says the text, Every branch in Me that bears not fruit He takes away!

We are next reminded of goodness, by which is undoubtedly meant beneficence, benevolence, generositynot merely kindliness of mannerbut bounty of heart. Oh what a fine thing it is when our Christianity gives us a noble spirit! We cannot all be nobles in pocket, but every child of God should be a noble in his heart. Come in, said a poor Scotch woman to some of the Lords people, I have room for ten of you in my house, but I have room for 10,000 of you in my heart.

So should the Believer say, Come in, you that are in need. I have not the power to help many of you, but I have the will to help all of you if I could. The Christian should be like his Lord and Mastereasily entreated, ready to communicate, making it his delight and his business to distribute, like a cloud that is full of rain and empties itself upon the earth. A Christian should be like the bright and sparkling sun scattering his beams abroad and not hiding or hoarding his light. If you have not this fruit of the Spirit in some measure I beseech you to remember the solemn words of the text, Every branch in Me that bears not fruit He takes away.

Then comes faith, by which is probably not meant the Grace of faith which is rather a root than a fruit, yet that is included. The fruit of the Spirit is, indeed, faith in God. Without this there is not even the commencement of anything like security in the soul. Do you believe on the Son of God? Have you faith? If you have faith but as a grain of mustard seed, it is a sign of life within you. If you have little of it, pray, Lord, increase our faith!

But the faith here, I think, means faithfulnessfaithfulness towards God, faithfulness towards conscience. How little some Christians make of that nowadays! Why they swallow their consciences! There are ministers who subscribe to words which they know to be deceiving the people and help to buttress a Church which is doing its utmost to lead this nation into downright Popery. The good and gracious ministers in the Establishment are the prop and pillar of it and by their influence they maintain a system which enables traitors to pollute this land with Popery.

O that our friends had a little more tenderness of conscience and would come out from their unhallowed alliance with the Popish Ritualists. How earnestly do I pray that none of us have the remotest connection with anything which would take us back to that Antichrist which God hates which He so hates that He has bid His servant John call the apostate church by a dreadful namea brand of infamy, a name which God never uses till He has cast off and utterly abhorred a thing.

My Brothers and Sisters, may your consciences be faithful and may you be faithful to your consciences! Men that trifle with doctrine, it seems to me, little know what sins they commit. I tell you who trifle with doctrines that you are as bad as thieves! You are worse, for the thief only robs men, but you rob

God and your own souls! By helping to foster error, you are heaping together the elements of a pestilence which, unless Divine Grace prevents, will utterly destroy this land.

We must have faithfulness, also, in our dealings with our fellow men in business. Saints are men of honor. The Christian man swears to his own hurt, and changes not. He does not take an oath, but his word is his bond. O that we may have this fruit of the Spiritfaithfulness, directness, straight-forwardness, doing the right, loving the true, and walking uprightly before the Lord our God!

The next fruit is meekness. May we possess much of this for there is a peculiar benediction promised to the meekBlessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. The Christian is to be as harmless as a dove. In his Masters battles, bold as a lion, but for himself and for his own causes, tender, gentle, shunning debate, loving quietness, ready to take a rebuke rather than to administer onefeeling himself to be weak and frail. Moses was the meekest of men, often provoked, but only once speaking unadvisedly with his lips. It is marvelous how he bore with the people! They were the most provoking people in the world, except ourselvesbut yet, like as a nurse is tender with a sick childeven so was he with a foolish people.

How often did they provoke him and grieve his spirit! He grew angry in ignorance and dashed the two tablets of stone upon the ground when he saw the idolatry of the people. Moses, the meekest of men, could not bear that! And Gods meekest servants grow wrathful when they think of the idolatry into which this land is sliding so rapidly. But meek we must be towards all menand if we have not this fruit, the Master says, Every branch in Me that bears not fruit He takes away.

Do not forget temperance, which is now generally used in respect to meats and drinks, but which has a far wider significance, though it includes that. The man who indulges the appetites of the flesh and cannot control himself as to eating and drinking need not even pretend to be a Christian. He has first to prove that he is equal to a beast before he may pretend to be a child of God! He has first to show that he is a man before he may claim to be a Christian. Those who indulge in drunkenness shall drink of the wine of Gods wrath before long, and then how bitter will their sweet wines be to them! How will that which has been sweet to the throat be as poison in the heart forever and ever! If we have not that kind of temperance, evidently we can know nothing about true religion.

But there must be an equal temperance in all other things, a temperance in your dress, in your expenditure, in your temper and, indeed, in every act. There is a moderation to be observed, a narrow road to be followed which the tutored eye of the spiritual man can see and which it is a fruit of the Spirit for the spiritual foot to tread. God grant that we may have these fruits. Beloved in the Lord, I am persuaded that no Truth of God needs to be pressed more upon my own soul and yours than this that positive fruit is the only test of our being in Christ. It is so easy for us to wrap ourselves up in the idea that attention to religious ceremonies is the test, but it is not so, for, Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, who were the most religious people of their day, you shall in no case enter into the kingdom of Heaven.

I know it is easy to think, Well, I do not indulge in drunkenness. I am no rogue. I do not do this or that. This matters little! Remember that the judgment will not be about those things which you do not do, but about positive things. How does Jesus Christ put that judgment matter? I was hungry and you gave me no meat. I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink. I was a stranger and you took Me not in. Naked, and you clothed Me not. Sick, and in prison, and you visited Me not. The absence of positive fruit was that which condemned the lost. Every tree, says John, that bears no fruit shall be hewn down and cast into the fire. He does not say, Every tree that bears bitter fruit, or sour grapes, but Every tree that brings forth no fruit.

Fruitless professors, tremble! I may not speak so as to make this Truth of God penetrate as I wish it should into your inmost souls, but I pray the eternal Spirit to make it like fire in the bones of every deceived man and woman! If my Lord shall come to you, my Hearer, day after day, as He once came to the fig tree, and should find leaves upon you and no fruit, I tell you He will say, Henceforth let no fruit be on you forever, and you shall wither away. What is His own parable The master of the vineyard said to the husbandman, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree and find none: cut it down; why cumbers it the ground?

And when the husbandman interceded, you will remember his intercession was only so far: If it bears fruit, well: and if not, then after that you shall cut it down. Jesus the Intercessor agrees with His Father the Husbandman. Mercy agrees with Justiceif there is no fruitthe tree must come down. May I beseech you to lay these things to heart. You must bear fruit unto God by the power of the Spirit or it is down with you! God fingers His axe this morning. It is sharp and if He does but lift it, woe to you, barren fig tree! Woe, indeed, to me also, if I am found barren in the day of the Lords appearing!

In closing this weighty business of self-examination, I must remind you that our Lord tells us that although these persons were in some points alike, the solemn difference between them led to a solemn resultEvery branch in Me that bears not fruit He takes away. There are many ways in which the Lord takes away barren branches. Sometimes He allows the professor to apostatize. He gets rich and then he will not go to the place of worship which he used to frequent when he was a poorer man and was humble enough to hear the Gospelhe must go to some fashionable place where he can listen to anything but the Truth of Godand thus by his own pride he is taken away.

Or else he is allowed to fall into open sin. We always should regret the falls of professors, but sometimes it is possible that discovered sins may be a blessing, for they take away from the Church men who never ought to have been there and who were an injury to it. Many bright professors have stood well for a long time, but at last they have been snuffed out ecclesiastically by reason of their outward sins. God has taken them away. Some have been taken away in a more terrible sense, by death. God has removed them. They have lived in the Church and died in the Church, but have been taken away in solemn judgment and cast into the fire.

Then there is a taking away which is worst of all, when the Master shall say, Depart, you cursed! Now, remember, these were respectable people. These were people like youdecent, good people, who attended a place of worship, and contributed, and were very moralbut still they had not Divine Grace in their souls. They had nominal Christianity, but not the fruit of the Spirit, and what was done with them? Lord, cannot some mild means be used? How sad to see these branches cut off! No, He says, if they bring not forth fruit, they must be taken away. But, Lord, they never reeled in and out of the gin palace! Lord, they were much too good and much too amiable to be found among the debased and the debauched!

Take them away! They brought no fruit, and they must be taken away. But, Master, they were so diligent in the use of ordinances. They were so constant and regular in the form of prayer! They brought forth no fruit, says He, take them away. There is only this one thing for themif they had, through saving faith, been made to bear the fruit of the Spirit, they would have been savedbut as there was no fruit, take them away. What is done with that which is taken away? If I could take you just outside the garden wall I would let you see a heap of weeds and slips that are taken from the vine. There they are heaped together with a little straw, and the gardener burns them. The other branches with their purple clusters are in honor, but these dishonored things are burnt outside the gate.

I cannot describe to you that day of doom, that terrible fate which shall come upon fruitless branches of the spiritual vine. They will be outside the gate with a great gulf fixed between them and Heaven, where the smoke of their torment goes up forever and everwhere their worm dies not, and the fire is not quenched. If such people are cast away, what will become of some of you? If these good people who were in Christ, in a way, still perish because they brought forth no fruit, O you who are like hemlock in the furrows of the field, you who produce the grapes of Gomorrah and the apples of Sodomwhat shall be your doom in the day of account when the Master shall come forth in robes of judgment to execute righteousness among the sons of men?

II. Briefly on the second point. THE TEXT CONVEYS INSTRUCTION. Looking at it carefully we observe that the fruit-bearing branches are not perfect. If they were perfect they would not need pruning. But the fact is there is much of original inbred sin remaining in the best of Gods people. So whenever the sap within them is strong for the production of fruit there is a tendency for that strength to turn into evil, and instead of good fruit evil is produced. It is the strength of the tree and the richness of the sap which makes the branch produce too much wood so that it needs pruning. The gardener desires to see that strength in clusters, but alas, instead it runs into wood.

Now observe that in a Christian when the sap comes into him to produce confidence in God, because of the evil that is in him it often produces confidence in himself, and he who would be strong in faith becomes strong in carnal security. When the sap would produce zeal, how very frequently it turns into rashness, and instead of zeal with knowledge, fanaticism is brought forth! Suppose the sap flows to produce self-examination? Very generally unbelief is the outgrowth and instead of the man doubting himself, he begins to doubt his Lord. How often have I seen even the joy of the Lord turned into pride, and when the man should rejoice in Christ Jesus he has began to rejoice in himself, to grow proud and say, What a fine experience I possess!

That love which we ought to bear towards our neighborshow apt is that to run into love of the world and carnal complacency towards its evil ways! The gentleness which I praised just now often turns to a silly compliance with everybodys whim. And meekness, which is a fruit of the Spirit, how often that becomes an excuse for holding your tongue when you ought boldly to speak! The fact is, it is very difficult to keep ourselves, when we are in a flourishing state, from producing wood instead of grapes. God grant us Divine Grace to keep us from this evil! And I do not know how the Grace can come except by His judicious pruning.

I say the fruit-bearing branches are not perfect because they bear a great deal that is not fruit, and, moreover, not one of them bears as much fruit as it ought to do. I do not agree with Mr. Wesleys opinion about perfection. It is very difficult to see how he could have done more than he did, but I do not doubt that even he felt that he might have been more like his Lord. None of the Lords people with whom I ever came into communion have dared to think themselves perfectand if they had said so, and proved itI should have rejoiced to think that there were such people, but greatly sorrowed to find that I belong to a very different order of beings myself. In me, that is, in my flesh, there dwells no good thing.

The Master is bringing us upon our way to bring forth more fruit, but as yet, the fruit-bearing branches are not perfect. Therefore we are taught, in the second place, that pruning is the lot of all the fruitful Saints. You may escape it if you are not fruitfulyou will be cut offyou will not be pruned. But all the fruit-bearing Saints must feel the knife. Observe Abraham, Isaac, and Jacobhad not those Patriarchs their trials? Moses and David, Jeremiah and Danielwho among those escaped? Though they honored their Master much, who escaped without the pruning knife? And if you come to the Believers of the New Testament, surely the flame was seven times hotter with regard to them than with regard to the elder Brethren.

How does the Lord prune His people, then? It is generally said by affliction. I question if that could be proved as it standsit needs explanation. It is generally thought that our trials and troubles purge us. I am not sure of that, they certainly are lost upon some. Our Lord tells us what it is that prunes us. Now, says He, in the third verse of the chapter, you are clean (or pruned) through the Word which I have spoken unto you. It is the Word that prunes the Christian, it is the Truth that purges himthe Scripture, made living and powerful by the Holy Spiritwhich effectually cleanses the Christian.

What, then, does affliction do? you ask. Well, if I may say so, affliction is the handle of the knifeaffliction is the grindstone that sharpens up the Word of God. Affliction is the dresser which removes our soft garments and lays bare the diseased flesh so that the surgeons lancet may get at it. Affliction makes us ready to feel the Word, but the true pruner is the Word in the hand of the Great Husbandman. Sometimes when you lay stretched upon a bed of sickness you think more upon the Word than you did before. That is one great thing. In the next place, you see more the applicability of that Word to yourself. In the third place, the Holy Spirit makes you feel more, while you are thus laid aside, the force of the Word than you did before.

Ask that affliction may be sanctified, Beloved, but always remember there is no more tendency in affliction in itself to sanctify us than there is in prosperity! In fact, the natural tendency of affliction is to make us rebel against God which is quite opposite to sanctification. It is the Word coming to us while in affliction that purges us. It is God the Holy Spirit laying home Divine Truths and applying the blood of Jesus, and working in all His Divine energy in the soul. It is this that prunes us, and affliction is only the handle of the knife, or what if I say the ladder which the gardener takes to reach the vine so that he may prune it better?

Now it may be that some of us have been afflicted a great deal and have not been pruned. I know some people who have been very poorI do not see that they are any better for it. And I know some others who have been very sick, but I have never heard that they have been improved. Alas, some people are of such a character that if they were stricken till their whole head were sickand their whole heart faintthey would not be benefited! If they were beaten till they were all bruises and putrefying sores they would still go on to rebelfor these things only provoke them to a greater hatred against the Most High. We must be pruned, but it must be by the Word, through affliction.

Now the object in this pruning is never condemnatory. God does not purge His children with a view to visit them penally for sin. He chastises, but He cannot punish those for whom Jesus Christ has been already punished! You have no right to say, when a man is afflicted, that it is because he has done wrong. On the contrary, every branch that bears fruit He purges. Just the branch that is good for something gets the pruning knife! Do not say of yourselves, or of other people, That man must have been a great offender or he would not have met with such a judgment. Nonsense! Who was a holier man than Job? But has any been brought lower than he?

Why, the fact is, it is because the Lord loves His people that He chastens themnot because of any anger that He has towards them! Learn, Beloved, especially you under trial, not to see an angry God in your pains or your losses, or your crossesinstead, see a Husbandman who thinks you a branch whom He estimates at so great a rate that He will take the trouble to prune youwhich He would not do if He had not a kind consideration towards you. The real reason is that more fruit may be produced, which I understand to mean more in quantity.

A good man who feels the power of the Word pruning him of this and that superfluity, sets to work, in the power of the Holy Spirit, to do more for Jesus. Before he was afflicted he did not know how to be patient. He learns it at lasta hard lesson. Before he was poor he did not know how to be humble, but he learns that. Before the Word came with power he did not know how to pray with his fellows, or to speak to sinners, or lay himself out for usefulness. But now the more he is pruned, the more he serves his Lord.

More fruit in variety, too, may be intended. One tree can only produce one kind of fruit, usually, but the Lords people can produce many, as we have already seen. And the more they are pruned the more they will produce. There will be all kinds of fruit, both new and old, which they will lay up for their Beloved. There will be more in quality, too. The man may not pray more, but he will pray more earnestly. He may not preach more sermons, but he will preach them more thoroughly from his heart with a greater unction. It may be that he will not be more in communion with God as to time, but it will be a closer communion. He will throw himself more thoroughly into the Divine element of communion and will become more hearty in all that he does.

This is the result of the pruning which our heavenly Father gives. And if such is the result, the Lord keep on pruning, for what greater blessing can a man have than to produce much fruit for God? Better to serve God much than to become a prince. He that does much for Christ shall shine as the stars forever and ever! He is good in God. He is blessing his fellow men. He is bringing joy into his own spirit. Oh, if on bended knee we might seek but one favor, I think we should not ask the wisdom which Solomon cravedwe would petition for thisthat we might bring forth much fruit, so that we might be Christs disciples.

III. To conclude. Our text INVITES MEDITATION. I will hint at the points on which it invites our thoughts. It suggests to every unconverted person here this one thoughtit seems that it is not very easy for the righteous to be savedIf the righteous scarcely are saved, where shall the ungodly and the wicked appear? If the branches in Christ that bear no fruit are taken away, what must become of the Sabbath-breakers, the despisers of God, the atheists, the drunkards, the unchaste, the dishonest, the blasphemers? I raise the questionsolve it! Let it burn into your soul!

Secondly, what a mercy it is to the Believer that it is pruning with him and not cutting off! Ah, let the knife be very sharp. Let the Word of God throw us into the great deeps till we almost despair. Yet, thank God we are not cast into Hell! Dear Friends, your prayer should be, Lord, let Your Word cut deep into me. Do not let the preacher mince matters with me. Deliver him from sewing pillows under my armholes and lulling me to sleep. Lord, I would be faithfully dealt with! I put the proud flesh before Youcut it out that the wound heals not so as to be worse when healed than it was when a running sore.

What a mercy it is not to be cut off! Ah, Christian, you are desponding and doubting today while the Word is searching youbut you might have been in Hell! Think of that! You are poor, or you are full of pain, but you might have been driven from the Presence of God! How can you, as a living man, complain about whatever God may place upon you? In the next place it would be well to think how gently the pruning has been done with the most of us, up till now, compared with our barrenness. I wonder the Lord has not cut us much more. He who has a deep-seated disease requires sharp medicine. And when the sore runs deep, the doctor must cut deep, too. With all the rust that is on us, it is a wonder we are not filed more. There is so much alloy, it is marvelous that we are not more often put into the fire. O Spirit of God, You have hard work with some of us! Still we bless You, for Your gentleness has been manifested very graciously. How tenderly have You dealt with our frail dust, O God of love!

Again, how earnestly we ought to seek for more fruit! If this is what God seeks after, we should be after it! If He often goes the length of pruning the vinealthough He does not love to do it, for He does not afflict willingly, or grieve the children of men for nothinglet us agree with God and seek to yield more fruit. How concerned should every one of us be to be efficaciously and truly one with Christ! I ought to have said that the whole gist of the text lies in that in Me, in Me, in Me. You see, if a man is not in Christ at all, why then, of course, there is no hope of any sort! And then, when he is in Christ, there come the questionsis he in Christ by living faith, by real trust? Has he the faith of Gods elect? Has he been born again from above? Is he a spiritual Grace-taught soul? Let these be the questions which shall rest upon our minds.

I would that this morning my text might be sweet to you. Sweet, I said, because if for the moment it seems bitter, the end is sweetness. Faithful are the wounds of such a friend as Jesus! If He has wounded any of you, it is not to drive you from Him but to make you cling closer to Him! Have you never learned that, when you feel the most humbled, most afraid, most full of sin, most conscious of your own imperfection, the best thing is to cling to Christ more?

Well, Lord, if I have been the most cursed hypocrite that ever lived, I will come to You. If up to this moment I have been deceived and have not had a grain of true faith, nor a single one of the fruits of the Spirit, yet here I am, a poor vile sinner! I fly to the fountaina naked sinner. I wrap Your righteousness about my loins! I am a poor sin-sick, lost sinnerI look up to You on yonder Cross and I do believe that You can save me! From the very jaws of death, and out of the belly of Hell do I cry unto You, and You will hear me.

O Sinners and Saints, come to Christ again whether you are His experimentally, or are strangers to Him, come to Him now, for still the Gospel bell rings out sweetly, Whoever will, let him take the water of life freely. O God, grant us Grace to come now afresh, and Yours be the praise! Amen, and Amen.

Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #1625 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

WITHOUT CHRISTNOTHING   
NO. 1625

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, OCTOBER 23, 1881, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Without Me you can do nothing.   
John 15:5.**

THIS is not the language of a man of ordinary mold. No saint, no Prophet, no Apostle would ever have addressed a company of faithful men and have said to them, Without me you can do nothing. Had Jesus Christ been, as some say, a good man and nothing more, such language as this would have been unseemly and inconsistent. Among the virtues of a perfect man we must certainly reckon modesty, but this from a mere man would have been shamelessly immodest! It is impossible to conceive that Jesus of Nazareth, had He not been more than man, could ever have uttered the sentence, Without Me you can do nothing. My Brothers and Sisters, I hear, in this sentence, the voice of that Divine Person without whom was not anything made that was made! The majesty of the words reveals the Godhead of Him that uttered them. The I Am comes out in the personal word, Me, and the claim of all power unveils the Omnipotent!

These words mean Godhead or nothing! The spirit in which we listen to this language is that of adoration. Let us bow our heads in solemn worship and so unite with the multitude before the Throne of God who ascribe power and dominion and might to Him that sits upon the Throne and to the Lamb. In this adoring state of mind we shall be the better prepared to enter into the innermost soul of the text. I am not going to preach upon the moral inability of the unregenerate, although in that doctrine I most firmly believefor that Truth of God did not come in our Lords way when He uttered these wordsand neither did He allude to it.

It is quite true that unregenerate men, being without Christ, can do no spiritual action whatever, and can do nothing which is acceptable in the sight of God. But our Lord was not speaking to unregenerate men at all, nor speaking about them. He was surrounded by His Apostles, the 11 out of whom Judas had been weeded, and it is to them as branches of the true Vine that He says, Without Me you can do nothing. The statement refers to such as are in the Vine and even to such as have been pruned and have, for a while, been found abiding in the stem which is Christ even in such there is an utter incapacity for holy produce if separated from Christ!

We are not called upon, just now, to speak upon all forms of doing, as beyond us, but of that form of it which is intended in the text. There are certain forms of doing in which men excel who know little or nothing of Christ. But the text must be viewed in its own context and the Truth of God is clear. Believers are here described under the figure of branches in the vineand the doing alluded to must, therefore, be the bearing of fruit! I might render it, Apart from Me you can produce nothing, make nothing, create nothing, bring forth nothing. The reference, therefore, is to that doing which may be set forth by the fruit of the vines branch and, therefore, to those good works and Divine Graces of the Spirit which are expected from men who are spiritually united to Christ. It is of these that He says, Without Me you can do nothing.

Our text is only another form of the fourth verseAs the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can you, except you abide in Me. I am therefore going to address myself to you who profess to know and love the Lord and are anxious to glorify His name. And I have to remind you that union to Christ is essential, for only as you are one with Him and continue to be so, can you bring forth the fruits which prove you to be truly His.

I. Reading, again, this solemn sentence, Without Me you can do nothing, it first of all excites in me AN ASPIRATION OF HOPE. There is something to be doneour religion is to have a grand practical outcome! I have been thinking of Christ as the Vine, and of the myriads of branches in Him, and my heart has hoped for great things. From such a root, what a vintage must come! Being branches in Him, what fruit we must produce! There can be nothing scanty or poverty-stricken in the fruit of a Vine so full of sap! Fruit of the best quality, fruit in the utmost abundance, fruit unrivalled must be borne by such a Vine. That word, do, has music in it! Yes, Brethren, Jesus went about doing good and, being in Him, we shall do good! Everything about Him is efficient, practicalin a word, fruit bearingand being joined to Him, much will yet be done by us.

We have been saved by the almighty Grace of God apart from all doings of our own and now that we are saved, we long to do something in return! We feel a high ambition to be of some use and service to our great Lord and Master. The text, even though there is a negative in it, yet raises in our soul the hope that before we go from here and are no more, we may even here on earth do something for Christ! Beloved, there is the ambition and hope before us of doing something in the way of glorifying God by bringing forth the fruits of holiness, peace and love. We would adorn the Doctrine of God, our Savior, in all things. By pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by love unfeigned, by every good and holy work we would show forth the praises of our God!

Apart from the Lord Jesus we know we cannot be holybut joined unto Him we overcome the world, the flesh and the deviland we walk with garments unspotted from the world! The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance and all manner of holy conversation. For none of these things are we equal of ourselves, and yet by faith we say with Paul, I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me. We may be adorned with plentiful clusters. We may cause the Savior to have joy in us that our joy may be full! Great possibilities are before us! We aspire not only to produce fruit in ourselves, but to bear much fruit in the conversion of others, even as Paul desired concerning the Romans, that he might have fruit among them.

In this matter we can do nothing whatever, alone, but being united unto Christ we bring forth increase unto the Lord. Our Lord Jesus said, The works that I do shall you do also, and greater works than these shall you do, because I go unto the Father. Brothers and Sisters, a hope springs up in our bosom that we may, each one of us, bring many souls to Jesus! Not because we have any power in ourselves, but because we are united to Jesus, we joyfully hope to bring forth fruit in the way of leading others to the knowledge of the Gospel! My soul takes fire of hope and I say to myself, if it is so, all these branches and all alivehow much fruit of further blessing will ripen for this poor world? Men shall be blessed in us because we are blessed in Christ!

What must be the influence of ten thousand godly examples? What must be the influence upon our country of thousands of Christian men and women practically advancing love, peace, justice, virtue, holiness? And if each one is seeking to bring others to Christ, what numerous conversions there must be and how large must the Church of God be increased? Do you not know that if there were only 10,000 real Christians in the world, yet if each one of these brought one other to Christ every year it would not need 20 years to accomplish the conversion of the entire population of the globe? This is a simple sum in arithmetic which any schoolboy can work out. Certainly it is a small thing that each one should bring another to the Lord! And surely, if we are one with Him, we may hope to see it done!

So I sit down and dream right comfortably, according to the promise, Your young men shall see visions and your old men shall dream dreams. See these thousands of branches proceeding from such a stem as Christ Jesusand with such sap as the Holy Spirit flowing through them, why, surely, this vine must soon clothe the mountains with its verdure and there shall not remain a single barren rock unadorned with the blessed foliage! Then shall the mountains drop sweet wine and all the hills shall melt! Not because of any natural fertility in the branches, but because of their glorious root, stem and sap, each one shall bear full clusters and each fruitful branch shall run over the wall!

Beloved Friends in Christ, have you not strong desires to see some such consummation? Do you not long to take a share in the high enterprise of winning the world to Christ? Oh, you that are young and full of spirits, do you not long to press to the front of this great crusade? Our souls pine to see the knowledge of the Lord covering the earth as the waters cover the sea! It is glad tidings to us that, joined unto Christ, we can do something in this great businesssomething upon which the Lord will smilesomething which shall redound to the glory of His name! We are not condemned to inaction. We are not denied the joy of service, the superior blessedness of giving and of doing. The Lord has chosen us and ordained us to go and bring forth fruit, fruit that shall remain! This is the aspiration which rises in our soulmay the Lord grant that we may see it take actual form in our lives!

II. But now, in the second place, there passes through my heart a shudderA SHUDDER OF FEAR. Albeit I glow and burn with strong desire and rise upon the wing of a mighty ambition to do something great for Christ, yet I read the text and a sudden trembling takes hold upon me. Without Meit is possible, then, that I may be without Christ and so may be utterly incapacitated for all good! Come, Friends, I want you to feel, even though it casts a cold chill over you, that you may possibly be, without Christ. I would have you feel it in the very marrow of your bonesyes, in the center of your hearts.

You profess to be in Christ, but are you? The large majority of those to whom I speak this morning are visible members of the visible Church of Christ. But what if you should not be so in Him as to bring forth fruit? Evidently there are branches which, in a certain sense are in the vine, and yet bring forth no fruit! It is written, Every branch in Me that bears not fruit He takes away. Yes, you are a member, perhaps an elder, perhaps a deacon, possibly a ministerand so you are in the Vinebut are you bringing forth the fruits of holiness? Are you consecrated? Are you endeavoring to bring others to Jesus Christ?

Or is your profession a thing apart from a holy life and devoid of all influence upon others? Does it give you a name among the people of God and nothing more? Say, is it a mere natural association with the Church, or is it a living, Supernatural union with Christ? Let the thought go through you and prostrate you before Him who looks down from Heaven upon you! He lifts His pierced hands and cries, Without Me you can do nothing. My Friend, if you are without Christ, what is the use of carrying on that Bible class, for you can do nothing? What is the use of my coming to this pulpit if I am without Christ? What is the use of your going down into the Sunday school this afternoon if, after all, you are without Christ?

Unless we have the Lord Jesus, ourselves, we cannot take Him to others! Unless within us we have the Living Water springing up unto eternal life, we cannot overflow so that out of our midst shall flow rivers of Living Water! I will put the thought another wayWhat if you should be in Christ, but not so in Him as to abide in Him? It appears from our Lords words that some branches in Him are cast forth and are withered. If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered. Some who are called by His name and reckoned among His discipleswhose names are heard whenever the roll of the Church is readyet do not continue in Him. My Hearer, what if it should happen that you are only in Christ on Sunday, but in the world all the rest of the week?

What if you are only in Christ at the Communion Table, or at the Prayer Meeting, or at certain periods of devotion? What if you are off and on with Christ? What if you play fast and loose with the Lord? What if you are an outside saint and an inside devil? Ah me, what will come of such conduct as this? And yet, some persist in attempting to hold an intermittent communion with Christin Christ today because it is the Sabbath out of Christ tomorrow because it is the market and obedience to Christ might be inconvenient when they buy and sell. This will not do! We must be so in Christ as to be always in Him, or else we are not living branches of the living Vine and we cannot produce fruit.

If there were such a thing as a vine branch that was only occasionally joined to the stem, would you expect it to yield a cluster to the farmer? So neither can you, if you are off and on with Christ. You can do nothing if there is not constant union. One year when I was traveling towards my usual winter resting place, I stopped at Marseilles, and there was overtaken by great pain. In my room in the hotel I found it cold and so I asked for a fire. I was sitting in a very desponding mood, when suddenly the tears came to my eyes, as if struck with a great sorrow. I shall never forget the thoughts which stirred my heart! The porter came in to light the fire. He had in his hand a bundle of twigs.

I called to him to let me look at it. He was about to push it into the stove as fuel with which to kindle the fire. As I took the bundle into my hand, I found it was made of vine branchesbranches that had been cut off, now that the pruning time was come. Ah me, I thought, will this be my portion? Here I am, away from home, unable to bear fruit, as I love to do. Shall I end with this as my portion? Shall I be gathered for the fire? Those vine shoots were parts of a good vine, no doubtbranches that once looked fair and greenbut now they were fuel for the flame. They had been cut off and cast off as useless things! And then men gathered them and tied them in bundles and they were ignobly thrust into the fire.

What a picture! There goes a bundle of ministers into the fire! There is a bundle of elders! Theres another bundle of deacons! Next a bundle of Church members, a bundle of Sunday school teachers! Men gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. Dear brothers and Sisters, shall this be the lot of any of us who have named the name of Christ? Well did I say a shudder may go through us as we listen to those words, without Me. Our end without Christ will be terrible, indeed! First, no fruit; then no life; and, at last, no place among the saints, no existence in the Church of God! Without Christ we do nothing, we are nothing, we are worse than nothing! This is now the condition of the heathen and it was our own condition onceGod forbid that we should find it to be our condition nowwithout Christ, having no hope! Here is grave cause for heart-searching and I leave the matter with you to that end.

III. Having come so far in our second head, under the third I behold A VISION OF TOTAL FAILURE. Without Me, says the text, you can do nothingyou can produce nothing. The visible Church of Christ has tried this experiment a great many times, already, and always with the same result. Separated from Christ, His Church can do nothing which she was formed to do. She is sent into the world upon a high enterprise, with noble aims before her and grand forces at her disposalbut if she should cease from communion with Christshe would become wholly incapable!

Now what are the outward signs of any community being apart from Christ? Answerfirst, it may be seen in a ministry without Christ in its doctrine. This we have seen, ourselves. Woe is the day that it is so! History tells us that not only in the Romish Church and the Anglican Church, but among the Nonconformist Churches, Christ has been, at times, forgotten! Not only among Unitarians, but among Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptistsall round, Jesus has been dishonored. Attempts have been made to do something without Christ as the truth to be preached. Ah me, what folly it is! They preach up intellectualism and hope that this will be the great power of God, but it is not.

Surely, they say, novelties of thought and refinements of speech will attract and win converts! If the preachers aspire to be leaders of thought will they not command the multitude and charm the intelligent? Add music and architecture and what is to hinder success? Many a young minister has given up his whole mind to thisto try and be exceedingly refined and intellectualand what has he done with these showy means? The sum total is expressed in the textNothing. Without Me you can do nothing. What emptiness this folly has createdwhen the pulpit is without Christ, the pews are soon without people!

I knew a chapel where an eminent divine was to be heard for years. A converted Jew, coming to London to visit a friend, set out on Sunday morning to find a place of Christian worship and he chanced to enter the chapel of this eminent divine. When he came back he said that he feared he had made a mistakehe had turned into a building which he hoped was a Christian place of assembly, but as he had not heard the name of Jesus all the morning, he thought, perhaps, he had fallen in with some other religionists. I fear that many modern sermons might just as fairly have been delivered in a Muslim mosque as in a Christian Church! We have too many preachers of whom we might complain, they have taken away my Lord and I know not where they have laid Him.

Christianity without Christ is a strange thing, indeed. And what comes of it where it is held up to the people? Why, by-and-by there are not enough people to support the ministry! Empty benches are plentiful and the thing gets pretty nearly wound up. Blessed be God for it! I am heartily glad that without Christ these pretended ministers cannot prosper! Leave Christ out of the preaching and you shall do nothing. Only advertise it all over London, Mr. Baker, that you are making bread without flourput it in every paper, Bread without flourand you may soon shut up your shop, for your customers will hurry off to other bakers!

Somehow there is a strange prejudice in peoples minds in favor of bread made with flour and there is also an unaccountable prejudice in the human mind which makes men think that if there is a Gospel, it must have Christ in it. A sermon without Christ as its beginning, middle and end is a mistake in conception and a crime in execution! However grand the language, it will be merely much ado about nothing if Christ is not there. Yes, and I mean by Christ not merely His example and the ethical precepts of His teaching, but His atoning blood, His wondrous satisfaction made for human sin and the grand doctrine of, believe and live. If, Life for a look at the Crucified One is obscured, all is dark! If justification by faith is not set in the very forefront in the full blaze of light, nothing can be accomplished! Without Christ in the doctrine you shall do nothing!

Further, without acknowledging always the absolute supremacy of Christ, we shall do nothing. Jesus is much complimented, nowadays, but He is not submitted to as absolute Lord! I hear many pretty things about Christ from men who reject His Gospel. Lives of Christ we have in any quantity! Oh for one which would set Him forth in His Glory as God, as Head of the Church and Lord of All! I should greatly like to see a, Life of Christ, written by one who know Him by communion with Him and by reverently sitting at His feet! Most of the pretty things about Jesus which I read nowadays seem to have been written by persons who have seen Him through a telescope at a great distance and know Him, according to Matthew, but not according to personal fellowship! Oh, for a Life of Christ, by Samuel Rutherford or George Herbert, or by some other sweet spirit to whom the Ever-Blessed One is such a familiar Friend!

Certain modern praises of Jesus are written upon the theory that, on the whole, the Savior has given us a religion that is tolerably suited to the enlightenment of the 19th Century and may be allowed to last a little longer. Jesus is commended by these critics and somewhat admired as preferable to most teachersbut He is, by no means, to be blindly followed. It is fortunate for Jesus that He commends Himself to the best thought and ripest culture of the period, for, if He had not done so, these wise gentlemen would have exposed Him as being behind the times! Of course they have, every now and then, to rectify certain of His dogmas, especially such as Justification by Faith, or Atonement, or the Doctrine of Election!

These are old-fashioned things which belong to an older and less enlightened period and, therefore, they adapt them by tearing out their real meaning. The Doctrines of Grace, according to the infallible critics of the period, are out of datenobody believes them and they settle off oldfashioned Believers as non-existent! Christ is rectified and squaredand His garment without seam is taken off and He is dressed out in proper styleas by a West-End clothier. Then He is introduced to us as a remarkable teacher and we are advised to accept Him as far as He goes. For the present the wise ones tolerate Jesus, but there is no telling what is to comethe progress of this age is so astonishing that it is just possible we shall, before long, leave Christ and Christianity behind!

Now, what will come of this foolish wisdom? Nothing but delusions, mischief, infidelity, anarchy and all manner of imaginable and unimaginable ills. The fact is, if you do not acknowledge Christ to be All, you have virtually left Him out and are without Him! We must preach the Gospel because Christ has revealed it. Thus says the Lord, is to be our logic. We must preach the Gospel as ambassadors delivering their messagethat is to say, in the Kings nameby an authority not their own. We preach our doctrines, not because we consider that they are convenient and profitable, but because Christ has commanded us to proclaim them. We believe the Doctrines of Grace, not because the enlightenment of the age sets its wonderful imprimatur upon them, but because they are true and are the voice of God!

Age or no age has nothing to do with us. The world hates Christ and must hate Himif it would boldly denounce Christ, it would be to us a more hopeful sign than its deceitful Judas kiss. We keep simply to this the Lord has said it and we care not who approves or disapproves. Jesus is God and Head of the Churchand we must do what He bids us and say what He tells usif we fail in this, nothing of good will come of it. If the Church gets back to her loyalty, she shall see what her Lord will do, but without Christ as absolute Lord, Infallible Teacher and honored King, all must be failure even to the end.

Go a little furtheryou may have sound doctrine and yet do nothing unless you have Christ in your spirit. I have known all the Doctrines of Grace to be unmistakably preached and yet there have been no conversionsfor this reasonthat they were not expected and scarcely desired. In former years many orthodox preachers thought it to be their sole duty to comfort and confirm the godly few who by dint of great perseverance found out the holes and corners in which they prophesied. These brethren spoke of sinners as of people whom God might possibly gather in if He thought fit to do sobut they did not care much whether He did so or not. As to weeping over sinners as Christ wept over Jerusalem; as to venturing to invite them to Christ as the Lord did when He stretched out His hands all the day long; as to lamenting with Jeremiah over a perishing people they had no sympathy with such emotions and feared that they savored of Arminianism.

Both preacher and congregation were cased in a hard shell and lived as if their own salvation was the only design of their existence. If anybody did grow zealous and seek conversions, straightway they said he was indiscreet, or conceited. When a Church falls into this condition it is, as to its spirit, without Christ. What comes of it? Some of you know by your own observation what comes of it. The comfortable corporation exists and grows for a little while, but it comes to nothing in the long run. And so it mustthere can be no fruit-bearing where there is not the Spirit of Christ as well as the doctrine of Christ. Unless the Spirit of the Lord rests upon you, causing you to agonize for the salvation of men even as Jesus did, you can do nothing!

But above all things we must have Christ with us in the power of His actual Presence. Do we always think of thisWithout Me you can do nothing? We are going out this afternoon to teach the youngshall we be quite sure to take Christ with us? Or on the road shall we suddenly stop and say, I am without my Master and I must not dare go another step? The abiding consciousness of the love of Christ in our soul is the essential element of our strength. We can no more convert a sinner without Christ than we could light up new stars in the sky! Power to change the human willpower to enlighten the intellect as to the things of God and to influence the mind as to repentance and faithmust come entirely from the Most High.

Do we feel that? Or do we put our thoughts together for an address and say, Now, that is a strong point, and that will produce effect. And do we rest there? If so, we can do nothing at all! The power lies with the Master, not with the servant! The might is in the hand, not in the weapon! We must have Christ in these pews and in these aislesand in this pulpit and Christ down in our Sunday school! And we must have Christ at the street corner when we stand there to talk of Him! And we must feel that He is with us even to the end of the world, or we shall do nothing! We have, then, before us a vision of total failure if we attempt, in any way, to do without Christ. He says, Without Me you can do nothing. It is in the doing that the failure is most conspicuous.

You may talk a good deal without Him. You may hold congresses, conferences and conventions. But doing is another matter! Without Jesus you can talk any quantity, but without Him you can do nothing. The most eloquent discourse without Him will be all a bottle of smoke. You shall lay your plans, arrange your machinery and start your schemes, but without the Lord you will do nothing! Immeasurable cloudland of proposals and not a spot of solid doing large enough for a doves foot to rest onsuch shall be the end of all! You may have all the money that generosity can lavish, all the learning that your universities can supply and all the oratory that the most gifted can lay at your feet, but, without Me, says Christ, you can do nothing. Fuss, flare, fireworks and failurethat is the end of it! Without Me you can do nothing.

Let me repeat those words again, Do nothing. Do nothing and the world dying around us! Africa in darkness, China perishing! India sunk in superstition and a Church which can do nothing! No bread to be handed out to the hungry and the multitude fainting and dying! The rock to be smitten and the Water of Life to leap out for the thirsty, but not a drop forthcoming because Jesus is not there! Ministers, evangelists, churches, salvation armies, the world dies for need of you and yet, you can do nothing if your Lord is away! The age shall advance in discovery and men of science shall do their little best, but you shall do nothing without Christabsolutely nothing! You shall not proceed a single inch upon your toilsome way, though you row till the oars snap with the strain! You shall be drifted back by winds and currents unless you take Jesus into the ship.

Remember that all the while the great Husbandman is watching you, for His eye is on every vine branch. He sees that you are producing no grapes and He is coming round with that sharp knife of His, cutting here and there! What must become of you who produce nothing? It makes ones very soul curdle within him to think that we should live to do nothing! Yet I fear that thousands of Christians get no further than this! They are not immoral, dishonest, or profanebut they do nothing! They think of what they would like to do and they plan and they proposebut they do nothing. There are plenty buds, but not a single grape is produced and all because they do not get into that vital, overflowing, effectual communion with Christ which would fill them with life and constrain them to bring forth fruit unto the Glory of God! There is a vision, then, of the failure all along the line if we try to do without Christ.

IV. But now, fourthly, I hear A VOICE OF WISDOM, a still small voice which speaks out of the text and says to us who are in Christ, let us acknowledge this. Down on your knees, bow your mouths in the dust and say, Lord, it is true! Without you we can do nothing, nothing whatever that is good and acceptable in the sight of God! We have not ability of ourselves to think anything of ourselves, but our ability is of God. Now, do not speak thus, as if you paid a compliment which orthodoxy requires you to makebut from the deeps of your soul, smitten with an absolute selfdespair, acknowledge the truth unto God. To will is present with me, but how to perform that which I would, I find not. Lord, I am a good-fornothing do-nothing! I am a fruitless, barren, dry, rotten branch without You, and this I feel in my inmost soul. Be not far from me, but quicken me by Your Presence.

Next, let us pray. If without Christ we can do nothing. Let us cry to Him that we may never be without Him! Let us, with strong crying and tears, entreat His abiding Presence. He comes to those who seek Himlet us never cease seeking! In conscious fellowship with Him, let us plead that the fellowship should always be unbroken. Let us pray that we may be so knit and joined to Jesus that we may be one spirit with Him, never to be separated from Him again. Master and Lord, let the life floods of Your Grace never cease to flow into us, for we know that we must be thus supplied or we can produce nothing! Brothers and Sisters, let us have much more prayer than has been usual among us. Prayer is appointed to convey the blessings God ordains to givelet us constantly use the appointed means and may the result be always increasing from day to day.

Next, let us personally cleave to Jesus. Let us not attempt a life of separation, for that were to seek the living among the dead! Do not let us depart from Him for a single minute! Would you like to be caught at any one second of your life in a condition in which you could do nothing? I must confess I should not like to be in that state, incapable of defense against my enemies, or of service for my Lord. If an awakened one should come before you under distress of mind and you should feel quite incapable of doing any good for himwhat a sad perplexity! Or if you did not feel incapable and yet should really be soand what if you should, therefore, talk on in a religious way but know no power in it? Would it not be a sad thing? May you never be in such a state that you would be a do-nothing, with opportunities afforded and yet without strength to utilize them! If you are divided from Christ you are divided from the possibility of doing good; cling therefore, to the Savior with your whole might and let nothing take you away from Himno, not for an hour!

Heartily submit yourselves, also, dear Friends, to the Lords headship and leadership, and ask to do everything in His style and way. He will not be with you unless you accept Him as your Master. There must be no quarrel about supremacyyou must yield yourself up absolutely to Him, to be, to do, or to suffer according to His will. When it is wholly so, He will be with you and you shall do everything that is required of you. Wonderful things will the Lord perform through you when once He is your All in All! Will we not have it so?

Once morejoyfully believe in Him. Though without Him you can do nothing, yet with Him all things are possible! Omnipotence is in that man who has Christ in him! Weakness, itself, you may be, but you shall learn to glory in that weakness because the power of Christ rests upon you if your union and communion with Christ are continually kept up! Oh for a grand confidence in Christ! We have not believed in Him, yet, up to the measure of the hem of His garment, for even that faith made the sick woman whole! Oh to believe up to the measure of His infinite Deity! Oh for the splendor of the faith which measures itself by the Christ in whom it trusts! May God bring us there! Then shall we bring forth much fruit to the Glory of His name.

V. And now, lastly. While I was listening to my text, as a child puts a shell to its ear and listens till it hears the deep sea rolling in its windings, I heard within my text A SONG OF CONTENTMENT. Without Me you can do nothing. My heart said, Lord, what is there that I want to do without You? There is no pain in this thought to me. If I can do without You, I am sorry to possess so dangerous a power. I am happy to be deprived of all strength except that which comes from You. It charms, it exhilarates and delights my soul to think that You are my All. Your have made me penniless as to all wealth of my own that I might dip my hand into Your treasury! You have taken all power away from every sinew and muscle of mine that I may rest on Your bosom. Without Me you can do nothing.

Be it so. Brothers and Sisters, are you not all agreed? Do you wish to have it altered, any of you that love His dear name? I am sure you do not, for suppose, dear Friends, we could do something without Christ? Then He would not have the Glory of it. Who wishes that? There would be little crowns for our poor little heads, for we should have done something without Him. But now there is one great crown for that dear head which once was pierced with thornsfor all His saints put together cannot do anything without Him! The goodly fellowship of the Apostles; the noble army of martyrs and the triumphant host of the redeemed by blood, all put together, can do nothing without Jesus! Let Him be crowned with majesty who works in us both to will and to do of His own good pleasure! For our own sakes, for our Lords sake, we are glad that it is so!

All things are more ours by being His! And if our fruit is His, rather than our own, it is none the less, but all the more ours! Is not this rare music for a holy ear? I feel so glad that without Christ we can do nothing because I fear that if the Church could do something without Christ she would try to live without Him! If she could teach the school and bring the children to salvation without Christ, I am afraid Christ would never go into a Sunday school again. If we could preach successfully without Jesus, I suspect that the Lord Jesus Christ would seldom stand on high among the people again. If our Christian literature could bless men without Christ, I am afraid we should set the printing press going and never think about the Crucified One in the matter. If there could be work done by the Church without Jesus, there would be rooms into which He would never be invitedand these would soon become a sort of Blue Beards chambers full of horror. A something that we could do without Christ? Why the mass of the Church would get to working that machinery tremendously and all the rest would be neglectedand so it is a blessed thing for the whole Church that she must have Christ everywhere! Without Me you can do nothing.

As I listened to the song within these words I began to laughI wonder if you will laugh, too? It was to myself I laughed, like Abraham of old. I thought of those who are going to destroy the orthodox doctrine from off the face of the earth. How they boast of the decline and death of oldfashioned evangelism! I have read once or twice that I am the last of the Puritans, the race is all dying out! To this I objectI am willing to be esteemed last in meritbut not last as ending the race! There are many others who are steadfast in the faith! They say our old theology is decaying and that nobody believes it. It is all a lie! But wise men say so and, therefore, we are bound to consider ourselves obsolete and extinct. We are, in their esteem, as much out of date as antediluvians would be could they walk down our streets. Yes, they are going to quench our coal and blot us out from Israel.

Newspapers and reviews and the general intelligence of the age all join to dance upon our graves! Put on your night-caps, you good people of the evangelical order, and go home to bed and sleep the sleep of the righteous, for the end of you is come! Thus say the Philistines, but the armies of the Lord think not. The adversaries exult exceedingly, but Christ is not with them. They know very little about Him. They do not work in His Spirit, nor cry Him up, nor extol the Gospel of His precious bloodand so I believe that when they have donetheir little best will come to nothing. Without Me you can do nothing. If this is true of Apostles, much more of opposers! If His friends can do nothing without Him, I am sure His foes can do nothing against Him! If they who follow His steps and lie in His bosom can do nothing without Him, I am sure His adversaries cannotand so I laughed at their laughter and smiled at their confusion.

I laughed, too, because I remembered a story of a New England service when the pastor, one afternoon, was preaching in His own solemn way, and the good people were listening or sleeping, as their minds inclined. It was a substantial edifice where they assembled, fit to outlive an earthquake. All went on peacefully in the Meeting House that afternoon till suddenly a lunatic jumped up, denounced the minister and declared that he would at once pull down the Meeting House about their ears! Taking hold of one of the pillars of the gallery, this newly announced Samson repeated his threat!

Everybody rose. The women were ready to faint. The men began to rush to the doors and there was danger that the people would be trampled on as they rushed down the aisles! There was about to be a great tumult. No one could see the end of it, when suddenly one cool Brother sitting near the pulpit produced calm by a single sentence. Let him try! was the stern sarcasm which hushed the tempest!

Even so, today the enemy is about to disprove the Gospel and crush out the Doctrines of Grace! Are you distressed, alarmed, astounded? So far from that, my reply to the adversarys boast that he will pull down the pillars of our Zion is only this LET HIM TRY! Amen.

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SELF-SUFFICIENCY SLAIN   
NO. 345

**DELIVERED ON SABBATH MORNING, NOVEMBER 11, 1860, BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT EXETER HALL, STRAND.

**Without Me you can do nothing.   
John 15:5.**

CONSCIOUS of this Truth of God in my own case, I would earnestly seek the help of Gods Spirit in preaching as in every other spiritual exercise, for, without Him I can do nothing. It is a remarkable fact that all the heresies which have arisen in the Christian Church have had a decided tendency to dishonor God and to flatter man. They have always had for their covert, if not for their open aim, the exaltation of human nature and the casting down of the sovereignty of Divine Grace. Robbing God of the glory which is due unto His name, these false Prophets would shed a counterfeit luster upon the head of the rebellious and depraved creature.

On the other hand, the doctrines of the Gospel, commonly known as the Doctrines of Grace, are distinguished for this peculiarity above every other, namely, that they sink the creature very low and present the Lord Jehovah before us as sitting upon a Throne, high and lifted up. So true is this, that the most uneducated Christian may, even if he is incapable of refuting an erroneous discourse, always be able to discover its untruthfulness, if it glorifies man at the expense of God.

The merest babe in grace may carry this test with himin the midst of the diversities of opinion with which he is surrounded, he may always judge and judge infallibly too, of the truth or falsehood of a doctrine by testing it thusDoes it glorify God? If it is so it is true. Does it exalt man? Then it must be false. On the other hand, does it lay man very low and speak of him in terms which tend to make him feel his degradation? Then doubtless it is full of the Truth of God. And does it put the crown upon the head of God and not upon the head of mans free will, or free agency, or good works? Then assuredly it is a doctrine according to godliness for it is the very Truth of the Lord our God.

My textthe very word of Christ, contains in it a doctrine which belongs to the class of those which speak against the vaunting of humanity, casting down its high hopesand scorning its proud looks and to the same degree this sentence honors Christ and lifts Him up in the estimation of all His people.

This morning I shall speak of my text thusJesus said, Without Me you can do nothing. First, this is true of His saints in matters relating to themselves. Secondly, this is even more manifestly true of unconverted and unregenerate men. Thirdly it will be found by experience to be equally a fact if we look at saints in relation to sinnerswithout Christ the most earnest saint can do nothing whatever for the conversion of the sinner.

I. To begin, then, with THE SAINT IN RELATION TO HIMSELF. Jesus said to the Apostles and if to them, certainly as strongly, if not more so, to us, Without Me you can do nothing. Let us explain this. Then try to support it. And then draw the practical lessons from it.

1. Child of GodJesus Christ speaks to you personally this morning and He says to you, Without Me you can do nothing. Do you understand this? Mark how decisively it speaks! I borrow from Augustine much of the exposition which follows. He observes that this sentence seems to have been written to put an end to the impudent impostures of the Pelagians, for the text does not say, Without Me you can hardly do anything. It will be with extreme difficulty that you will be able to accomplish a good work or to achieve a holy purpose.

No, it lays the axe far more decisively to the root. It says, Without Me you can do nothingabsolutely, positively nothing at all. What? Even if I seek and strive, if I bring all my energies to a single pointconcentrate all my faculties to the purposecan I not, then, do it? If I am extremely watchful, if I am intensely earnest, if I am sincerely prayerfulcan I not then accomplish something, even if the Spirits influence is withheld? It may be it shall cost me much difficulty. It may be hard rowing against the stream. But may I not, with my own unaided power, if I strain it to the utmostmay I not speed at least a little in the things of God?

No, says the Lord Jesus, No. Without Me you can do nothing. Strive as you mightstruggle as you mightyour striving and your struggling would be strength misapplied. They would not speed you towards the goalthey would but sink you deeper into the mire of desperation or of presumption. Mark, further, the text does not say, Without Me you can not do some great thingssome special acts of piety some high and supernatural deeds of daringof self-denial and self-sacrifice. No, Without Me you can do nothing. Including in the sentence, as you will clearly perceive, those little acts of gracethose little deeds of pietyfor which, perhaps, in our proud self-conceit, we think ourselves to be already sufficiently equipped.

You can do nothing, not only is the higher duty beyond your power, but the lesser duty, too. You are not capable of performing the lowest act of the Divine life, except as you receive strength from God the Holy Spirit. And surely, my Brethren, it is generally in these little things that we find out most of all our weaknesses. Peter can walk the waves of the sea, but he cannot bear the jest of a little maid. Job can endure the loss of all things, but the upbraiding words of his false friends, though they are but words and break no bonesmake him speak far more bitterly than all the sore boils and pains which were in his very skin.

Jonah said he did well to be angry, even unto death, about a gourd. Have you not often heard that mighty men who have outlived hundreds of battles have been slain at last by the most trivial accident? And has it not been so with professed Christians? They stood uprightly in the midst of the greatest trialsthey have outlived the most arduous struggles and yet, in an evil hour, trusting to themselves, their foot has slipped under some slight temptation, or because of some small difficulty. John Newton saysThe Grace of God is as necessary to create a right temper in Christians on the breaking of a china plate as on the death of an only son.

These little leaks need the most careful stopping. The plague of flies is no more easy to be stayed than that of the destroying angel. In little, as well as in great things, the just must live by faith. In trifles as well as in nobler exercises the Believer should be conscious of his own inability should never say of any act, Now I am strong enough to perform this. I need not go to God in prayer about this. This is so little a thing, it is beneath the dignity of God and I am quite sufficient for it of myself. No, Believer, you are sufficient for nothing at all. Without Christ you can do nothing that is good, nothing that is right. We have not sufficiency of ourselves to think anything of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God. We know not what to pray for as we ought. We do feel each day that to will is present with us, but how to perform that which we would, we find not.

Our strength is not only weakness but perfect weaknessweakness even for little thingsweakness for ounces as truly as for tons. Weakness in drops of grief as well as of seas of sorrow. Weakness for splinters of trial as well as for the terrible darts of the Evil One. In everything, Christian, you are powerless apart from the Lord who is your strength and your salvation. Learn, then, the meaning of this text, Without Me you can do nothing.

In further explaining the meaning of this passage, let me remark that Christ did not say Without Me you can perfect nothing, but, Without Me you can do nothing. The Pelagian might perhaps admit that the Christian could not complete the good work unaided. But then he might do much towards it. Says he, If he does not finish, he may begin, if he is not the Omega, he may at least be the Alpha. If he cannot bring out the glorious top-stone and crane it up to the sublime height in which it is to stand forever and ever, he may at least dig out the foundations and lay in the first hidden stone.

No, says Christ, Without Me you can do nothing. As in that last glorious leap when the Believer shall vault from his dying bed into the land of the living, all his strength must be of Godso must it be in that first trembling step when as a penitent he comes to Christ and rests his soul on Him. Do not say, if you are about to undertake some enterprise, I will begin this and then God will give me grace to make up my deficiencies, but I will trust in myself as far as I can.

Ah, you foolish one, your trowel is covered with untempered mortar, you build with wood and hay and stubble. So far from its being yours to do much apart from the Spirit of God you can do nothing whatever. You can neither lift a finger, nor stir a hand in this spiritual work apart from God. You can not put on the white robe of gloryno, moreyou can not unwrap yourself from the clothes of your death. Even this must be done for you, from the beginning to the end.

And yet further, to put the meaning in a forcible light. There might be some who would say, Well, while the text may be understood to say the Believer cannot commence any good thing, yet possibly he may, after it is commenced with great assistance of God the Holy Spirit in his own

salvation, he may do something apart from the Spirit. Ah, my Brethren, when the Spirit of God is with us we do much. When He is in us He makes us the instrument of our own deliverance. But let the Spirit of God be taken away from the Christian man, albeit that he is renewed, albeit that he has a new heart and a right spirit, yet would he retain that new heart and right spirit not one single hour, nonot for a tenth of a second, if the Spirit of God were once withdrawn from him.

There is no support for the new life to be found in the natural soil of manhood. Every dew drop with which the sweet flower of Paradise is nourished in our heart had to be brought there from Heaven, for naturally our heart is a rock too barren to yield any subsistence to the plants of Paradise. If in our soul there flows a river of the water of life, its rise is in the mountains of Gods eternal purpose. The river finds no tributary springs in our heart. Flesh can yield no aid to spirit. Unrenewed nature can be a huge impediment to Divine Grace, but assistance it can never be.

The Apostle Paul never found the old man a help to the new man. If it had been so, he would not have cried outO wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death. He would have shaken hands with that body of death and thanked it for its assistance if it yielded any. But he felt it was of no more use to him than would a dead, rotten, corrupt, filthy noxious carcass be to a living man if he had it chained side by side with him. When we shall get rid of self and selfs power, then we shall be strong, but all the strength of nature is but a weakness to Divine Grace and all the power and energy of the flesh is but an hindrance to the Lord and not a help to Him. Without Himin the widest sense in which the language can be possibly understoodwe can do nothing.

2. And now, having thus sought to explain the text in regard to the Christian, let me try to support it. I would support it first of all by the common consent of all Believers in all ages. With the exception of ancient Pelagians and their modern off-spring, I do not know that the Church has afforded any instance of any professors who have doubted the inability of man apart from God the Holy Spirit. Our confessions of faith are nearly unanimous upon this point. But I hear some one sayDo not the Arminians believe that there is natural strength in man by which he can do something? No, my Brethren, the true Arminian can believe no such thing. Arminius speaks right well upon this point. I quote his words, as I have them in a translationIt is impossible for free will without grace to begin or perfect any true or spiritual good. I say, the grace of Christ, which pertains to regeneration is simply and absolutely necessary for the illumination of the mind, the ordering of the affections and the inclination of the will to that which is good.

It is that which operates on the mind, the affections, and the will, which infuses good thoughts into the mind, inspires good desires into the affections and leads the will to execute good thoughts and good desires. It goes before, accompanies, and follows. It excites, assists, works in us to will and works with us that we may not will in vain. It averts temptations, stands by and aids us in temptations, supports us against the flesh, the world, and Satan. And in the conflict, it grants us to enjoy the victory. It raises up again those who are conquered and fallen, it establishes them and endues them with new strength and renders them more cautious. It begins, promotes, perfects and consummates salvation. I confess that the mind of the natural and carnal man is darkened, his affections are depraved, his will is refractory and that the man is dead in sin.

Richard Watson, who among modern Arminians is considered to be a standard Divine, especially in the Wesleyan denomination, is equally clear upon this point. He fully admits that, The sin of Adam introduced into his nature such a radical impotence and depravity, that it is impossible for his descendants to make any voluntary effort (of themselves) towards piety and virtue, and then he quotes with great approbation an expression of Calvins, in which Calvin says that, Man is so totally overwhelmed, as with a deluge, that no part is free from sin, and therefore, whatever proceeds from him is accounted sin.

It is very satisfactory to have these testimonies to the common doctrine of the Church. I know that some Arminians are not so sound even as Arminius or Richard Watson. I know that some of them do not understand any creed at all, not even their own, for in all denominations there are men so ignorant of all theology that they will venture upon any assertion whatever, claiming to be Arminian, or Calvinistic, without knowing what either Calvin or Arminius taught. Arminians would be much better even if they were as good as Arminius. Much as he swerved from the faith in some respects, he was not one-half so grave a heretic as multitudes of his followers, but in many points would be as stern and unflinching a defender of the faith as John Calvin, himself.

But my dear Friends, instead of dwelling upon this point any longer, let me make one or two other remarks. Suppose for a moment that the doctrine of our text were not true and that Christians had power in themselves to do something. Take down your Bibles when you get home and see what a great many promises of the Word of God would be without any value to you. God never made a promise which was not necessary. Now if I have strength of my own, God certainly will not need to make me a promise of giving His strength to me.

But inasmuch as there are scores of promises in which it is written, Unto him that has no might, He increases strengthinasmuch as we are often told that, young men do faint and are weary and the youths do utterly fail, but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strengthI think you see that the very fact of these promises prove that they are needed, and if needed, it must be because man is weak.

But again, what should we make of the praises of the saints? Have you not heard them all through Holy Scripture ascribing their strength and their power to God? Did they not all, from the first even to the last, confess that all their fresh springs were in Him? That He, the Lord Jehovah, was their strength and their song and had become their salvation? Did they not unanimously confess that their sufficiency was of God, that when they were weak, then were they strong? That in themselves they were nothing? I say, what do you make of these praises?

What are they? Are they not mere empty wind, if these men really had in themselves strength and power to do good?

And what are the songs before the Thronethose eternal cries of Salvation be unto our God that sits upon the Throne and unto the Lamb? How can they ascribe power and dominion and might to Him forever and ever, if their power was of themselves? Must there not be a mingled strain? And while they sing the power of Divine Grace, must there not be some interludes in which they will chant the power of nature, too? If they came to Heaven partly by God and partly by themselves, must not some of the saved harpers sing to Divine Grace, but others of them vary the strain, at least at intervals, to the praise of him who by his own strength did snap the fetters of his sin and by his own watchfulness did preserve himself unto eternal life? It is blasphemy to think thus.

Oh, no, my Brethren, it is because they had no power on earth but that in which God gave to them that they have no song in Heaven except the song which exalts and praises God!

Other arguments, I suppose, are unnecessary, but yet let me mention one other. If it were so, that man had power in himself, what were the need of the Holy Spirits office at all? The office of the Holy Spirit becomes at once useless if man can do anything and everything. What need to quicken men by the Spirit, if they can take the first step towards quickening themselves? What need to strengthen us with might according to His Spirit in the inner man, if the inner man is already strong enough in its own natural power? What need that the Spirit should daily teach Gods people, if they can instruct themselves?

What need that I should pray, Hold you me up, if I can hold myself up? Prayers for spiritual aid are prayers for mercies that are unneeded if we have strength of our own. I do declare that if man has grace enough to keep himself one single hour from sin, it is not necessary for him to pray at least during that hour. Why should he want more strength than he needs? Should he have it to spend it upon his lusts? If it is possible for me to perform any one holy action apart from the Lord Jesus, then let me at least perform that one action independently of Him. Let me for that time dispense with the Holy Spirit.

But you revolt from such an idea. I say your blood would curdle if I should continue to talk thus. No, you say, day by day we have need to pray. Hour by hour we have need to trust. My soul, wait you only upon God, for my expectation is from Him. I am compelled to feel each day I can no nothing without Himmy strength is wholly His. The very fact that the offices of the Holy Spirit are needed, by our experience, proves that we can do nothing without Him.

3. Now let us discuss this doctrine. We see here a reason for the deepest humility. Are you proud, Believer, because you have done some little service to the Church and to your times? Who makes you to differ and what have you which you have not received? Have you shed a little light upon the darkness? Ah, who lit your candle? And who is it that keeps you still shining and prevents you from being extinguished? Have you overcome temptation? Hang not up your bannerdo not decorate your own bosom with the glory, for who made you strong in the battle?

Who made your sword sharp and enabled you to strike home? Remember, you have done nothing whatever of yourself. If you are this day a vessel unto honor, decorated and gildedif now you are a precious vase, filled with the sweetest perfumeremember you did not make yourself so. You are the clay and He is the potter. You may be a vessel unto honor, yet not a vessel unto your own honoryou are a vessel unto the honor of Him that made you. If you stand among your fellow men as the angels stand among the fallen spiritsa chosen one, distinguished from themremember, it was not any goodness in yourself that made you to be chosen, nor has it been any of your own efforts, or your own power, which has lifted you out of the miry clay and set your feet on the Rock and established your goings.

Off with the crown from your proud head and lay down your honors at the feet of Him who gave them to you! Come with cherubim and seraphim and veil your face and cry, Not unto us, not unto us, but unto His name be all the glory forever and ever. And when you are thus bowed down with humility, be prepared to learn another lesson, namelynever to depend on yourself again. If you have anything to do, go not forth to do it leaning on an arm of flesh. First bow your knee and ask power of Him who makes you strong, and then you shall come back from your labor rejoicing. But if you go in your own strength, you shall break your plowshare on the rock. You shall sow your seed by the side of the salt sea, upon the barren sand, and you shall look upon the naked acres in years to comethey shall not yield you so much as a single blade to make your heart glad.

Trust in the Lord forever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. But that strength is not available to you so long as you repose in any strength of your own. He will help you if you are but as a worm, but if you are strong in yourself, He will take away His own power from you and cause you to stumble and fall. And happy shall it be if you stumble not to be broken into pieces. Learn, then, the Divine Grace of depending daily upon God and do this constantly with proper humility.

Ah, my Brothers and Sisters, I would speak very earnestly here before I turn from this point, for this is a common vice with us allto wish to grow independent. We get a little stock of grace on hand and we think we will spend our pocket money before we will go again to our Fathers treasury. We have a little faith, our Master honors us with enjoyment of His presence and we grow so great that we cry, My mountain stands firmI shall never be moved. Ah, there is always a trial near at hand. Do we not make most of our trials through our boasting and do we not kindle our own furnace with the fuel of our pride?

If we were more childlike, resting more simply on the Spirits power, should we not be more happy? Does not God our Father hide His face, because to see His face too much might make us exalted above measure? Does not that thorn tear our flesh because otherwise we should lie upon the bed of carnal security and sleep all day long? Oh, we might always be on the mountaintop if we had not such dizzy heads and such slippery feet. We might always have our mouths full of sweetness if it were not that we are so weak that we cannot bear these sweet things always. We must

have a draught of wormwood that we may be brought back again by a bitter tonic into a healthy state of soul. I pray you seek to lie flat on the ground before our God, for every inch we rise higher than that, is an inch too high. Not an inch heavenward, but an inch Hell-ward. Every grain of self-strength we gain is a grain of weakness and every particle of selfreliance is but a new particle of poison infused into our veins. From all reliance upon self and all carnal security, good Lord deliver us!

II. I now turn to the second part of the discourse, upon which I shall dwell briefly but earnestly. Without Me you can do nothing. If this is true of the saint, we affirm that it is equally, if not even more forcibly true of THE SINNER.

Instead of making a distinction here, as I have done under the first head, let me at once speak to the conscience. Sinner, the child of God who has been quickened and renewed, feels that without Christ he can do nothing. How much more must this be true of you, for you are absolutely dead in trespasses and sins. When the branch is in the vine and has been grafted into the good olive, it can then bring forth no good fruit without the stem. How much less, then, can you hope to do anything, for you are not even grafted in. You belong to the wild olivehow can you bring forth fruit? If when the Christians face has been made white he cannot keep it so, how much more shall the Ethiopiansuch as you arechange his skin, or the leopard his spots?

If when healed of his leprosy the Believer feels that the leprosy would break out daily were it not for the constant miraculous power of the Good Physician, how much less can you, all over defiled with the leprosy of sin, make yourself clean? Sinner, it is true of you that unless visited by the Holy Spirit, unless united to Christ, you can do nothing. We do not assert that you are physically incapableyou can perform natural acts. You can go to the House of God. You can read Gods Word. You can do a thousand things, which only need your arms and legs and eyes.

Nor are you even mentally incapable. You can discern between good and evil. You can judge of truth and error and in choosing the false and rejecting the true you are verily guilty. We speak now of your actions spiritually, not morally. Of all spiritual acts you are as totally incapable as the dead in the graveyards, or as the dried bones after they have passed through the fire. There remains in you no spiritual life, no spiritual power with which to help yourself. You are utterly ruined, entirely undone.

And in yourself you are beyond the reach of all hope and of all human help. Yet remember, I pray you, that this incapacity of yours is a sinful one. It is not one which is your misfortune, but your sin. You are incapable of righteousness, but you are capable enough of iniquity and your very incapacity is in itself a deadly and a damning sin. Againyour incapacity does not deliver you from your duty. Though you can do nothing, it is equally your duty to do everything which God commands.

Though you can not pay the debt, for you are utterly bankrupt, it is still your duty to pay it. God has not remitted His Law because you have lost power to obey. No, even the Gospel itself does not take back one of its precepts because you can not fulfill them in and of yourself. Still does God demand of you that you should, love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your strength. though you can no more do this than you can fly. Still does He demand of you that you turn from sin and that you believe in the Lord Jesus with all your heart, though you can no more accomplish this than a stone can transform itself into an angel, or silent rocks chant forth the hallelujahs of eternity.

Thus, you see, Sinner, in what a state you are. You have a Lord to demand of you, but you have nothing wherewith to pay. You have the same claims upon you as Adam had in the garden, but you have lost all capacity to fulfill the demand. Oh, Sinner! What a lost thing you are! What a lost thing you are!

But I hear someone say, Preaching like this will paralyze mens exertions and make them say, I can do nothing. Ah, my Friends, it is just this which we wish to make them say. We wish to paralyze their exertions. We wish to strike them with a sense of their inability. Do not think I would deny or shrink from the consequences of this Truth of God upon the sinners conscience. It is just this I wish to bring him to. The Arminian seeks to bring men to activity. I seek to bring him to no such thing at first, but to a sense of his inability. For when the sinner has come to know his inability, then God the Spirit works in him and then shall the activity begin! But activity apart from a sense of inability is but putting the sinner on a path which seems to lead to Heaven, but which will really lead to Hell.

I care not, though it should be said thousands have been converted by a preaching contrary to this. The conversion of most of these has been a fallacy. I have been lately in a district where a most excellent Brother in Christ had worked a very great revival. It was said that nearly every person in the town had been converted and the town is as drunken, as profane, as blasphemous this day, as it was before. I am persuaded that much of the excitement and fanatical ravings which have disgraced the true revival movement, are no more the work of God, but the work of Satan, himself.

I would discern between the precious and the vile. God has made bare His armmultitudes have been converted during the last few years by true revival work. But that excitement which has attended some of these revivals is nothing more than the excitement of the passions of men making men weep about their parents, but not about their sinsmaking them cry about their children, but not about their soulsmaking them tremble for the moment, but not reaching their inmost heart. We shall need to have the Master come again, with a fan in His hand, thoroughly to purge His floor. I may state an unpalatable Truth of God, but the floor is getting heaped with chaff now and preachers are receiving into Churches men that will need to be cast out again.

They may be received with sound of trumpet, but they will have to be thrust out the back door with the noise of weeping because they were not savingly converted to God. I feel in my own conscience that I were not clear of mans blood unless I did declare that any conversion which does not bear in it a consciousness of mans total loss and ruinany conversion which does not teach man the fact that he can do nothing, is

a conversion from which he needs be converted and a repentance which needs to be repented of.

Still, I hear another say, It must be an ill thing to bring men to feel that they can do nothing. It is no ill thing, I would to God that every sinner felt it in his own soul. But, says one, I knew a man who used to say he could do nothing, therefore, he would not try. My Friend, what that man said is one thing. What he felt was another. I venture to affirm that that man did not believe what he said, or he would not have added the last sentence. He thought in his own heart that he could believe and could repent and could be saved when he liked.

He still treasured up in his soul the fallacy that one of these fine days, when he had a more convenient season, he would come to Christ. That was his inmost thought. What he said was but a mere presence to screen his conscience from your rebuke. Why, men and women, if you could be made to feel that you were so lost, so ruined, that you could do nothing, it would fill you with trembling and with self-despair and then you would cry out in the midst of your horror, Lord save me, or I perish. God be merciful to me, a sinner.

I say again, it is because you do not feel it, but only say you do and you therefore make your saying it an excuse for a want of feeling it. I pray God the Spirit strike you now with a sense of powerlessness, that at once you may fall flat on your face and feel in your inmost heart that your salvation lies in Christs hands and not in your own. And that if you are saved, it must be the work of Divine Grace in you and of Divine Grace for you. It cannot be your own work since you have no power to do it, in and of yourself.

If I could only bring you there! Oh, my God, bring the sinner there! I pray You bring him there! If you are come there already, poor Sinner, God has begun a good work in you. I tell you, if you are come to know this Truth of God really in your very heart, God the Spirit has begun to save you and by the work of His own hands He will never leave. Do not misunderstand me. If you merely say, I can do nothing(any man can say that)that is not the Spirits work. But if you feel you can do nothing, then that is the Spirits work. Is not this doctrine very unpalatable? There are many of my hearers who do not like it now. Perhaps they will go away and say, This is a hard sayingwho can bear it? I do not expect the natural man to receive a spiritual Truth of God.

If you have received it, I thank God for it. He that strips you will clothe you. He that has killed you this morning will quicken you. He that has made you feel that you can do nothing will give you strength to do all things. If you could see the bottom of your own treasury, that there is not a farthing left in itif you could feel your own emptinessI am sure you would soon see Christs fullness and would discover that He is able to save unto the uttermost them that come unto God by Him. Remember, though we can do nothing, He can do all thingsthough we can neither begin nor endHe is Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the Author and the Finisher of our faith.

III. I now close with the third head, Without Me you can do nothing. This is true of THE SAINT ON THE SINNERS ACCOUNT.  
Brethren, I sometimes hear of men called Revivalists and I suppose it is imagined that there is some power in them or about them to create a revival. I should be sorry to wear the title lest I should be thought to arrogate any power to myself. I know, too, that people sometimes plan to have a revival at a certain time. As if the Spirit of God were at their disposal, as if they could make the wind, which blows where it pleases and when it pleases, come at their beck and at their command.   
I think all that is beginning at the wrong end. Instead, we ought to hold meetings for prayer, to confess our inability. If we began by feeling we could not do anything, we should do everything. But when we begin by thinking we can do everything, we shall end in doing nothing. The Church of today needs more and more to have this fact driven right into her heart. Church of God, you are powerless. You have no strength, no might to convert a single soul apart from the Spirit of God. Have any of you proved this to be true in your own experience?   
Perhaps I look upon a father who has many children. He says, There is one of my sons who completely confounds me. I have prayed for him, I have talked with him. I have sought to instruct him. But I can only go up to my chamber and on my knees feel that unless God will save him, that boy will never be saved. It is a good thing that you should feel this, for now you will go to work in the right way, using not your own tools, nor your own power, but the strength of God. And I, too, may come up into the pulpit feeling I may preachyes, with the tongues of men and of angels I may preach. And not I, alone, but all my Brethren in the ministrywe may all of us preach vehemently, earnestlybut there will be no power whatever in our preaching for the winning of a single soul, apart from that Spirit of God who goes forth with the Word.   
We want ministers always to feel that it is not the mere adaptation of the sermon to the salvation of souls, but the application of that sermon to the soul. It is not the mere fact that we are earnest but the energy of the Spirit going with our earnestness, to quicken the heart and arouse the conscience. Sunday-School teachers, you must pray to understand this. It will not unnerve you, it will not paralyze youit will make you strongfor when we are weak then we are strong. You want to feel that you could no more convert a child in your class than create a worldthat you could no more change a heart than make an ocean blazeor compel the solid granite to mount in watery fountains to the sky.   
You know that this is in Gods hand, not in yours. Yours it is to use the means, but Gods to work the result. Go, then, each of you, beloved of your God, to your separate works, casting aside all your own trust and depending simply, wholly and entirely upon God. I do believe there would be much more good done in the world if some of those who try to do good, looked less to their own carnal power to do it. I mean by this, if they had less apparent power they would have more strength.   
There is a story told by Toplady of a Doctor Guyse, a very learned man. He was in the habit of preparing his sermons very carefully, and he used to read them very accurately. He did so for years, but there was never known to be a sinner saved under himnever such a wonder! The poor good manfor he was an earnest man and wished to do goodwas one day at prayer in the pulpit, praying to God that he would make him a useful minister. When he had finished his prayer he was stone blind. He had sufficient self-possession to preach the sermon extemporaneously, which he had prepared with notes. People did not notice his blindness, but they never heard the doctor preach such a sermon as that before!   
There was deep attention, there were souls saved. He found his way from the pulpit and began to express his deep sorrow that he had lost his eyesight, when some good old woman who was present, said, perhaps a little unkindly, but still very truthfullyDoctor, we have never heard you preach like this before and if that is the result of your being blind, it is a pity you were not blind twenty years ago, for you have done more good today than you have done in twenty years.   
So I do not know whether it would not be a good thing if some of our fine sermon readers were struck blindif they were compelled to be less elaborate in the preparation of their sermons. Then they might loose some half-dozen hard words, which they always write down as soon as they meet with them and use them as stones in the middle of the sermon. And then, perhaps, when they came up into the pulpit, though condemned by critics as speaking vulgar language, they might talk of commonplace things such as poor people could appreciate.   
If they would only do this, God being with them, the absence of their mental power would be the means of more spiritual power and they would have reason to thank Godthat the man had become lessand that God did shine out with greater resplendence. For what are many learned men, after all, but stained glass windows to keep out the light?   
Oh that we had more men who were as the plain glass of the poor mans cottage, to let the light of God shine through them! Let the Church feel that her power is not mental power, but spiritual power. Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the Lord. She might then use all her learning, all her education and all her eloquence. She would use them well, too, if she did but feel that these were but her weapons in the hand of God for the pulling down of strongholds.   
May God add His blessing for Jesus Christs sake.

Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #2002 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE SECRET OF POWER IN PRAYER   
NO. 2002

**DELIVERED ON LORDS DAY MORNING, JANUARY 8, 1888, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**If you abide in Me and My Words abide in you, you shall ask what you will and it shall be done unto you.   
John 15:7.**

THE gifts of Divine Grace are not enjoyed all at once by Believers. Coming unto Christ, we are saved by a true union with Him. But it is by abiding in that union that we further receive the purity, the joy, the power, the blessedness which are stored up in Him for His people. See how our Lord states this when He speaks to the believing Jews in the eighth chapter of this Gospel, at the thirty-first and thirty-second verses Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on Him, If you continue in My word, then are you My disciples, indeed. And you shall know the Truth and the Truth shall make you free. We do not know all the Truth of God at oncewe learn it by abiding in Jesus.

Perseverance in Divine Grace is an educational process by which we learn the Truth of God fully. The emancipating power of that Truth is also gradually perceived and enjoyed. The Truth shall make you free. One bond after another snaps and we are free, indeed. You that are young beginners in the Divine life may be cheered to know that there is something better, still, for youyou have not yet received the full recompense of your faith. As our hymn puts itIt is better than before. You shall have happier views of heavenly things as you climb the hill of spiritual experience. As you abide in Christ you shall have firmer confidence, richer joy, greater stability, more communion with Jesus and greater delight in the Lord your God.

Infancy is beset with many evils from which manhood is exemptit is the same in the spiritual as in the natural world. There are these degrees of attainment among Believers and the Savior here incites us to reach a high position by mentioning a certain privilege which is not for all who say that they are in Christ but for those only who are abiders in Him. Every Believer should be an abider but many have hardly earned the name as yet. Jesus says, If you abide in Me and My Words abide in you, you shall ask what you will and it shall be done unto you. You have to live with Christ to know Him and the longer you live with Him the more will you admire and adore Himyes, and the more you will receive from Him, even grace for grace.

Truly He is a blessed Christ to one who is but a month old in Divine Grace. But these babes can hardly tell what a precious Jesus He is to those whose acquaintance with Him covers well-near half a century! Jesus, in the esteem of abiding Believers, grows sweeter and dearer, fairer

and more lovely each day. Not that He improves in Himself, for He is perfect. But as we increase in our knowledge of Him, we appreciate more thoroughly His matchless excellences. How glowingly do His old acquaintances exclaim, Yes, He is altogether lovely! Oh, that we may continue to grow up in Him in all things who is our Head, that we thus may prize Him more and more!

I call your earnest attention to our text, begging you to consider with me three questions. First, what is this special blessing? You shall ask what you will and it shall be done unto you. Secondly, how is this special blessing obtained? If you abide in Me and My Words abide in you. Then, thirdly, why is it obtained in this way? There must be a reason for the conditions laid down as necessary to obtaining the promised power in prayer. Oh, that the anointing of the Holy Spirit which abides on us may now make this subject very profitable to us!

I. WHAT IS THIS SPECIAL BLESSING? Let us read the verse again. Jesus says, If you abide in Me and My Words abide in you, you shall ask what you will and it shall be done unto you.

Observe that our Lord had been warning us that, severed from Him we can do nothing, and therefore we might naturally have expected that He would now show us how we can do all spiritual acts. But the text does not run as we should have expected it to run. The Lord Jesus does not say, Without Me you can do nothing, but if you abide in Me and My Words abide in you, you shall do all spiritual and gracious things. He does not now speak of what they should, themselves, be enabled to do but of what should be done unto themit shall be done unto you.

He says not, Strength shall be given you sufficient for all those holy doings of which you are incapable apart from Me. That would have been true enough, and it is the Truth of God which we looked for here. But our most wise Lord improves upon all parallelisms of speech and improves upon all expectancies of heart and says something better, still. He does not say, If you abide in Me and My Words abide in you, you shall do spiritual things. But, you shall ask. By prayer you shall be enabled to do. But before all attempts to do, You shall ask. The choice privilege here given is a mighty prevailing prayerfulness. Power in prayer is very much the gauge of our spiritual condition. And when that is secured to us in a high degree, we are favored as to all other matters.

One of the first results, then, of our abiding union with Christ will be the certain exercise of prayerYou shall ask. If others neither seek, nor knock, nor ask, you, at any rate, shall do so. Those who keep away from Jesus do not pray. Those in whom communion with Christ is suspended feel as if they could not pray. But Jesus says, If you abide in Me and My Words abide in you, you shall ask. Prayer comes spontaneously from those who abide in Jesus, even as certain oriental trees, without pressure, shed their fragrant gums.

Prayer is the natural out-gushing of a soul in communion with Jesus. Just as the leaf and the fruit will come out of the vine without any conscious effort on the part of the branch but simply because of its living union with the stem, so prayer buds and blossoms and produces fruit out of souls abiding in Jesus. As stars shine, so do abiders pray. It is their use and their second nature. They do not say to themselves, Now it is the time for us to get to our task and pray. No, they pray as wise men eat, namely, when the desire for it is upon them. They do not cry out as under bondage, At this time I ought to be in prayer but I do not feel like it. What a weariness it is! No, they have a glad errand at the Mercy Seat and they are rejoiced to go upon it.

Hearts abiding in Christ send forth supplications as fires send out flames and sparks. Souls abiding in Jesus open the day with prayer. Prayer surrounds them as an atmosphere all day long. At night they fall asleep praying. I have known them even dream a prayer and, at any rate, they are able joyfully to say, When I awake, I am still with You. Habitual asking comes out of abiding in Christ. You will not need urging to prayer when you are abiding with JesusHe says, You shall ask. And depend upon it, you will!

You shall also feel most powerfully the necessity of prayer. Your great need of prayer will be vividly seen. Do I hear you sayWhat? When we abide in Christ and His Words abide in us, have we not already attained? Far are we, then, from being satisfied with ourselves. It is then that we feel more than ever that we must ask for more Divine Grace. He that knows Christ best knows his own necessities best. He that is most conscious of life in Christ is also most convinced of his own death apart from Christ. He who most clearly discerns the perfect character of Jesus will be most urgent in prayer for Divine Grace to grow like He. The more I seem to be in my Lord, the more I desire to obtain from Him since I know that all that is in Him is put there on purpose that I may receive it.

Of His fullness have all we received, and grace for grace. It is just in proportion as we are linked to Christs fullness that we feel the necessity of drawing from it by constant prayer. Nobody needs to prove to an abider in Christ the doctrine of prayer, for we enjoy the thing itself. Prayer is now as much a necessity of our spiritual life as breath is of our natural life we cannot live without asking favors of the Lord! If you abide in Me and My Words abide in you, you shall askand you shall not wish to cease from asking. He has said, Seek you My face, and your heart will answer, Your face, Lord, will I seek.

Note next, that the fruit of our abiding is not only the exercise of prayer and a sense of the necessity of prayer, but it includes liberty in prayer You shall ask what you will. Have you not been on your knees at times without power to pray? Have you not felt that you could not plead as you desired? You wanted to pray but the waters were frozen up and would not flow. You said mournfully, I am shut up and cannot come forth. The will was present but not the freedom to present that will in prayer. Do you, then, desire liberty in prayer so that you may speak with God as a man speaks with his friend? Here is the way to itIf you abide in Me and My Words abide in you, you shall ask what you will.   
I do not mean that you will gain liberty as to mere fluency of utterancefor that is a very inferior gift. Fluency is a questionable endowment, especially when it is not attended with weight of thought and depth of feeling. Some Brethren pray by the yard. But true prayer is measured by weight and not by length. A single groan before God may have more fullness of prayer in it than a fine oration of great length. He that dwells with God in Christ Jesushe is the man whose steps are enlarged in intercession. He comes boldly because he abides at the Throne. He sees the golden scepter stretched out and hears the King saying, Ask what you will and it shall be done unto you.

It is the man who abides in conscious union with his Lord who has freedom of access in prayer. Well may he come to Christ readily, for he is in Christ, and abides in Him. Attempt not to seize this holy liberty by excitement, or presumptionthere is but one way of really gaining it and here it isIf you abide in Me and My Words abide in you, you shall ask what you will. By this means alone shall you be enabled to open your mouth wide, that God may fill it. Thus shall you become Israels and as princes, have power with God.

This is not allthe favored man has the privilege of successful prayer. You shall ask what you will and it shall be done unto you. You may not do it, but it shall be done unto you. You long to bear fruitask and it shall be done unto you. Look at the vine branch. It simply remains in the vine and by remaining in the vine the fruit comes from it. It is done unto it. Brothers and Sisters in Christ, the purpose of your being, its one object and design, is to bring forth fruit to the glory of the Fatherto gain this end you must abide in Christ, as the branch abides in the vine. This is the method by which your prayer for fruitfulness will become successful. It shall be done unto you.

Concerning this matter, you shall ask what you will and it shall be done unto you. You shall have wonderful prevalence with God in prayer, insomuch that before you call He will answer and while you are yet speaking He will hear. The desire of the righteous shall be granted. To the same effect is the other textDelight yourself also in the Lord. And He shall give you the desires of your heart. There is a great breadth in this text, You shall ask what you will and it shall be done unto you. The Lord gives the abider carte blanche. He puts into his hand a signed check and permits him to fill it up as he wills.

Does the text mean what it says? I never knew my Lord to say anything He did not mean. I am sure that He may sometimes mean more than we understand Him to say, but He never means less. Mind you, He does not say to all men, I will give you whatever you ask. Oh no, that would be an unkind kindnessbut He speaks to His disciples and says, If you abide in Me and My Words abide in you, you shall ask what you will and it shall be done unto you. It is to a certain class of men who have already received great Grace at His handsit is to them He commits this marvelous power of prayer.

O my dear Friends, if I may covet earnestly one thing above every other, it is thisthat I may be able to ask what I will of the Lord and have it! The man who prevails in prayer is the man to preach successfully, for he may well prevail with man for God when he has already prevailed with God for men! This is the man to face the difficulties of business life. For what can baffle him when he can take all to God in prayer? One such man as this, or one such woman as this in a Church is worth ten thousand of us common people. In these we find the peerage of the skies. In these are the men in whom is fulfilled Gods purpose concerning man, whom He made to have dominion over all the works of His hands.

The stamp of sovereignty is on the brows of these menthey shape the history of nations, they guide the current events through their power on high. We see Jesus with all things put under Him by the Divine purpose and as we rise into that image. We also are clothed with dominion and are made kings and priests unto God. Behold Elijah, with the keys of the rain swinging at his girdlehe shuts or opens the windows of Heaven! There are such men still alive. Aspire to be such men and women, I beseech you, that to you the text may be fulfilled, You shall ask what you will and it shall be done unto you.

The text seems to imply that if we reach this point of privilege, this gift shall be a perpetuityYou shall ask, you shall always askyou shall never get beyond asking but you shall ask successfully. You shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you. Here we have the gift of

continual prayer. Not for the week of prayer, not during a months conference, nor upon a few special occasions shall you pray prevailingly. But you shall possess this power with God so long as you abide in Christ and His Words abide in you. God will put His Omnipotence at your disposalHe will put forth His Godhead to fulfill the desires which His own Spirit has worked in you.

I wish I could make this jewel glitter before the eyes of all the saints till they cried out, Oh that we had it! This power in prayer is like the sword of Goliathwisely may every David sayThere is none like it; give it to me. This weapon of all-prayer beats the enemy and at the same time enriches its possessor with all the wealth of God. How can he lack anything to whom the Lord has said, Ask what you will and it shall be done unto you? Oh, come, let us seek this promise. Listen and learn the way. Follow me, while by the light of the text I point out the path. May the Lord lead us in it by His Holy Spirit!

II. How is this privilege of mighty prayerfulness TO BE OBTAINED? The answer is, If you abide in Me and My Words abide in you. Here are the two feet by which we climb to power with God in prayer.

Beloved, the first line tells us that we are to abide in Christ Jesus our Lord. It is taken for granted that we are already in Him. May it be taken for granted in your case, dear Hearer? If so, you are to abide where you are. As Believers we are to remain tenaciously clinging to Jesus, lovingly knit to Jesus. We are to abide in Him by always trusting Him, and Him only, with the same simple faith which joined us to Him at the first. We must never admit any other thing or person into our hearts confidence

as our hope of salvation. We must rest alone in Jesus as we received Him at the first. His Godhead, His Manhood, His life, His death, His resurrection, His glory at the right hand of the Fatherin a word, Himselfmust be our hearts sole reliance. This is absolutely essential. A temporary faith will not savean abiding faith is necessary.

But abiding in the Lord Jesus does not only mean trusting in Him. It includes our yielding ourselves up to Him to receive His life and to let that life work out its results in us. We live in Him, by Him, for Him, to Him, when we abide in Him. We feel that all our separate life has gonefor you are dead and your life is hid with Christ. We are nothing if we get away from Jesuswe would then be branches withered and fit only to be cast into the fire. We have no reason for existence except that which we find in Christand what a marvelous reason that is! The vine needs the branch as truly as the branch needs the vine. No vine ever bore any fruit except upon its branches. Truly it bears all the branches and so bears all the fruit.

But yet it is by the branch that the vine displays its fruitfulness. Thus are abiding Believers necessary to the fulfillment of their Lords design. Wonderful thing to saythat the saints are necessary to their Savior! The Church is His bodythe fullness of Him that fills all in all. I want you to recognize this, that you may see your blessed responsibility, your practical obligation to bring forth fruit that the Lord Jesus may be glorified in you. Abide in Him. Never diminish your consecration to His honor and glory. Never dream of being your own master. Be not the servant of men but abide in Christ. Let Him be the Object, as well as the Source, of your existence.

Oh, if you get there and stop there in perpetual communion with your Lord, you will soon realize a joy, a delight, a power in prayer such as you never knew before! There are times when we are conscious that we are in Christ and we know our fellowship with Him. And oh, the joy and the peace which we drink from this cup! Let us abide there. Abide in Me, says Jesus. You are not to come and go but to abide. Let that blessed sinking of yourself into His life, the spending of all your powers for Jesus and the firm faith of your union with Him remain in you forever. Oh, that we might attain to this by the Holy Spirit!

As if to help us to understand this, our gracious Lord has given us a delightful parable. Let us look through this discourse of the vine and its branches. Jesus says, Every branch in Me that bears fruit, He purges it. Take care that you abide in Christ when you are being purged. Oh, says one, I thought I was a Christian. But, alas! I have more troubles than evermen ridicule me, the devil tempts me and my business affairs go wrong. Brother, if you are to have power in prayer you must take care that you abide in Christ when the sharp knife is cutting everything away. Endure trial and never dream of giving up your faith because of it. Say, Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.

Your Lord warned you when you first came into the vine that you would have to be purged and cut closely. And if you are now feeling the purging process you must not think that some strange thing has happened unto you. Rebel not because of anything you may have to suffer from the dear hand of your heavenly Fatherwho is the husbandman of the vineyard. No, but cling to Jesus all the more closely. Say, Cut, Lord, cut to the quick if You will! But I will cling to You. To whom should we go? You have the words of eternal life. Yes, cling to Jesus when the purging knife is in His hand and so shall you ask what you will and it shall be done unto you.

Take care, also, that when the purging operation has been carried out you still cleave to your Lord. Notice the third verseNow you are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in Me and I in you. Abide after cleansing where you were before cleansing. When you are sanctified, abide where you were when first justified. When you see the work of the Spirit increasing in you do not let the devil tempt. He will try to get you to boast that now you are somebody, you need not come to Jesus as a poor sinner and rest in His precious blood alone for salvation. Abide still in Jesus. As you kept to Him when the knife cut you, keep to Him now that the tender grapes begin to form.

Do not say to yourself, What a fruitful branch I am! How greatly I adorn the vine! Now I am full of vigor! You are nothing and nobody. Only as you abide in Christ are you one whit better than the waste wood which is burned in the fire. But do we not make progress? Yes, we grow, but we abidewe never go an inch furtherwe abide in Him. Or, if not, we are cast forth and are withered. Our whole hope lies in Jesus at our best times as well as at our worst. Jesus says, Now you are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in Me and I in you. Abide in Him as to all your fruitfulness. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, no more can you, except you abide in Me.

Here, then, I have something to do, cries one. Certainly you have, but not apart from Jesus. The branch has to bear fruit. But if the branch imagines that it is going to produce a cluster, or even a grape out of itself alone, it is utterly mistaken. The fruit of the branch must come forth of the stem. Your work for Christ must be Christs work in you or else it will be good for nothing. I pray you, see to this. Your Sunday school teaching, your preaching or whatever you do, must be done in Christ Jesus. Not by your natural talent can you win souls, nor by plans of your own inventing can you save men. Beware of homemade schemes. Do for Jesus what Jesus bids you do. Remember that our work for Christ, as we call it, must be Christs work first if it is to be accepted of Him. Abide in Him as to your fruit-bearing.

Yes, abide in Him as to your very life. Do not say, I have been a Christian man now 20 or 30 years, I can do without continued dependence upon Christ. No, you could not do without Him if you were as old as Methuselah! Your very being as a Christian depends upon your still clinging, still trusting, still depending on your Masterand this He must give you for it all comes from Him and Him alone. To sum it all up, if you want

that splendid power in prayer of which I spoke just now, you must remain in loving, living, lasting, conscious, practical, abiding union with the Lord Jesus Christ. And if you get to that by Divine Grace, then you shall ask what you will and it shall be done unto you.

But there is a second qualification mentioned in the text and you must not forget itand My Words abide in you. How important, then, are Christs Words! He said in the fourth verse, Abide in Me and I in you, and now as a parallel to this it is, If you abide in Me and My Words abide in you. What, then? Are Christs Words and Himself identical? Yes, practically so. Some talk about Christ being the Master, but as to doctrine they do not care what His Word declares. So long as their hearts are right towards His Person they claim liberty of thought. Yes, but this is a mere subterfuge.

We cannot separate Christ from the Word. For, in the first place, He is the Word. And, in the next place, how dare we call Him Master and Lord and do not the things which He says and reject the Truth of God which He teaches? We must obey His precepts or He will not accept us as disciples. Especially that precept of love which is the essence of all His Words. We must love God and our Brethrenyes, we must cherish love to all men and seek their good. Anger and malice must be far from us. We must walk even as He walked. If Christs Words abide not in you, both as to belief and practice, you are not in Christ. Christ and His Gospel and His commands are one.

If you will not have Christ and His Words, neither will He have you nor your words. And you shall ask in vainyou shall by-and-by give up askingyou shall become as a withered branch. Beloved, I am persuaded better things of you and things that accompany salvation, though I thus speak. Oh for Divine Grace to pass through these two-leaved gates, these two golden doors! If you abide in Me and My Words abide in you. Push through the two and enter into this large roomYou shall ask what you will and it shall be done unto you.

III. It is my last work to try to show WHY THIS PRIVILEGE SHOULD BE SO OBTAINED. This extraordinary power of prayerwhy is it given to those who abide in Christ? May what I have to say encourage you to make the glorious attempt to win this pearl of great price! Why is it, that by abiding in Christ and having His Words abide in us, we get to this liberty and prevalence in prayer?

I answer, first, because of the fullness of Christ. You may very well ask what you will when you abide in Christ, because whatever you may require is already lodged in Him. Good Bishop Hall worked out this thought in a famous passage. I will give you the substance of itDo you desire the Grace of the Spirit? Go to your Lords anointing. Do you seek holiness? Go to His example. Do you desire pardon of sin? Look to His blood. Do you need mortification of sin? Look to His Crucifixion. Do you need to be buried to the world? Go to His tomb. Do you want to feel the fullness of a heavenly life? Behold His Resurrection. Would you rise above the world? Mark His Ascension. Would you contemplate heavenly things? Remember His sitting at the right hand of God and know that He has raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places.

I see clearly enough why the branch gets all it wants while it abides in the stem, since all it wants is already in the stem and is placed there for the sake of the branch. What does the branch want more than the stem can give it? If it did want more it could not get it. For it has no other means of living but by sucking its life out of the stem. O my precious Lord, if I want anything which is not in You, I desire always to be without it. I desire to be denied a wish which wanders outside of Yourself. But if the supply of my desire is already in You for me, why should I go elsewhere? You are my Allwhere else should I look? Beloved, it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell, and the good pleasure of the Father is our good pleasure, alsowe are glad to draw everything from Jesus. We feel sure that, ask what we will, we shall have it, since He has it ready for us.

The next reason for this is the richness of the Word of God. Catch this thought, If My Words abide in you, you shall ask what you will and it shall be done unto you. The best praying man is the man who is most believingly familiar with the promises of God. After all, prayer is nothing but taking Gods promises to Him and saying to Him, Do as You have said. Prayer is the promise utilized. A prayer which is not based on a promise has no true foundation. If I go to the bank without a check I need not expect to get money. It is the order to pay which is my power inside the bank and my warrant for expecting to receive.

You that have Christs Words abiding in you are equipped with those things which the Lord regards with attention. If the Word of God abides in you, you are the man that can pray because you meet the great God with His own Words and thus overcome omnipotence with omnipotence. You put your finger down upon the very lines and say, Do as You have said. This is the best praying in all the world! O Beloved, be filled with Gods Word. Study what Jesus has said, what the Holy Spirit has left on record in this divinely-inspired Book and in proportion as you feed on the Word and are filled with the Word and retain the Word in your faith and obey the Word in your lifein that proportion you will be a master in the art of prayer!

You will acquire skill as a wrestler with the Covenant angel in proportion as you can plead the promises of your faithful God. Be well instructed in the doctrines of Divine Grace and let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, that you may know how to prevail at the Throne of Grace. Abiding in Christ, and His Words abiding in you are like the right hand and the left hand of Moses, which were held up in prayer, so that Amalek was smitten, Israel was delivered and God was glorified!

Let us go a little furtheryou still may say you do not quite see why a man who abides in Christ and in whom Christs Words abide, should be allowed to ask whatever he wills and it shall be done unto him. I answer you againit is so because in such a man as that there is a predominance of Divine Grace which causes him to have a renewed will which is

according to the will of God. Suppose a man of God is in prayer and he thinks that such-and-such a thing is desirable, yet he remembers that he is nothing but a babe in the presence of his all-wise Father and so he bows his will and asks as a favor to be taught what to will.

Though God bids him ask what he wills, he shrinks and cries, My Lord, here is a request which I am not quite clear about. As far as I can judge, it is a desirable thing and I will it. But, Lord, I am not fit to judge for myself and therefore I pray You, give not as I will, but as You will. Do you not see that when we are in such a condition as this, our real will is Gods will? Deep down in our hearts we will only that which the Lord Himself wills. And what is this but to ask what we will and it is done to us? It becomes safe for God to say to the sanctified soul, Ask what you will and it shall be done unto you. The heavenly instincts of that man lead him right. The Divine Grace that is within his soul thrusts down all covetous lusting and foul desires and his will is the actual shadow of Gods will.

The spiritual life is master in him and so his aspirations are holy, heavenly, God-like. He has been made a partaker of the Divine Natureand as a son is like his father, so now in desire and will he is one with his God. As the echo answers to the voice, so does the renewed heart echo the mind of the Lord. Our desires are reflected beams of the Divine willyou shall ask what you will and it shall be even so.

You clearly see that the holy God cannot pick up a common man in the street and say to him, I will give you whatever you will. What would he ask for? He would ask for a good drink, or permission to enjoy himself in evil lust. It would be very unsafe to trust the most of men with this permit. But when the Lord has taken a man and has made him newhas quickened him into newness of life and has formed him in the image of His dear Sonthen He can trust him! Behold, the great Father treats us in our measure as He treats His First-Born. Jesus could say, I know that You hear Me always, and the Lord is educating us to the same assurance.

We can say with one of old, My God will hear me. Do not your mouths water for this privilege of prevailing prayer? Do not your hearts long to get at this? It is by the way of holiness. It is by the way of union to Christ. It is by the way of a permanent abiding in Him and an obedient holding fast of His Truths that you are to come to this privilege! Behold, the only safe and true waywhen once that way is really trodit is a most sure and effectual way of gaining substantial power in prayer.

I have not quite done. A man will succeed in prayer when his faith is strong. And this is the case with those who abide in Jesus. It is faith that prevails in prayer. The real eloquence of prayer is a believing desire. All things are possible to him that believes. A man abiding in Christ, with Christs Words abiding in him, is eminently a Believer and consequently eminently successful in prayer. He has strong faith, indeed, for his faith has brought him into vital contact with Christ and he is, therefore, at the source of every blessing and may drink to his full at the well itself.

Such a man, once more, will also possess the indwelling of the Spirit of God. If we abide in Christ and His Words abide in us, then the Holy Spirit has come and taken up His residence in us. And what better help in prayer can we have? Is it not a wonderful thing that the Holy Spirit, Himself, makes intercession in the saints according to the will of God? He makes intercession for us with groans that cannot be uttered. What man knows the mind of a man save the spirit of a man? The Spirit of God knows the mind of God and He works in us to will what God wills, so that a believing mans prayer is Gods purpose reflected in the soul as in a mirror.

The eternal decrees of God project their shadows over the hearts of godly men in the form of prayer. What God intends to do He tells unto His servants by inclining them to ask Him to do what He Himself is resolved to do. God says, I will do this and that. But then He adds, For this will I be enquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them. How clear it is that if we abide in Christ and His Words abide in us we may ask what we will! For we shall only ask what the Spirit of God moves us to ask. And it were impossible that God the Holy Spirit and God the Father should be at cross-purposes with one another. What the one prompts us to ask, the other has assuredly determined to bestow.

I struck out a line just now to which I must return for a single moment. Beloved, do you not know that when we abide in Christ and His Words abide in us, the Father looks upon us with the same eye with which He looks upon His dear Son? Christ is the vine and the vine includes the branches. The branches are a part of the vine. God, therefore, looks upon us as part of Christmembers of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. Such is the Fathers love to Jesus that He denies Him nothing. He was obedient to death, even the death of the Cross. Therefore does His Father love Him as the God-Man Mediator and He will grant Him all His petitions. And is it so that when you and I are in real union to Christ, the Lord God looks upon us in the same way as He looks on Jesus and says to us, I will deny you nothing. You shall ask what you will and it shall be done unto you? So do I understand the text.

I call your attention to the fact that in that 15th chapter, the ninth verse, which I did not read this morning, runs thusAs the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you. The same love which God gives to His Son, the Son gives to us! And therefore we are dwellers in the love of the Father

and of the Son. How can our prayers be rejected? Will not infinite love have respect unto our petitions? O dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, if your prayers speed not to the Throne, suspect that there is some sin that hinders themyour Fathers love sees a necessity for chastening you this way.

If you do not abide in Christ, how can you hope to pray successfully? If you pick and choose His Words and doubt this and doubt that, how can you hope to speed to the Throne? If you are willfully disobedient to any of

His Words, will not this account for failure in prayer? But abide in Christ and take fast hold upon His Words and be altogether His disciplethen shall you be heard of Him. Sitting at Jesus feet, hearing His Words, you may lift up your eyes to His dear face and say, My Lord, hear me now. And He will answer you graciouslyHe will say unto you, I have heard you in a time accepted and in the day of salvation have I succored you. Ask what you will and it shall be done unto you. Oh for power at the Mercy Seat!

Beloved Friends, do not hear this sermon and then go away and forget it. Try to reach this place of boundless influence. What a Church we could be if you were all mighty in prayer! Dear children of God, do you want to be half starved? Beloved Brethren, do you desire to be poor, little, puny, driveling children who will never grow into men? I pray you, aspire to be strong in the Lord and to enjoy this exceedingly high privilege. What an army would you be if you all had this power with God in prayer! It is within your reach, you children of God! Only abide in Christ and let His Words abide in you and then this special privilege will be yours! These are not irksome duties but they are in themselves a joy. Go in for them with your whole heart and then you shall get this added to youthat you shall ask what you will and it shall be done unto you.

Unhappily, to a portion of this congregation my text says nothing at all. For some of you are not even in Christ, and therefore you cannot abide in Him. O Sirs, what shall I say to you? You seem to me to miss a very Heaven even now! If there were no Hell hereafter, it is Hell enough not to know Christ nownot to know what it is to prevail with God in prayer not to know the choice privilege of abiding in Him and His Words abiding in you. Your first matter is that you believe in Jesus Christ to the saving of your souls, yielding your souls to His cleansing, your lives to His government. God has sent Him forth as a Savior, accept Him. Receive Him as your Teacher. Yield yourself up to Him as your Master. May His gracious Spirit come and do this work upon you now. And then, after this, but not before, you may aspire to this honor.

First of allYou must be born again. I cannot say to you as you are now, Grow, because you will only grow a bigger sinner. However much you may be developed, you will only develop what is in youand that is the heir of wrath will become more and more the child of evil. You must be made anew in Christthere must be an absolute change, a reversal of all the currents of nature, a making of you a new creature in Christ Jesus. And then you may aspire to abide in Christ and let His Words abide in you and the consequent prevalence with God in prayer shall be yours.

Gracious Lord, help us this morning. Poor creatures as we are, we can only lie at Your feet. Come Yourself and uplift us to Yourself for Your mercys sake! Amen.

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LOVE AT ITS UTMOST   
NO. 1982

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, SEPTEMBER 11, 1887, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you: continue you in My love. John 15:9.**

IN the love of Christ we find our best joy. The pastures of the Great Shepherd are wide, but the sweetest grasses grow close to His pierced feet. The love of Jesus is the center of salvationit is as the sun in the midst of the heavens of Grace. I trust that while I lead your meditations this morning towards this golden theme, you will be able to enter in spirit into the heart and soul of it. Paul said, when he spoke of marriage, Behold, I show you a mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the Church. There is always much that is mysterious, here, but it is always the mystery of love. You believe in this love; you know it; you have tasted it and, therefore, I speak to an audience who will appreciate the subject, however faulty may be my handling of it.

Oh, for a higher experience! May the Lord at this hour conduct us into His banqueting house and rejoice us with His love, which is better than wine! Many of us will bring to the feast a keen appetitethat is all we can contributeand even that is a gift of love! Oh, that we may have a quick eye to see the beauties of the Lord and a discerning heart to perceive how His love to us enhances all His charms!

The love of Christ to His people is the sweetest, fullest and most profitable theme that a preacher can bring before his people. And it is always a suitable and seasonable subject, whatever the condition of the congregation may be. But we greatly need the aid of the Holy Spirit to prepare our minds for the enjoyment of this Truth of God. It is one thing to hear the outward sound of loveit is another thing to feel an inward sense of it. It is pleasant to hear the rippling of the brook, but if you are dying of thirst, that silver music will not refresh you if you are unable to drink of the stream! Come, Holy Spirit, come! We beseech You, take of the things of Christ and glorify Him by revealing them to our inmost souls!

I. We will plunge into the subject at once. Here is our first exhortationLET US UNQUESTIONINGLY BELIEVE THAT JESUS LOVES US. That is to say, if we are, indeed, in Him, He loves us infinitely. Our Lord is speaking here, not of His general love of benevolence, but of that peculiar and special affection which He bears to His own, of whom He says, I have chosen you out of the world. If we are in Him, as the branches are in the vine, and if we prove the reality of that union by bringing forth the fruits of Grace to His Glory, then we are the objects of the Saviors peculiar love. He speaks to us as a Church and to each one personally, and says, As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you. O my Hearer, does He speak thus to you? Have you taken hold of Christ by faith? Has He saved you? Is your life derived from Him? Is He your hope, your joy, your all? If this is so, then doubt not that He speaks to you with His own lips as well as out of this Book of record. As truly as if He stood at your side and grasped your hand and spoke with His eyes looking into your eyes with tenderness of love, He says to you, As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you: continue you in My love.

That He truly loves us, we may confidently believe, for He, Himself, is at pains to assure us of it in so many words. He does not leave it to an inference, although the inference might be safely drawn from the 10,000 lovedeeds of His life and death. But He deliberately declares His loveAs the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you. Do you doubt His words? words spoken in the solemn night of His agony and registered in the volume of Inspiration? Does not your heart respond to Him as He says, I have loved you? Do you not answer, Yes, Lord, it is true, indeed! There is little need for You to tell me this with Your lips, for You have assured me of it by Your wounds. I know that You love me. Oh, that I loved You better in return!

As if to confirm us in our belief beyond all wavering and to lead out our hearts to behold the largeness of His affection, He quotes a parallel to His love of the most extraordinary kind. He looks not to the loves of earth, but to the greatest love of Heaven, and says, As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you. Beloved, you do not, dare not, could not, doubt the love of the Father to His Son! It is one of those unquestionable Truths about which you never dreamed of holding an argument. Our Lord would have us place His love to us in the same category with the Fathers love to Himself! We are to be as confident of the one as of the other. What a wonderful certainty is conveyed to us by this token! The Father regards with boundless love, the Son, with whom He is in essential union, since they are one Godand as surely as this is the caseso surely does Jesus love the people whom He has taken into marriage union with Himself forever. Doubt not! It would be a sort of blasphemy to doubt after such a pledge as this! Think of it and let your assurance become doubly sure!

Behold the course and proof of our Redeemers love! He chose us in love. The reason of His choice was love. Remember how He puts it in the seventh chapter of Deuteronomy? God there speaks of His choice of IsraelYou are an holy people unto the Lord your God: the Lord your God has chosen you to be a special people unto Himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set His love upon you, nor choose you because you were more in number than any people; for you were the fewest of all people: but because the Lord loved you. He loved you because He loved you! Election is based upon affection and that affection is its own fountain. The whole system of Divine Love springs from the love of God and from nothing else. Jesus loves us because He is Love!

If I must add anything to that statement, it will suffice me to quote the Well-Beloveds own Words when He thanked the Father that He had hid these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes. He said, Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in Your sight. O Believer, Jesus loved you before the world began and all because He would love you! He loved you in order that He might manifest His love to you. He loved you in order that you might be conformed unto His image, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren and that thus we might share His Nature and His Character and His Fathers love, and so draw nearer and nearer to Him in ever-growing fellowship of affection! See the love which is its own cause, spending itself and, by its own efficacy, working out its gracious purposeseveryone of which is as full of love as the love which designed it!

Having thus chosen us for love, so great was the love of our Lord that He became Man for love of us. He counted it not robbery to be equal with God, but became Man that He might carry out His purposes of love to us. It is written, For this cause shall a man leave his father and shall cleave to his wife, and the two shall be one flesh. And this has its highest exemplification in Christ, who left His Father that He might become one flesh with His Church. He took our nature so that He might be able to do for us and suffer for us what, otherwise, He could not have done and suffered. By thus talking upon Himself our nature, He established a nearer union and a sweeter fellowship with His beloved Church than could otherwise have existed. If He had never become the Babe of Bethlehem and the Man of Nazareth, how could He have been made in all points like unto His brethren? Think what that love must have been which brought the Lord of Glory from the highest Heaven to become the Man of Sorrows for our sakes!

Having become a Man for us, we remember that Jesus died because of love. Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. That laying down of life in our Lords case was specially a proof of love, for He died voluntarilythere was no necessity upon Him, as upon us, to die. Other men, if they died for us, would but pay the debt of nature a little before its time, but Jesus died who needed not to die, so far as He, Himself, was concerned. He died, also, amid circumstances of pain, shame and desertion which made that death peculiarly bitter. The death of the Cross is to us the highest proof of our Saviors infinite love to us. He must die the death of a felon, between two thieves, utterly friendless, the object of general ridiculeand this He must do as bearing our sins in His own body. All this makes us say, Behold how He loved us! O Beloved! Can we doubt Christs love, since He laid down His life, the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God?

It was because of this love, remember, dear child of God, that the Lord made you live. I cannot quote at full length that memorable passage in the 16th Chapter of Ezekiel, but there you have our condition represented as that of a deserted infant cast out to die, unwashed, unswaddled, bleeding itself to death in filth and misery. And it is written that when the Lord passed by, He said unto that infant, Live. Even thus did He speak to usand we lived and rose out of our misery. He declares that the time when He thus passed by was a time of love. Shall I not touch your hearts when I remind you of the Lords time of love to you? Remember your cast-out condition, your helpless distress, your hopeless ruin. You lay between the very jaws of death and no eye pitied youyou did not even pity yourself! Jesus looked on you long before you looked to Him! He spoke to you before you spoke to Him. He said, Live! and you lived, but before that you were dead in trespasses and sins! Then He washed, clothed, beautified and adopted you. He made a wretched foundling to be joint-heir with Himself. O love! Matchless love! We owe our spiritual life to love and, therefore, as long as we live we will praise the Lover of our souls!

Inasmuch as we are, by nature, at a distance from God, we needed to be brought near. We have been brought near to Him by love. Jeremiah has a famous passageThe Lord has appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved you with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn you. Do you remember when the bands of a man were fastened around you and you felt the cords of love drawing more and more forcibly? You could not tell why you were so singularly inclined to better things, but it was so. In yourself you were, at first, lifeless as a log! But soon you began to feel a yielding, yes, and an inclinationand at last that stubborn will relentedand new desires took the place of former aversions. Then you ran in the way in which you were drawnyour will had at last been made truly free, so that you delighted in the will of God! Love did all this. Love was more than conqueror, for it did not vanquish the enemy by force, but turned him into a grateful friend. By the recollection of those drawings which have not ceased, even now, let us believe in the love of Jesus! Do you not feel Him drawing you even as you sit in this House of Prayer? Then under a present sense of His love, cry out The love of Christ constrains us. I charge you, have no doubt about the love of your Divine Lord which even now is working within you.

Time would fail me if I were to go into all the fruits of the love of Christ to you. For love He has forgiven you! Have you ever forgotten the blotting out of your iniquities by that hand of love? For love He has fed you day by day with the best of spiritual meat. You are complete in Him. All your needs His love has suppliedthere are shoes for your pilgrimage, armor for your warfare, strength for your labor, rest for your weariness, comfort for your sorrow. No good thing does His love withhold! You have an inward satisfaction in Christ which all the world could not produce. Moreover, He has led you through this wilderness life in safety to this day. In dark and devious roads He has been near you. His rod and His staff have comforted you. You have not gone astray and that, not because there was not the spirit of straying in you, but because the great Shepherd has kept you in His paths. How often has He succored you and delivered you! How graciously has He helped your weakness, enlightened your darkness, allayed your fears, renewed your hope and, above all, preserved you from sin!

As I look back upon my own life, I am filled with adoring thankfulness. I know that the retrospect which each one of you is looking upon is very much the same. Surely, goodness and mercy have brightened all the days of our lives! Each day has been so wonderful that if we had only lived that one day, we would have had cause to praise the Lord forever and ever. When all the days are threaded on times string, what a bracelet of mercies they make! What shall I say of my Lords love? If I liken it for height to the mountains, I see Alps piled on Alps. Your mercy, O God, is in the heavens. If I liken it for depth to the sea, I am again lost in the comparisonI can only cry, O the depths! As to counting the gifts of His love, if we think of them, they are more in number than the sands of the sea! Let us not doubt His love, for that would be wanton cruelty, but, sitting down in stillness of mind, let our hearts quietly beat time to this one sentence He loves meHe loves me. More surely than parent or child, or husband or wife, or the best tried friend, Jesus loves His blood-bought ones! O my Soul, He loves you! Be you always ravished with His love.

Yet I must not quite close the list till I remind you that you are now, this very day, in union with Him. You are laid on Him and cemented to Him as a stone is built upon the foundation. You are also joined to Him vitally as the branch is to the stem and as the member to the body. You are, moreover, joined to Him by a living, loving, lasting union, as the bride is united to the Bridegroom. You are identical with your Covenant Head today in the purposes of God. God has dealt with Him as though He had sinned your sinand now He deals with you as though you had brought His righteousness! In the purposes of God you are wrapped up with the Lord Jesus Christ. Herein is love!

The future of Jesus is to be your future! You are to be with Him where He is. When Luther was in his worst troubles, a friend came in to see him and noticed that he had written upon the wall in big letters the word, VIVIT! He enquired of Luther what he meant by, VIVIT? Luther answered, Jesus lives and if He did not live I would not care to live an hour. Yes, our life is bound up with that of Jesus! We are not called upon to live of ourselvesthat would be deathbut we have life and all things in union with Him. This is love, indeed, which rests not till it is one with its object. O you unconverted ones, how can you live apart from Christ? To live one hour apart from Christ is to live in infinite peril, since in that hour you may die and pass beyond the realms of hope!

O Beloved, you that love Him, are one with Him by an infinite and indestructible union! Who shall separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord? This eternal oneness is the security both of Grace and Glory to us. Certain of our dear Brothers and Sisters have lately gone up the shining road. We might envy them if we did not know that even here we have the Lords love to cheer us. Let us love Jesus for His love to our Brethren, for now they share His Throne, lie in His bosom and are indulged with a vision of His Glory. We also are on our way to the wedding feastlet us keep our lamps burning. Comfort yourselves with the Divine hope of everlasting joy. His love which came to us from Heaven to earth will bear us up from earth to Heaven! Heart cannot conceive what love has laid up for those whom it has chosen.

II. But I cannot proceed further after this fashion. I must now exhibit my theme in another light. LET US MEDITATE CONTINUALLY UPON THE LOVE OF CHRIST. I would help your meditations by giving a few hints. Do not think that I am preaching, but consider that you are alone in your chambers and that I am speaking through a telephone to you. Let me vanish and let Jesus stand before you.

Meditate upon the love of Christ to you. It is a love ancient and venerable, tried and proved. He loved you when you were not. He loved you when you were, but were not what you should be. He has loved you into spiritual beingHe has loved you so as to keep you in that being. He loved you so as to suffer and to die. And He loves you so as to permit you to suffer for His sake. He has loved you so well as to bear with your ill manners, your shortcomings and your transgressions, your coldness, your backsliding, your lack of prayer, your hardness of heart, your little love to your Brethren and all the other sins of which I will not now accuse you, for it is a time of love. He has loved you right on without pausing or slackening. Some of you have known His love these 20, 30, 40, 50 years! Yes, some of you even more than that. It is no new thing with us to sing, Jesus loves me.

All this while He has never failed us once, nor done us an ill turn. The kindest husband that ever lived may sometimes be faulty, but this Husband of our souls overflows with Divine affection every day, and all the day. We could not find fault or flaw in His love if we were to try! Doubtless, in the future we shall have to make continued trial of His love, but we are sure it will endure every test. We may have rough ways to traverse, but He will tread them with us and we shall lean upon our Beloved. We may be very sick and faint, but He has borne our sicknesses and will sympathize with us. He has said, and we believe it, I will never leave you, nor forsake you. His promise is, Certainly I will be with you. Even to your old age I am He; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you. The longer we live, the more abundant evidence shall we receive of that love of Christ which, at this moment, is assuredly ours. At this moment we believe in this love as implicitly as yonder babe believes in its mothers love and stretches out its little hands to be embraced in those dear arms. Is it not so, dear Friends? Do you not lean on the bosom of your Lord without a shadow of mistrustand do you not, there, find your fears all laid asleep? What love is this!

Remember, also, in your meditation, that His love to you has been most free. It was unbought and even unsought. In Hosea it is written, I will love them freely. And surely, if ever there was a case in which that verse was transparently true, it is in my case! Was it not so in yours? What was there in you that could have won His love? If He could see any beauty in me, it must have been first in His own eyes. They say that love is blind and certainly, though our heavenly Bridegroom is not blind, yet He was somewhat kinder, for He saw our deformities of sin and follyand yet He loved us notwithstanding all! He saw our iniquities and then He cast them into the depths of the sea. Jesus, lover of my soul, You love me and that love is free, indeed! How could You be enamored with such an one as I am? It could only be because You love those who most need Your love and can least repay it. Inasmuch as it is even so, what shall I do but admire and adore? Brothers and Sisters, let us muse and meditate, pray and praise, wonder and worship Him whom, having not seen, we love! Let us love Him because He first loved us! Beholding the generous upbringing of a love which we could not deserve and would not seek, let us freely love in return.

This love of our Lords, so free, so full, so forceful, was and is most amazing. We shall never bear better or more surprising news than this, that Jesus loves us! Nothing more surprising ever came to me than to learn He loved me, and gave Himself for me. Others may, perhaps, see what is worked by the Lords Grace in us, and this may make them the less astonished at the Lords love towards us. But we know ourselves and see our blemishes as well as our beauties and, therefore, we know that there is nothing lovable in us by nature. When we see our Lords beauty, we see nothing but deformity in ourselves! The more we perceive His love, the more do we abhor ourselves because of our own need of love to Him and because of the defilements into which we have fallen. We are amazed at our sin, but more amazed at His love! We shall go on reading in the golden Book of Christs love throughout all eternityand the longer we study it, the more we shall be astonished that the Holy and the Glorious and the Ever-Blessed should ever have espoused in love such insignificant, polluted, and fickle-hearted creatures as we are!

The love of Jesus is love most practical. Christ loves not in word, only, but in deed and in truth. There is a greater force to my mind in Christs deeds of love than in all the words which even He could have uttered. His deeds emphasize His words. Words cannot, to the fullest, express the mind of lovelanguage filters from the lips, while feeling gushes from the heart. Jesus has written out His love in living characters. O Master! Never man spoke like You, and yet that was Your most eloquent discourse when You did say but little, but did stretch Your hands on the Cross, that they might be nailed there! Then did You pour out Your heart, not in oratory, but in blood and water! Jesus has given to us His crown, His garments, His body, His soul, His life, Himself! Said I not well that His is practical love? It is love full of tenderness, rich in bounty, lavish in thoughtfulness, firm in constancy, strong as death, mightier than the grave.

Think, again, that it was personal love. The Lord Jesus Christ loves each one of His people as much as if He had not one more. All the heart of Christ goes out to each one of us! The great sun shines today on this round earthand while it pours its limitless flood of light on all, that one tiny daisy, as it bathes in the brightness, is able to say, The sun is all mine. Though there are myriads of flowers in the meadows and the gardens, yet this one flower may freely possess all that the sun can give, or rather all that the little flower can receiveas much as if it were the only flower that blooms! So Jesus is to me, to you, to each one of usall our ownneither lose we anything by the fact that He is all the own of so many millions! No, we gain by His being thus possessed by so many Brothers and Sisters, for we find our bliss repeated in the happiness of all whom Jesus loves as He loves us! In the text we read, so have I loved you. Mark how the two personal pronouns, I, and, you, stand with nothing but, love, between! The Lord Jesus, Himself, delighted in us, even in us who are not worthy to be named in the same day with Him! Glory be to His holy name forever!

The pith of our text lies in this, that to make us know a little of how much He loves us, our Lord has paralleled His love to us with the Fathers love to Him. What kind of love was that? Here we get into deep waters! Each thought is an abyss. We know that the Father loved the Son without beginning, even from eternity. It is not conceivable that there ever was a period when the Father did not love His Sonneither is it conceivable by those who read this Book of the Lord aright that there ever could have been a time when Jesus did not love His people. This love constrained Him in the council chamber of eternity to become the Surety of the Covenant for those His Father gave Him. In that time before time began, the Lords love went forth, for His goings forth were of old, from everlasting! Not when we began to love Him, nor even when we began to be, did the love of our redeeming Lord commence its Divine historybut from of old, before the earth was. Some of you dote upon antiquities, but this, to me, is the most precious of all ancient thingsthe everlasting love of Jesus!

We also feel sure that the Father loves the Son without end. There cannot come an hour when the Father will banish the Son from His heart. Till then, Jesus will never cast off His people! The unchanging Christ of God will never cease to love His redeemed, for the Father will never cease to love Him! Has He not said, I have engraved you upon the palms of My hands. The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but My kindness shall not depart from you, neither shall the Covenant of My peace be removed, says the Lord that has mercy on you?

Beloved, we must not fail to note the intimacy of this love, for Jesus said, I and My Father are one. Even such is His love to us. It is intimate in character, for Jesus says, I in them, and You in Me, that they may be made perfect in one. Jesus has made Himself one with His people. He loves them with a marvelous intimacy, so that in loving them He loves Himself, for He has made them to be members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. I go furtherour Lord loved us better than He loved Himself, for they truly said of Him, He saved others; Himself He could not save. His mighty love made Him to be a Sacrifice for His people, that He might redeem them from under the curse of the Law.

It is a love, in fact, immeasurablethere is no boundary to it. The Father must love the Son inconceivably. As God, Himself, is incomprehensible, so is the love of the Divine Persons to each other. Jesus also loves His chosen without limit. He loves unto the end with a love which has no end. We can only become conscious of a limited portion of that love, but it is not limited in itself. To this ocean there is neither shore nor bottom. Jesus loves Omnipotently, everlastingly and infinitely!

His love is also immutable, like that of His Father to Him. Change is unknown to the heart of Jesus. He cannot love us more and He will not love us less. I spoke of the ocean just now, but it was a faulty emblem, for it ebbs and flows, while our Lords love is always at the fullest.

Now the point I want to bring you to is thisremember that the Fathers intimate and infinite and unchanging love to His Son did not prevent His Son from being a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with grief. It did not prevent His having to say, I have not where to lay My head. It did not prevent His bloody sweat in Gethsemane. Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered. Even He had to cry, If it is possible, let this cup pass from Me, and to add, nevertheless not as I will, but as You will. Do you think that you will be excused the bitter cup? You in your prayers have said, My Father, if You love me let me not be poor, let me not be bereaved, let me not be laid aside, let me not be spoken evilly of. You know not what you ask! You pray against promotion when you pray against affliction! It was necessary for the greater Glory of the Mediator, in His complex Person as God and Man, that He should greatly suffer and give Himself a Ransom for many and, therefore, the love of the Father did not withhold the wormwood and the gall!

And now, for other purposes known to the wise heart of Jesus, it is necessary that you, His disciple, should be made to drink of His cup and to be baptized with His baptismand He will not deny you the privilege! You must be made a partaker of Christs sufferings, that you may the better have fellowship with Him in the highest form of His Glory. Therefore, believe that Christ loves you when He afflicts youthat He loves you when He declines to remove the cup of trembling from your lips! You would decline the high honors He intends you, but His love forbids the heavy loss. If we are to reign with Him, we must first suffer with Himand so His love urges us on to the suffering out of a high regard for our eternal welfare.

O you that are shrinking from the Cross, are you willing to forego the crown? Surely you are not so foolish! Why, you can be sure that these griefs are necessary for you, that your soul may be enlarged and enabled to contain more of delight and of bliss in Christ Jesus your Lord throughout eternity. To spare you that pins prick today would be to make you a loser throughout the endless ages! Therefore, lift up your finger to the needle and be ready to endure the sharp point for an instant, seeing it is the trifling penalty of your rank as a follower of the Crucified. These light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work for us a far more exceedingly and eternal weight of glory. And, therefore, why do we draw back from them?

God grant us Grace to meditate much upon this love of Jesus Christ to us paralleled only by the Fathers love to Him and, meditating, may we become content to have fellowship with Christ in His sufferings, that we may partake in His Glory!   
III. Bear with me while I come, in the third place, to say, LET US EXPERIENCE AND ADMIRE THE POWER WHICH THIS LOVE HAS OVER US. I asked you to forget me, just now, and to regard me as a mere telephone. But now I desire to retire altogether, that only Jesus may rule in your mind and heart in the fullness of His power. What can be more powerful than this love? What can be operative in so many ways and in such varied methods? Happy is the man who is always under the spell of its power!

The love of Christ received into the heart acts as a catholicon. The old doctors searched for many a day to find a universal remedy. They sought in vainyet here we have it! Christ is all medicine for all ailments, but He is vastly more than that. He heals and He fills! He fills and He beautifies! He beautifies and He confirms! He confirms and He perfects. Wondrously does His love work on men. Let the love of Christ be believed in and felt in your hearts and it will humble you. Proud self goes out when sweet love comes inthe flesh dies through the power of that love on which the spirit lives. Can I be proud when my Beloved unveils to me His love which passes knowledge? Impossible! No, I feel ready to sink into the ground when I see His GloriesMy soul melted while my Beloved spoke. Brothers and Sisters the love of Christ is such a torrent that when it floods the soul, it carries self before it.

Love has also a melting influence . The hammer of the Law breaks, but the heart, when thus broken, is like a broken flint, every bit of which is still flint. When the love of Jesus performs its office, it dissolves us, turning the flint into flesh. An old Divine says that when the Law creates repentance, the tears are hard as hailstones in the sinners eyes. And I believe it is so. But when the Gospel makes us repent, our weeping is as the dew of the morning! What a blessed softness Grace produces! How tender is the heart which Jesus touches with His pierced hands!

This love of Christ, how consoling it is to mourning hearts! This is the best candle for one who is lying in bed in the dark. Oh, you Much-Afraids and Desponding-Ones, who are hardly able to enjoy my subject this morning, I would gladly lift you up and cheer you by this sweet love, for, indeed, it is a balm for you! Do not turn away from this heavenly cordial. Do not try to doubtyou can scarcely do so when you think of our Redeemers love! What? Desponding? When your Beloved gives you the kisses of His lips and says, I have loved you with an everlasting love? If His Presence does not cheer you, surely Heaven itself would not make you glad, for what is Heaven but the full enjoyment of His love?

The love of Jesus has a cleansing and sanctifying power. To kill the love of sin, live in the love of Christ! He whom Christ loves hates sin. We begin to say within ourselvesWhat shall I quit for Christ? What shall I do for Christ? The love of Jesus shed abroad in the soul has a sanctifying savorit perfumes the heart with holiness. His love is as a fire of odoriferous woodsit consumes sin and gives forth a fragrance of virtue. No furnace ever purifies our heart like the love of Jesus which burns like coals of juniper. The way of love is the road to perfectness. Jonathan will not offend the David whom he loves. A heart enamored of the holy Jesus will be very jealous lest it grieve Him by sin.

A sweet sense of Christs love also strengthens us. Love is strong as death and it makes us strong for the duties of life. Those holy women in Scotland tied to stakes to be drowned by the incoming tidewhat made them so brave in their confession of loyalty to Jesus? What but a sense of His love to them? Feeble men and women were cast to the lions in the Roman amphitheatredid you ever hear that they cowered before the wild beasts, or asked mercy of the cruel crowd that sat around and gazed on their agonies? Ah, no! Christs soldiers never quail! And if you ask the secret of their courage, it is that He loves themand they cannot but be bold for His dear sake!

This it is, too, that makes us tender to others and compassionate for this poor, ruined world. If any of you want to love the souls of men, learn how Christ loved you. You will love the vilest for His sake. If you would have eyes with which to weep over this sinful city, see how Jesus wept for you. If you would be prompt at all times to help the needy and succor the afflicted, keep close to the side of your gentle, tender, compassionate Lordand as you feel His love to youyou will feel pity for others.

It is this that inflames men with a true zeal for God and for the good of men. Some hardly know what it is to be zealous. But there are a few saints yet remaining who are like pillars of flame from morning till night. We have some among usmy only fear is lest they consume themselves and are gone before others have caught the flame! Would you know the secret of that holy flame which sits upon some apostolic men? The love of Jesus is that heavenly fire! They burn with love as they think of Him whose love made Him a whole Burnt Offering for them.

This love fills Believers with delight. If you would be always happy, sustain your mirth upon the spiced wine of His pomegranate. He loves me. He loves me! O joyous thought! Such an assurance creates a Paradise in a prison and a Heaven in heaviness!

Now I invite you, in conclusion, dear Friends, to enter into this love of Christ by personal enjoyment. Wade into this river of the Water of Life. Do I hear you cry, It is up to the ankles? Go deeper, Brother! It is up to the knees. Go deeper, Sister! Think more of Divine love! Value it more; live upon it more; trust it more! Sir, it is up to my loins. Go deeper, Brother! Thank God when it begins to lift you from your feet and bear you up above all earthly things. When you cannot touch the bottom, rejoice! When you must swim, be happy to cast yourself upon the blessed flood. You cannot drownthese are not waters to sink in, but waters to swim in. Be you as a bird in the air, a fish in the stream, an angel in Heaven! Let the love of Christ be your elementto you let love and live be the same word! You cannot think too much of Christs love! The wise man says, Eat not too much honey, but you cannot enjoy too much of the love of Christ! Get absorbed into it! Be swallowed up in it till it is no more I, but Christ that lives in me.

And when you are once immersed in this love, continue in it. Christ does not love you today and cast you away to-morrow. Shall your faith be inconstant when His faithfulness is so abiding? How is it that you, today, are so happy in the Lord, and tomorrow will be so dreary? Are you up on Sunday and down on Monday? Is your God only the God of the Sabbath, and not of the whole week? What? Is Christ a Sunday Christ and not a Monday Christ? And is His love a Sabbath theme and not an inspiration for Tuesdays and Wednesdays? Beloved, this must not be! Why, it is a childish thingI retract the word as dishonoring to dear childrenit is a foolish thing to be warm with this love, today, and then to be cold tomorrow! Surely near such a fire we ought to be always warm! Abide in His love! Jesus Christ would have His people remain in a high, happy, holy, heavenly condition!

Do you say you think it is impossible? I do not agree with you. Enoch walked with God for many a year till, at last, he walked away with God. Try after continued communion. Too often we get up to the top of the hill and slide down, again, like boys at play. Come, comethis will never do. Let us keep up to the height which we reach. If I climb to the top of a hill, I am by no means able to boast, for at once I see another hill beyond which I had not before perceived. I aspire to climb that new summit and I doubt not that if I attain it, I shall there spy anotherand so on till the end. It is never ours to write the word, finality. Higher and holier is still our watch word! But why must we come down into the marshes again? What can be the good of rushing out of the sunshine of Christs love into the fogs of distrust? To where we have attained, let us abide in it and seek Grace to go on to something more.

Does not our Lord intend this when He says, Continue you in My love? Oh, says one, you set us a hard task. No, Brother, I have set before you a pleasant privilege, but I admit that you will not reach it by your own power and as you are in yourself. But I am not talking to you as you are in yourself! I am talking to you as you are in Christand as you are in Christ all power is given to you! Exercise that power! Henceforth, instead of singing a song which breaks up into verses with groans between, let us chant a Psalm that goes right straight on and has, in every verse, the joyous stanza, His mercy endures forever.

My Beloved is mine and I am His. And till the day breaks and the shadows flee away, my soul shall feast upon His loveand joy and rejoice in Him! God help you to do this for His names sake! Oh, unconverted hearers, do you not wish to taste our joys? Come as you are and trust in Jesusand they shall be yours! Amen.

**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 15.** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK916, 798, 792. Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #2444 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

CHEERING WORDS   
NO. 2444

**INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS DAY, DECEMBER 22, 1895. DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you: continue you in My love. John 15:9.**

THE Savior was about to leave His disciples and this was the hardest trial which they had ever experienced. As there could be no trial to them like the loss of the Saviors Presence, it was at this time Jesus brought forth His richest consolation. He seems to have kept the best wine and the most potent cordial till the time when their spirits most required to be comforted. He said to them more fully than He had ever said it before, Take this for your comfortlive upon it while I am absent from you. Live upon it alwaysthat as the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you.

But what is this richest of all cordials? What is this marrow and fatness? It is the assurance of His love to us and surely there cannot be a more delightful thought that can fill the soul of a mortal than thisThe Son of God loves me. Did you ever sit down for half an hour and try to masticate and digest this thought? That God should pity me, I can understand, being so far inferior to Himself and so full of misery. That He should be generous to me, I can comprehend, from the liberality and bounty of His Nature and from my great necessities. But that He should love me is amazing! I cannot see anything lovely in myself and there are many who see that there is much ugliness about meand I do not doubt that there isand yet He who knows me better than I know myself and is not unmindful of my infirmities and weaknesses says He loves me! He does not put me at arms length and then feed me from His bountythat would be graciousHe opens wide His bosom and takes me into His heart! He closes the golden doors and takes me in to dwell forever, that in the ivory palaces I may be made glad with the cassia and the aloes of His delightful Presence!

Man, did you ever get this into you soul? Then though you may be clothed in rags, you will feel as though you were wrapped about with imperial purple! Although you may dwell in a very poor and lonely cottage, when this thought shines upon you, you would not change your cottage for a palace! Unto which of the angels did He ever say this? I believe angels are the subjects of Divine Love in a certain sense, but I have never read of Christ saying to them, As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you. This is the special privilege for the sons of Adam who have fallen which angels never have. How marvelous! And is it not more than marvelous, that God should have selected me out of the sons of Adam? Perhaps there is nothing in any of you which you can look upon as a reason why God should love you. Did I say, perhaps? Why, there are 10,000 things about every one of us that might have won for us the Almightys hatred! Instead of this, He says He loves us, His people! Surely, if I were to say no more, but sit down and leave you to think over the fact that God loves you and that your name is dear to Jehovah, your souls might be satisfied as with marrow and fatness!

The text, itself, clearly contains two things a declaration and an exhortation.   
I. THE DECLARATION is like a door on two hinges and on these the text swings. The hinges are, as, and, soAs the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you. What if I call them two diamond pivots upon which the pearly gate of Love turns to shut in Gods people?   
These words may be viewed in four lights. The word, as, is used here for the sake of affirmation. The Savior does as much as say, in the most solemn manner possible, to His believing people, I love you and I love you as surely as My Father loves Me. There are a great many new doctrines starting up, nowadays, and perhaps tomorrow morning there will be another. New opinions are constantly coming up, but I do not remember ever hearing anybody say that the Father does not love the Son. Whatever new heresies there may beand there will be plenty of themI do not suppose that this will ever be the subject of heresy. It is so firmly believed, that I never heard a sermon preached to prove itit is a doctrine taken for granted and laid hold of as being an elementary Truth of the Christian system. Jesus Christ, then, says, You do not doubt that the Father loves Me. Now, just as surely as the Father loves Me, I say, solemnly and truly, that I love you. He says this to each of us who trusts in Himto all of you poor, troubled Christians who have so many cares that you would not like to count themyou to whom it was whispered, the other day

*The Lord has quite forsaken you*

*Your God will be gracious no more.*   
No, says Jesus, you do not think that the Father has cast Me off, or ceased to love Me? Then do not think that I have cast you off, or ceased to love you. You are the purchase of My blood and as surely as the Father loves Me, so do I still love you.

This, as, may not only be regarded as an affirmation, but also what is very near akin to it, a confirmation. In order to strengthen their faith, God has been pleased to give His people not merely His Word, but tokens and signs to confirm His Word. When Noah had been delivered from the flood by means of an ark, he might still have been very timid at the first shower of rain and have been afraid that the world was going to be drowned, again. But to remove any fears he might have had, lo, there appears in the heavens Gods rainbow, a bow of many colors, illustrating the joy which there should be in the hearts of those with whom God had made a Covenant! Not a black bow as though it were bent on destruction, nor a crimson bow as though it were dipped in bloodbut a rainbow of many colors, a bow turned upwards, not shooting the arrows of vengeance upon mankind, but hinting to us that we may shoot our prayers up to Heavena bow unstrung and a bow without an arrow to show that God had ceased from warring with His creatures and had made peace with man. As soon as Noah saw that rainbow, he said, I shall not be drowned, the world will not be destroyed by a flood!

God also gave His servant, David, a sign when He told him that as long as the sun and moon should shine in their places, He would not break His Covenant with David. The rainbow is a very sweet sign, but we cannot always see it. And the sun and moon are not always visible, so the Lord has been pleased to give to His people a sign which is always visible, a symbol which is good by day and by night, and which is not dependent upon raindrops and sunbeams. The Christian, by the eyes of faith, can always look up to Heaven and see Christ in the bosom of His Father! You have no doubt, I am sure, that Christ is the object of Divine affection. You can see it clearly and there is no doctrinal error at all clouding your view of the love of the Father for His Son. Now this is, to me, the token that Jesus Christ loves me! I look up and see Jesus resting in His Fathers heartand I, a poor sinner, resting upon Jesus and finding all my help in Himknow that I am in Christs heart and that nothing shall ever pluck me from it. I know this because I have the sign that, as the Father loves the Son, so Christ loves me. May God give us Grace to see and rejoice in this, as, of confirmation!

But perhaps the fullness of this meaning lies in the fact that this is an, as, and a, so, of comparison. I think the text means that in the same way as the Father loves the Son, just in the same way Jesus loves His people. And how does the Father love the Son? He loved Him without beginning! You meet with strange people, sometimes, but I do not recollect ever meeting with anyone who thought that God the Father did not, at some time or other, love the Son. It is commonly and currently believed among all who accept the Bible as true, that from everlasting to everlasting the love of God is set upon His Son. We believe that long before worlds were made or time began the Lord Jesus Christ was dear to His eternal Father. Now, as the Father loves Christ, so Christ loves us and, therefore, He loves us without beginning! Long before the lamps of Heaven were kindled, or the stars began to twinkle in the skywhen as yet all this world slept in the mind of God as unborn forests sleep within the acornwe were in the heart of Christ!

When we rest upon Christ, we may be infallibly certain that His foreseeing eyes beheld us and that His foreloving heart loved us when as yet we had no being! In the book wherein all His members were written, which in continuance were fashioned when as yet there were none of them, there He read our names, our forms, our lineaments. He saw our characters and knew our sins

*He saw us ruined in the Fall,   
Yet loved us, notwithstanding all.*

You can go back to the beginning of human affectionyou can easily go back to the beginning of your love to God, but Gods love to us is a deep which has no bottom

*The streams of love   
I trace up to their FountainGod!   
And in His mighty breast I see   
Eternal thoughts of love to me.*

And I suppose we all believe that the Father loves His Son without end. You have no idea, I suppose, that at any time the Father will cease to love His own dear Son. You cannot suppose such a thingyour mind can hardly conjure up such a blasphemous thought as that there should ever be a division among the Persons of the Trinity and that Jesus Christ should be driven from His Fathers heart! Now, says Christ, as the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you, that is, without end

*Once in Christ, in Christ forever!   
Nothing from His love can sever.*   
This is a great and precious Truth of God, but I know some people who use it very badly, for they say, I was in Christ once and, therefore, I must be in Christ now. But that is not the question! If you were once in Christ, you

are in Christ nowbut can you really and truly say that you are in Christ now? Are you now resting upon Him? Are you now walking in His ways? Are you now reflecting His image? Are you now trusting that His Spirit dwells in you? If not, I do not care what you say about having been once in Christ, for I do not believe that unless you are in Christ

now! This Truth, which you use as a buttress for your presumption, should rather be used as a stimulus to self-examination! Remember, it is written, But if any man draws back, My soul shall have no pleasure in him. And if you have drawn back, you have given clear proof that His soul has no pleasure in you, for they who are in Christ Jesus are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvationthey are preserved by Christ Jesusthey are sanctified by His indwelling Spirit and their path, according to Solomon, is as the shining light, that shines more and more unto the perfect day. God grant that we may prove our calling by our perseverance!

Let us, just for a moment, suck in the Truth of this very precious doctrine that, as surely as the Father will always continue to love Jesus Christ, so Jesus Christ will always continue to love us. Some of us, perhaps, look forward to old age without expecting any great delight in it. There are times when the grinders fail because they are few and they that look out of the windows are darkened. But, Saint, you need not fear the loosing of the silver cord, for your God shall never changeHis eyes shall not wax dimHis natural force shall never abate! If you should be bowed double with infirmity, yet remember that the everlasting God faints not, neither is weary and His love for you will never cease! Perhaps at times we look forward to death with a sort of shiver. I know that there are seasons when even the very best of Gods servants do not find death the sweetest possible subject for contemplation, but I do not think that any of us who believe in Jesus have the slightest reason to be afraid to die. On the contrary, we may rejoice in it, for our Savior will not leave us in the hour of death. Still is He in the Fathers bosom and still shall we be there even when the chill floods are about us and the crashing of the eternal waves shall be sounding in our ears! Rest confident, Christian, that even down to the grave, Christ will go with you and that up, again, from it, He will be your Guide and your Companion to the Celestial Hills!

I am sure you are all perfectly agreed, too, that God the Father loves Jesus Christ without any change. You do not believe, as instructed disciples, that the Father loved Jesus Christ more, at one time, than at another. It is our belief that when Christ said, My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? He was still as dear to His Fathers heart as He ever had been. There was a hiding of His face from His Son, but not a turning away of His heart! Can you suppose that His Father loved Him the least when He was most obedient? When He was obedient unto death and fulfilled His Fathers will at all hazards in the awful darkness, do you think that, then, the Fathers heart was cold and stony towards Him? Oh, no! It was but a change of manifestation, but His inward love was still the same!

Now, Christian, take this for your own comfort, that there is never any change in Jesus Christs love to those who rest in Him. Yesterday you were on Tabors top and you said, He loves me. Today you are in the Valley of Humiliation, but He loves you just the same. On the hill Mizar and far away among the Hermons, you heard His voice which spoke so sweetly with the turtle-notes of love. And now, on the sea, or even in the sea, when all his waves and billows go over you, and deep calls unto deep at the noise of his waterspouts, He is just as loving to you as ever He was! He does not change one whit. If you lived in certain lands, you might look up and see on the mountain some glorious old peak lifting its snow-white head into the clouds. When you look up the next morning, can you see the mountain? No, you see nothing but fog. Is there no mountain? Oh, yes

*The mountains, when in darkness hidden,*

*Are real as in the day.*   
So is it with you. You look up today and see your Fathers love and rejoice in ittomorrow you may not see it so clearly, but it has not gone, for it abides fixed and stableand never changes. Gourds may grow and wither, but Gods love neither grows nor withersit knows not the shadow of a change! As the Father loves Christ without change, so does Christ love us without change.

Once more and then we shall entrench upon another interpretation of the word, as. I think it also means that the Father loves the Son without any measure. I was going to say that this is an, as, of degree, but it is a degree without any degree, or rather, it is a degree which cannot be measured! You cannot say of the Fathers love to the Son that He loves Him up to such a point and there stopsand you cannot say of Jesus Christs love to His people that He loves them so much, but does not love them any farther

*Oh, no! Christ loves His Church,   
His glory tis to bless   
He cannot love her more,   
He will not love her less.*

The whole heart of Christ was emptied into His peoples hearts! You say His peoples hearts could not hold it all? Very likely, but that is no reason why Christ did not give us all. If I cannot hold all the sea, yet God may give me all the sea. The Christian is filled with all the fullness of God. He has as much of Christ in him as he can hold. He is in Christ and Christ is in him. He dwells in God and God dwells in him. Both of these are Scriptural expressions. There is no conceivable limit to the love of God to us in Jesus Christ and if you need proof of it, go to Calvary and see, there, how He gave Himself for ushow He was stripped naked to His shame that He might clothe us! How He spared neither hands, nor feet, nor head, nor backno, He spared not even His own heartbut poured out from it blood and water! Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for those whom He loves. There cannot be greater love than that of Christ! He went as far as infinity could go in love and do you know how far that is? No

*Imaginations utmost stretch*

*In wonder dies away*   
at the thought of Infinite Love stretching its wings and putting itself forth to its highest pitch. Such is Jesus Christs love to you!

What was that you said the other night? That you were afraid you would exhaust the patience of God? A little fish said, once, he was afraid he would drink the sea dry, but there was never any the less water in the sea for all that he drank, for he was in the sea and all he drank was still in the sea! So all that we get from God is still in God, for, in Him we live, and move and have our being. If you could give to a poor man in the street any quantity of money and still have just as much in your own pockets, no, if you could still have the same money in your own pockets that you had given to him, the man would say, Well, giving does not impoverish you, restraining does not enrich you and, therefore you may well give freely. Oh, there are some of us who have such large appetites for Divine Love! I have sometimes felt such hungering after my God that I thought my soul could never be satisfied. I have thirsted after Him till I have felt like behemoth, who trusts that he can drink up Jordan at a draught! But there is enough in God to satisfy all our souls needs. We sometimes sing what is strictly true

*All my capacious powers can wish,   
In You do richly meet.*

Come, then, Beloved, you have a full Savior, a precious Savior, one who loves you without measure, without any degree, even as the Father loves Him! There is much food here for those who know how to feed upon it. May the Holy Spirit help us to do so!

II. Let me now ask your patient attention while I speak upon THE EXHORTATION OF THE TEXTContinue in My love.   
What, what? asks one, does He love us with an everlasting love and yet thus admonishes us, Continue in My love? Yes, yesthe certainty of the thing does not at all weaken the force of the precept. This is Gods plan, to work out His own purpose by an exhortation. Diligent students of Gods Word must have noticed that the very things which in one part of Scripture are spoken of as unconditional gifts, are, in other parts spoken of as blessings to be anxiously desired and eagerly sought after. The two things are correct and consistent, one with the other, only some people get one of their eyes bound up so that they are not able to see two Truths at the same time! I am thankful if you can see one, but I should be still more glad if you could see two because I think that then you would be more like the perfect man in Christ Jesus who enters into life with both eyes! You find in one place that God is exhorting His people to good works as if their good works were all their ownand yet in another place He tells them that their good works are the gifts of His Spirit! In one place He tells the saints that they shall hold on their way and in another place He exhorts them to hold on their way. This is not at all inconsistent because the exhortation, by Gods Grace applied to the heart, ministers to the fulfillment of the decree. My good old grandfather, I think, was quite right, when he said, I rest my salvation upon the finished work of Jesus Christ as if I had never performed a good work in all my life. And then I endeavor to do good works as if everything depended upon them. This is what the Savior seems to say to His disciples, Continue in My love, continue in the path of obedience, in the path of faith and, by your keeping of this exhortation shall My purpose be fulfilled, and you shall be preserved in My love.   
Not that this is exactly the meaning of the text. Although this may lie on the surface, it seems to me rather to suggest such counsel as this, Continue to exhibit to others the love which I have exhibited to you. Some professed Christians never get into Christs love at all in this sense of it. It strikes me that one of the truest signs of Grace in the young Christian is his love to others. As soon as ever he is, himself saved, he wants to have other people saved! I do not believe that Heaven is a place into which, if I get there, I shall be eternally happy at the thought of other people being shut out. On the contrary, I look forward to it as the place where Christ shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied and it is not a little that will satisfy Him!

If you ever get any comfort from the thought of others being shut out, you may keep your comfort to yourselves. My comfort is and I hope it always will be, to labor to be the means of bringing others in. Oh, to bring sinners to Christ! Oh, to feel the same love beating in our hearts which Christ has beating in Hisnot to the same degree, of course, but the same kind of love. Oh, to be baptized into that same river of love in which Christ was baptized, and to come out of it to continue in the same sort of love, so as to have the same love to others which Jesus Christ had to us! Do not be afraid of having too much love for precious souls. Do not think that you will ever go beyond the love of Jesus Christ in that matter. Poor cold hearts as we are, how shall we warm into anything like His affection?   
*Did Christ over sinners weep,   
And shall our cheeks be dry?*   
Ah, there are some cheeks that were never wet with the tears for others, yet! And there are some hearts that never were ready to break for the conversion of others! Well, says one, every tub must stand on its own bottom. Yes, Sir, and if you trust to yourself, it will be to your everlasting ruin! If you have found honey, your first desire is that another should taste of its sweetness and, having found Christ, yourself, your first instinct will be to turn round and say to others, Behold the Lamb of God, that takes away the sin of the world. I find that when I preach the Gospel without tenderness, I do not get such a blessing as I do when it melts my own soul. It is a good thing when the preacher finds his own heart breaking. Heartbroken ministers are very soon made heartbreaking ministers! Love to others has a kind of sympathetic influence and under the blessing of God the Holy Spirit, when men see that we care about them, they are often led to care about themselves. May all Christians here get fully into Christs love and learn to look at sinners as Christ looked at them in all their awful dangerand weep over them even as Christ wept over Jerusalem!   
I think, however, that the Savior meant even a little more than this. Sometimes we get into Christs love and enjoy it in our own hearts. It is the sweetest thing this side Heaven to know and enjoy the love of Jesus Christ, to have our head lying on His bosom so that we can feel His heart beat, and then to hear Him say, I have loved you and given Myself for you. You know this, dont you? Then I know your prayer will be like that of the spouse, Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth: for Your love is better than wine. I do not know how it is with you, but I find it rather more easy to get into this state than to stay there. I can get up the mountain, by Gods Grace, but the difficulty is to stay there. Peter said, It is good for us to be here; let us build three tabernacles. Yes, but it is not so easy to build one tabernacle upon the mountain. Christs lovevisits are so often like those of angelsfew and far between! But yet we cannot blame our Beloved. Forbid it, my tongue, that you should ever say a word against Him! No, He would never turn me out of doors. The fault is my ownit is I who leave the table and refuse to stay with Him any longer. Oh, may His love bind us so fast to the altar that we may never stray from it, but may continue in His love!   
Well, says one, I do not think that any man could stay long in communion with Christ if he had as many troubles as I have. Did you ever read about Enoch? We are told that he lived 365 years and walked with God. And if Enoch walked with God so long, do you think that you cannot walk with Him for the few years of your short life? Oh, you say, but Enoch was differently situated from what I am. And yet it is written, Enoch walked with God and begat sons and daughters, which seems to say that the common engagements of life and the ordinary cares of a family need not break off our walking with God! But, you say, he did not live in such times as these. No, he did not live in such good ones, for he lived before the rising of the Sunhe lived in the twilight, in the dim, dark ages before the great Sun of Righteousness had arisen with healing beneath His wings! Enoch walked with God nearly 400 years, but there are some of us who cannot walk with Him for 400 hours!   
Oh, may the Lord grant us more Grace, for that is where the mischief lies! The most of Gods people, I am afraid, are in the condition of being just barely alive. Sometimes a man is washed up on a rock and you put your hand to his bosom to see if there is any heat left in him, and hold a mirror to his nose to see if he has any breath. You look for signs and evidences and, at last you say, Yes, he is alive! And this is just like a great many of you! You have to look for signs and evidences to know if you are alive! You are just washed up on the Rock and that is all. But look at many of us herewe do not need signs and evidences! We are alive, by Gods Grace, and we know that we are! We can talk and laugh, and eat and drink, and engage in business. We are perfectly sure that we are alive because we are in good health! And so it is with Christians when they get to be in good sound spiritual health and are enabled, by Divine Grace, to do much for their Master! I would not be satisfied with being merely alive if I were lying stretched upon the bed and someone should say to me, Well, you know you are alive, I would tell him that I was not satisfied merely with thatI wanted to be healthy and well! God grant that we may not only know Christs love, but that we may get into the soul of it, into the marrow and fatness of ittill we live in itand then may Gods Grace help us to continue in it!   
But there are some poor souls here who have never got into this love at all, nor do they know anything about it. Perhaps, dear Friends, you desire to know it. Well, there is only one place where you can see it. The window through which you can look into Gods heart is the Cross of Christ! If you want to read the love of God, go and look through the wounds of the Savior! And as you stand looking through those wounds, you will, if you listen, hear a voice saying   
*Loves redeeming work is done!   
Come, and welcome, Sinner, come!*   
I have never heard of Jesus Christ shutting the door against a sinner. There is a notice that is put in some gentlemens parks stating that they do not allow beggars or dogs there. But Jesus Christ puts up a notice that He does allow beggars! In fact, there are none but beggars who ever go to Himand even those who are such beggars that you would not pick their clothes from a dunghill, Jesus Christ receives into His house, into His heart, into the bath of His blood and wraps them in the robe of His perfect righteousness! O poor Sinner, come and try Him, and He will not cast you out!

EXPOSITION B Y C. H. SPURGEON:  
**JOHN 15.**

Verse 1. I am the true Vine, and My Father is the Husbandman. Not only the Mosaic Law, but the whole of creation is full of types of Christ. All the vines that we see in this world are only, as it were, typical, but Christ is the substancethe substance of Nature as well as of Grace. I am the true Vine, and the real Husbandman, who watches over everything, who has the whole Church, yes, the whole universe, under His care, is the great Father. My Father is the Husbandman.

2. Every branch in Me that bears not fruit He takes away. It has no right to be there, for it is not there by a vital unionit will only harbor mischief if it is allowed to remain. Therefore let it be taken away and taken away it certainly will be by the Husbandman who makes no mistakes.

2. And every branch that bears fruit, He purges it, that it may bring forth more fruit. So there is taking away for the fruitless branches and pruning for the fruit-bearing branches! Are you suffering under the pruning-knife just now? Accept it joyfully! How much better that the knife should cut off your superfluities than that it should cut you off! The mercy is that although God will purge and prune His vine branches, He will not destroy them!

3. Now you are clean through the Word which I have spoken unto you. Christ had so dealt with His disciples that He left them like a pruned branch, ready and prepared for fruitfulness.

4. Abide in Me, and I in you. The pruning is nothing without the abiding in Christ. You may suffer again and again, but no good can come of it except you have vital, continuous, everlasting union with Christ. You cannot take a branch away from the vine for a little while and then put it back againits life depends upon the perfect continuity of its union. So is it with us and Christthe branch is in the Vine, and the Vine is in the branch. The very essence and sap of the Vine are in the branch even as the branch is part and parcel of the Vine.

4, 5. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can you, except you abide in Me. I am the Vine, you are the branches. You are not the Vinedo not think that you are! And if God blesses you and makes you of some importance in the Church, yet do not dream that you are the Church, that you are the very root and stem of it. Ah, no, at the utmost, you are the branches!

5. He that abides in Me, and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit. Oh, what a searching word is this! Are we bringing forth much fruit? I trust, dear Brothers and Sisters, that we are bringing forth some fruit, but, oh, what a test is this, He that abides in Me, and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit. Christ expects much from those who have this doubly high privilege of having Him in them and of being, themselves, in Him!

5, 6. For without Me you can do nothing. If a man abides not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. And are there enough of them for that? It is enough to bring tears into ones eyes to think that there should be enough fruitless, unabidingmerely nominal members of Christs Churchfor men to gather to make a fire! Oh, sad, sad thing is this! It is the grief of the Church! It is the sorrow of Gods ministers! It ought to call for great self-examination in our own hearts that mere professorsthose who apostatize after having made a profession of religiondo not seem to have been thought by the Savior to be here and there one, but to be so many that men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

7. If you abide in Me, and My Words abide in you, you shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you. Power in prayer is dependent upon full enjoyment of union and communion with Christ! It is not every man who can ask of God what he wills and get itit is such a man, and such a man onlyas shall be found abiding in Christ and having Christs Words abiding in him. If we do not take notice of what Christ says, can we expect that He will take notice of what we say? If we do not obey Him when He asks this and that of us, how can we reckon that He will give us this and that when we ask it of Him? No, this is the condition of power in prayer, If you abide in Me, and My Words abide in you, you shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you.

8. Herein is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall you be My disciples. You shall be known to be the disciples of the much fruitbearing Savior! He was no moderately good Man. He was not One who was only a little useful in the world. Our blessed Master was perfectly consecrated! He abounded in every good word and work and, unless we are the same, how shall men think that we are His disciples?

9. As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you. Matchless, matchless Word of God! The love of God the Father to the Son is the immeasurable measure of the love of Christ to His peoplewithout beginning, without end, without change, without bounds! As the Father loved Christ, so has Christ loved us.

9. Continue in My love. Abide in it, live in it as the fish lives in the stream, enjoy itdo nothing contrary to it.   
10, 11. If you keep My commandments, you shall abide in My love; even as 1 have kept My Fathers commandments, and abide in His love. These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. When Christ cannot rejoice in us, you may rest assured that we cannot rejoice in ourselves! But when His Grace so operates upon us that He sees that in us which gives Him contentment, then it is that we shall feel a blessed contentment ourselves.  
12. This is My commandment, That you love one another, as I have loved you. I am sure you will never love each other too much. You cannot go beyond this ruleLove one another, as I have loved you.   
13. Greater love has no man than this that he lay down his life for his friends. What more has he that he can lay down when, having given up all else, he gives life, itself, for them?   
14. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. You cannot be His friends if you are disobedient to His commands. An act of disobedience is unfriendliness. Yes, and the omission of obedience is unfriendliness to Christ. I wish we would always remember that every sin, either of omission or of commission, is an unfriendly act towards our best Friend.   
15. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knows not what his lord does: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you. The Law made man do this and that, but it communicated very little of the secret counsels of God. But there is a holy familiarity between Christ and His people, a sacred confidence which Christ has manifested towards us in revealing the very heart of God to us and, therefore, we are put upon a very high standing, not as servants, but as friends. O friends of Christ, show yourselves friendly by your entire obedience to His gracious will!   
16. You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and ordained, yes, that you should go and bring forth fruit and that your fruit should remain: that whatever you shall ask of the Father in My name, He may give it to you. Fruitfulness, perseverance, and power in prayerthese are the priceless gifts that come to us through our being one with Christ!   
17. These things I command you, that you love one another. As if there were many things in that one command. It is but one command, but it is so comprehensive that all the commandments are fulfilled in this one, that you love one another.   
18. If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. So you need not be at all surprised if the world hates you.   
19. If you were of the world, the world would love his own: but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Therefore expect it, in some form or other, for you will be sure to meet with it! The seed of the serpent never will love the seed of the woman.   
20, 21. Remember the word that I said to you, The servant is not greater than his master. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept My sayings, they will keep yours, also. But all these things will they do unto you for My names sake, because they know not Him that sent Me. If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sinas if all the rest would scarcely have been sin at all in comparison with that sin against the Light of God which men committed after Christ had spoken to them! What an amazing thing it is that the very Word of God which is the creation of all good should, through the perversity of mens will, become, also, the creation of evil!   
22, 23. If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin. He that hates Me, hates My Father, also. There is a hatred of God in all hatred of the Mediator! Men may say that they love God, and yet despise Christ, but it cannot be so. Christ is so truly God and so clear a manifestation of God that if men knew God, they would certainly hate Him if they hate Christ!   
24-27, If I had not done among them the works which no other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both Me and My Father. But this came to pass that the Word might be fulfilled that is written in their Law, They hated Me without a cause. But when the Comforter comes, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceeds from the Father, He shall testify of Me: and you, also, shall bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning.

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CHRISTS JOY AND OURS   
NO. 2935

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, MAY 11, 1905.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, JANUARY 3, 1875.

**These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.   
John 15:11.**

THERE is a sentence which has crept among our common proverbs so that it is repeated as if it were altogether trueMan was made to mourn. There is a truth in that sentence, but there is also a falsehood in it. Man was not originally made to mournhe was made to rejoice. The Garden of Eden was his place of happy abode and, as long as he continued obedient to God, nothing grew in that garden which could cause him sorrow. For his delight the flowers breathed out their perfume. For his delight the landscapes were full of beauty and the rivers rippled over golden sands. God made human beings as He made His other creatures, to be happy. They are capable of happiness. They are in their right element when they are happy and now that Jesus Christ has come to restore the ruins of the Fall, He has to bring back to us the old joy only it shall be even sweeter and deeper than it could have been if we had never lost it! A Christian has never fully realized what Christ came to make him until he has grasped the joy of the Lord. Christ wishes His people to be happy. When they are perfect, as He will make them in due time, they shall also be perfectly happy. As Heaven is the place of pure holiness, so is it the place of unalloyed happiness and, in proportion as we get ready for Heaven, we shall have some of the joy which belongs to Heaven. And it is our Saviors will that oven now His joy should remain in us and that our joy should be full.

I. My first remark upon the text will be thisall THAT JESUS SPEAKS IS MEANT TO PRODUCE JOY IN HIS PEOPLE. These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you.

If you will read through the Chapter from which our text is taken and also the Chapter which precedes it, you will see the nature of the words which Jesus Christ speaks to His people. Sometimes they are words of instruction. He talks to us that we may know the Truth of God and the meaning of the Truth. But His objective is that, knowing the Truth, we may have joy in it. I will not say that the more a Christian knows, the more joy he has, but I can truly say that ignorance often hides from us many wells of delight of which we might otherwise drink, and that all other things being equal, the best-instructed Christian will be the happiest man. He will know the Truth and the Truth will make him free. The Truth of God will kill a thousand fears which ignorance would have fostered within him. The knowledge of the love of God, the knowledge of the full Atonement made on Calvary, the knowledge of the Eternal Covenant, the knowledge of the immutable faithfulness of Jehovah indeed, all knowledge which reveals God in His relationship to His peoplewill tend to create comfort in the hearts of the saints. Be not, therefore, careless about Scriptural Doctrinestudy the Word of God and seek to understand the mind of the Spirit as revealed in it, for this blessed Book was written for your learning, that through patience and comfort of the Scriptures you might have hope. If you are diligent students of the Word, you will find that you have good reason to rejoice in the Lord under all circumstances.

But sometimes our Lord also spoke words of warning. In this Chapter, we find Him telling His disciples that they were branches of a vine and that branches which bore no fruit had to be cut off and cast into the fire. At first sight, it seems to us that there is nothing consoling in such words as thosethey sound sharply in our ears and make us start and be afraidand we ask ourselves, Are we bearing fruit? Well, Brothers and Sisters, but such heart-searching as that is eminently beneficial and tends to deepen true joy in us! Christ would not have us rejoice with the false joy of presumption, so He bares the sharp knife and cuts

that joy away. Joy on a false basis would prevent us from having true joy and, therefore, the Master gives us the sharp and cutting word that we may be sound in the faith, that we may be sound in the life of God and that so the joy we may get may be worth havingnot the mere surf and foam of a wave that is driven with the wind and tossed, but the solid foundation of the Rock of Ages!

Our Lord also tells us that even the branches that bear fruit will have to be pruned that they may bring forth more fruit. Unpleasant Truth that! Somebody might sayIt will give me no joy to know that I shall have to endure the knife of correction and affliction. Yes, dear Brother, but, tribulation works patience, and patience, experience, and experience, hope, and hope makes one not ashamed because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us. So, beginning rather high up in this pedigree, you finally get to joy and get to it by the only right method! To try to sail up to joy by the balloon of fancy is dangerous work, but to mount up to it by Jacobs ladder, every round of which God has placed at the proper distance, is to climb to Heaven by the safe road which He has appointed! There is nothing which the Lord Jesus says to us, by way of warning, which does not guard us against sorrow, conduct us away from danger and point us to the path of safety. If we will but listen to these words of warning, they will thus guide us to the truest happiness that mortals can ever find either here or hereafter!

You will notice, as you read the Chapter, that our Lord, in addition to words of instruction and words of warning, utters some very humbling words. I think that is a very humbling verse in which He says, As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can you, except you abide in Me. But it is good for us to be humbled and brought low. The Valley of Humiliation has always struck me as being the most beautiful place in the whole of the pilgrimage which John Bunyan describes. To see that shepherd boy sitting down among the sheep and to hear him playing upon his pipe, and singing

*He that is down need fear no fall,   
He that is low no pride.   
He that is humble ever shall   
Have God to be his Guide*

teaches us that to be brought down to our true condition of nothingness before God and made to feel our entire dependence upon the power of the Holy Spirit is the true way to promote in us a joy which angels themselves might envy! Be thankful, therefore, Beloved, whenever you read the Scripture, whether it instructs you, or warns you, or humbles you. Say to yourself, Somehow or other, this tends to my present and eternal joy and, therefore, I will give the more earnest heed to it lest by any means I should lose the blessing it is intended to convey to me.

The Chapter also abounds in gracious words of promise such as this If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you shall ask what you will and it shall be done unto you. There are other promises here, every one of which is full of consolation to the children of God. Are any of you lacking in joy at this time? Do you feel dull and heavy of heart? Are you dead and tried? Then listen to what Jesus Christ says hereThese things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. What are the things that He says to you in other parts of His Word? He says, Take therefore no thought for the morrow; for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Let not your heart be troubled: you believe in God, believe also in Me. My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of My hand. In this strain does our Lord graciously talk to usdo not let Him talk to us in vain! My Brothers and Sisters, do not allow His precious promises to fall upon your ears as the good Seed fell upon the rocky or stony soil! The promise of harvest gives joy to the earth. Rob not your Lord of the sheaves which He deserves to gather from your heart and life, but believe His Word, rest upon it and rejoice in it, realizing that His Words of promise are meant to bring you great joy!

So are His Word s of precept. This chapter contains many of them, for He tells us that it is His command that we should love our brethren and also that we should continue in His love. He gives us many precepts of that kind, and every precept in Gods Word is a signpost pointing out the road to joy. The Commandments upon the tablets of stone seem very hard, even though cut by the finger of God, Himself, and the granite on which they are engraved is hard and cold. But the precepts of the Lord Jesus are tender and gracious and bring us joy and life. As you read them, you may be quite sure off two thingsthat is, if Christ denies you anything, it is not good for you and if Christ commands you to do anything, obedience will promote your highest welfare! O child of God, never quibble at any precept of your Lord! If your proud flesh should rebel, pray it down, for rest assured that if you were so selfish as only to wish to do that which would promote your own happiness, it would be the path of wisdom to be obedient to your Lord and Master. I repeat what I said just now. The precepts of Christ are signposts indicating the way to joy. If you keep His Commandments, you shall abide in His love. And if you carefully watch His eyes, as the handmaidens watch the eyes of their mistress, so as to do at once all that He bids you do, you shall have the peace of God flowing into your soul like a river and that peace shall never fail to bring you solid and lasting joy!

II. Now secondly, I gather from the text that WHEN OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST JOYS IN US, THEN WE ALSO HAVE JOY.   
This meaning of the text is the interpretation given to it by several of the early fathers. These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you. That is to say, they say, that I may rejoice over you, and rejoice in you, and be pleased with you, and that so your joy may be full. I am not certain that this is the meaning of the text, nor am I sure that it is not, but, anyway, it is a very blessed Truth of God. It means this. A child knows that its father loves it, and while it is quite sure that its father will never cease to love it, it also knows that if it is disobedient, the father will be displeased and grieved. But the obedient child gives pleasure to its father by its obedience and when it has done so, it receives pleasure, itself, from that very fact. There used to be servants in the olden timeand I suppose there are some nowwho were so attached to their masters that if they gave satisfaction to them, they were perfectly satisfied. But the least word of displeasure from their master wounded them to the very heart. Perhaps a better illustration may be found in the nearer and dearer relationship of the wife and the husband. The wife, if she has pleased her husband, is delighted in the joy which she has given to him. But if by any means she has displeased him, she is unhappy until she has removed the cause of his displeasure and has again given him joy. Now I know that my Lord Jesus loves me and that He will never do anything else but love me. Yet He may not always be pleased with me and when He has no joy in me, my joy also goes if I have a heart that is true towards Him. But when He has joy in mewhen He can rejoice in me, then is my joy also full. And everyone of you whom the Lord has loved will find this to be truethat in proportion as Jesus Christ can look upon you with joy as obedient and faithful to Him, in that proportion will your conscience be at ease and your mind will find joy in the thought that you are acceptable to Him.   
What are the ways in which we can really please Christ Jesus and so have joy in Christs pleasure? According to the Chapter before us, we please Him when we abide in Him. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you. If you sometimes abide in Christ and sometimes turn away from Him, you will give Him no pleasure, but if He is the indispensable Companion of your daily lifeif you are unhappy should even a cloud come between you and your Lordif you feel that you must be as closely connected with Him as the limb is with the head, or as the branch is with the stem, then you will please Him and He will take delight in your fellowship. Fervent love to Christ is very pleasing to Him, but the chilly, lukewarm love of Laodicea is nauseous to Him, so that He says, Because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of My mouth. If you continue, day by day, to walk with God carefully and prayerfully, and to abide continually in Christ, He will look upon you with eyes of satisfaction and delight and will see in you the reward of His soultravailand you, being conscious that you are giving joy to Him, will find that your own cup of joy is also full to overflowing! What greater joy can a man have than to feel that he is pleasing Christ? My fellow creatures may condemn what I do, but if Christ accepts it, it matters not to me how many may condemn it. They may misrepresent and misjudge me and impute wrong motives to me, and sneer and snarl at me, but if I can keep up constant and unbroken communion with the Christ of God, what cause have I for sorrow? No, if He is joyful in us, then our joy shall remain in us and shall be full.   
Our Lord Jesus has also told us that He has joy in us when we bring forth much fruit. Herein is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall you be My disciples. That is to say, I will recognize in you the evidence of true discipleship with satisfaction and delight. Brothers and Sisters in Christ, are we bringing forth much fruit unto God? Are you called to suffer? Then do you, in your suffering, bring forth the fruit of patience? Or, are you strong and in robust health? Then are you, with that health and strength, rendering to the Lord the fruit of holy activity? Are you doing all you can for the Lord Jesus who has done so much for you? You have received much from Himare you yielding an adequate return to Him? It is little enough when it is what we call, much, but, oh, how little it is when it is little in our own estimation! But when our Lord Jesus Christ sees us doing much for God, He is pleased with us, as the gardener is when, having planted a tree, and dug about it, and fertilized it, and pruned it, he sees it at last covered with golden fruit. He is pleased with his fruitful tree and Christ is pleased with His fruit-bearing disciples! Are we making Christ glad in this fashion? If so, our own joy shall be full. I am not surprised that some Christians have so little joy when I remember how little joy they are giving to Jesus because they are bringing forth such a little fruit to His praise and Glory. Brothers and Sisters, see to this matter, I pray you! If I cannot enforce this Truth of God with the power that it deserves, may the Holy Spirit cause the Truth to come home with power to your hearts!

Our Lord also tells us that He has joy in us when we keep His Commandments. If you keep My Commandments, you shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Fathers Commandments and abide in His love. These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. This is My Commandment, That you love one another, as I have loved you. He that walks carefully in the matter of obedience to Christs Commands, wishing never to do anything offensive to Him, asking for a tender conscience that he may be at once aware when he is doing wrong, and earnestly desiring to leave no duty undonesuch a man as that must be happy! He may not laugh much. He may have very little to say when in frivolous company. But there is a joy that laughter would but mock. There is a sacred mirth within to which the merriment of fools is but as the crackling of thorns under a pot. And the man with a tender conscience has that joy! The careful walker has that joy! The man who, when he puts his head upon his pillow at night, can feel, I have not been all that I want to be but still I have aimed at holiness. I have tried to curb my passions, I have sought to find out my Masters will and in every point to do it. Such a man sleeps sweetly and if he wakes, there is music in his heart! And such a man, whatever the trials of life may be, has abundant sources of joy within himself. He is pleasing to Christ, Christ joys in him and his joy is full!   
And this is peculiarly the case with those who love the brethren. Those are some who do not love their brethren at all. Or if they do, they love themselves a great deal more. They are very apt to judge and to condemn their brethren. If they can find a little fault, they magnify it and if they can find none, they invent some. I know persons who seem to be, by nature, qualified to be monks or hermits, living quite alone. According to their notion of things, they are much too good for society. No church is pure enough for them. No ministry can profit them. No one else can reach as high as the wonderful position to which, in their self-conceit, they fancy that they have attained! Let none of us be of that sort. Many of the children of God are far better than we are and the worst one in his family has some points in which he is better than we are. I feel, sometimes, as though I would give my eyes to be as sure of Heaven as the most obscure and the least in all the family of God! And I think that such times may come to some of you if you imagine yourselves to be so great and good. You strong cattle that push with horn and with shoulderand drive back the weak onesthe Lord may say to you, Get you gone! You belong not to Me, for My people are not thus rough and boastfulnot thus proud and haughty. I look to the man who is humble, to him who has a contrite spirit and who trembles at My Word.   
Did you ever try to pray to God under the influence of a consciousness of possessing the higher life? Did you ever try to pray to God that way? If you ever did, I do not think you will do it a second time! I tried it once, but I am not likely to repeat the experiment. I thought I would try to pray to God in that fashion, but it did not seem to came naturally from me. And when I had done so, I thought I heard somebody at a distance saying, God be merciful to me a sinner, and he went home to his house justified! And then I had to tear off my Pharisaic robes and get back to where the poor publican had been standing, for his place and his prayer suited me admirably! I cannot make out what has happened to some of my brethren who fancy themselves so wonderfully good. I wish the Lord would strip them of their self-righteousness and let them see themselves as they really are in His sight! Their fine notions concerning the higher life would soon vanish them. Brothers and Sisters, the highest life I ever hope to reach this side of Heaven is to say from my very soul *I the chief of sinners am,   
But Jesus died for me.*   
I have not the slightest desire to suppose that I have advanced in the spiritual life many stages beyond my brethren. As long as I trust simply to the blood and righteousness of Christ and think nothing of myself, I believe that I shall continue to be pleasing to the Lord Jesus Christ that His joy will be in me and that my joy will be full.   
III. Now, thirdly, I think we may gather from the text that THE JOY WHICH JESUS GIVES TO HIS PEOPLE IS HIS OWN JOY. That My joy might remain in you.   
I daresay you have noticed that a man cannot communicate to another any joy except that of which he is himself conscious. Here is a man who is rich. He can tell you the joy or riches, but he cannot give that joy to a poor man. Here is another man who takes delight in all sorts of foolery. He can tell you the joy of nonsense, but he cannot go beyond that. So, when Jesus gives us joy, He gives us His own joy and what do you think it is? I must put it very briefly.   
The joy of Jesus is, first, the joy of abiding in His Fathers love. He knows that His Father loves Himthat He never did anything else but love Himthat He loved Him before the earth wasthat He loved Him when He was in the manger and that He loved Him when He was on the Cross. Now that is the joy which Christ gives to youthe joy of knowing that your Father loves you! Let me stop a little while so that you who are really Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ may just roll that sweet morsel under your tonguethe everlasting God loves you! I have known the time when I have felt as if I could leap up at the very thought of Gods love to me. That He pities you and cares for you, you can understand. But that He loves youwell, if that does not make your joy full, there is nothing that can! It ought to fill us with delight to know that we are loved of the Lord with an everlasting and infinite love, even as Jesus Christ is loved. The Father Himself loves you, declares Christ, so surely you share Christs joyand that fact should make your own joy full!   
Christs joy is also the joy of hallowed friendship. He said to His disciples, Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knows not what his Lord does: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of My Father, I have made known unto you. The friends of Jesus are those who are taken by Him into most intimate fellowshipto lean upon His breast and to become His constant companions. Our Lord Jesus Christ has great joy in being on the most friendly terms with His people and have not you also great joy in being on such friendly terms with Him? What higher joy do you want or can you have? I have heard a man say, very boastfully, that he once dined with Lord So-and-So. And another, just for the sake of showing off, spoke of his friend, Sir John somebody or other! But you have the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Friend, your Divine Companion! You are going to sit and feast with Him presently at His own table. He calls you no more His servant, but His friend! Does not that fact make you rejoice with exceeding joy? What is your heart made of if it does not leap with joy at such an assurance as that? You are Beloved of the Lord and a friend of the Son of God! Kings might well be willing to give up their crowns if they could have such bliss as this!   
Moreover, our Lord Jesus felt an intense delight in glorifying His Father. It was His constant joy to bring Glory to His Father. Have you ever felt the joy of glorifying God, or do you now feed joy in Christ because He has glorified His Father? I solemnly declare that if Christ would not save me, I would love Him for what He has done to exhibit the Character of God! I have sometimes thought that if He were to drive me out of doors, I would stand there in the cold and say, Do what You will with me. Crush me if You will. But I will always love You, for there never was another such as You are, never one who so well deserved my love and so fully won my affection and admiration as You have done. How gloriously has Christ rolled away the great load of human sin, adequately recompensed the claims of Divine Justice and magnified the Law and made it honorable! He took the greatest possible delight in doing this. It was for the joy that was set before Him that He endured the Cross, despising the shame. Let that joy be yours, also! Rejoice that the Law of God is honored, that Justice is satisfied and that Free Grace is gloriously displayed in the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ. It was the joy of Christ that He should finish the work which His Father gave Him to do. And He has finished it and, therefore, He is glad!   
Will you not also rejoice in His finished work? You have not to put a single stitch to the robe of righteousness which He has workedit is woven from the top throughout and absolutely perfect in every respect. You have not to contribute even a quarter of a penny to the ransom price for your redemption, for it is paid to the uttermost farthing. The great redemptive work is finished forever and Christ has done it all! He is Alpha and He is Omega. He is the Author and He is also the Finisher of our faith! Sit down, my Brothers and Sisters in Christ, and just feed on this precious Truth of God! Surely this is the feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined, of which the Prophet Isaiah long ago wrote. I see You, Lord Jesus, with Your foot upon the dragons neck! I see You with death and Hell beneath Your feet! I see the Glory that adorns Your triumphant brow as You wait till the whole earth shall acknowledge You as King, for You have once and for all said, It is finished, and finished it certainly is! And shall not my poor heart rejoice because You have finished it, and finished it for me?   
IV. My last observation is that WHEN CHRIST COMMUNICATES HIS JOY TO HIS PEOPLE, IT IS A JOY WHICH REMAINS AND A JOY WHICH IS FULL.   
No other joy remains. There is a great deal of very proper joy in many families when children are born, yet how many little coffins are followed by weeping mothers? There is joy when God fills the barn, and very properly so, for a bountiful harvest should make men glad. But the winter soon comes, with its cold and dark and dreary weather. But,

Brothers and Sisters, when we get the joy of the Lord, it remains! Why? Because the cause of it remains. The well will continue as long as the spring runs and the joy of a Christian is one that can never alter because the cause of it never alters! Gods love never changes towards His people. The Atonement never loses its efficacy. Our Lord Jesus Christ never ceases His intercession. His acceptableness with God on our behalf never varies. The promises do not change. The Covenant is not like the moon sometimes waxing and sometimes waning. Oh, no, if you rejoice with Christs joy today, you will have the same cause for rejoicing tomorrow, and forever, and forevermore, for He says that His joy shall remain in you!   
Then, next, this joy is full joy. Then, dear Brothers and Sisters, if our joy is full, two things are very clear. First, there is no room for any more joy and, secondly, there is no room for any sorrow! When a man gets to know the love of God to him, he is so full of delight that he does not need any more joy. The pleasures of this world lose all their former charm. When a man has eaten all he can eat, you may set whatever you like before him, but he has no appetite for it. Enough is as good as a feast, we say. When a man is forgiven by God and knows that he is saved, the joy of the Lord enters his soul and he says, You may take all other joys and do what you like with them. I have my God, my Savior, and I need no more. Then, ambition ceases, lust is quiet, covetousness is dead and desires that once roamed abroad, now stay at home. The saved one says, My God, You are enough for me. What more can I require? Since You have said to me, I love you, and my heart has responded, My God, I love You, too, I have more true wealth at my disposal than if I had all the mines of the Indies under my control!   
There is, also, no longer any room for sorrow, for if Christs joy has filled us, where can sorrow go? But the man has lost his gold. Yes, he says, but if the Lord likes to take it from me, let Him have it. But the man is bereaved of those that are very dear to him, as Job was. Yet he says, The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. When a man consciously realizes the love of God in his soul, he cannot want more than that. I wish that all of us had that realization, for then our joy would be so great that we would have no room left for sorrow!   
Now, dear Brothers and Sisters, as you come to the Table of your Lord in this spirit, you will feel so full of joy that you will be too full for words. People really full of joy do not usually talk much. A person who is carrying a glass that is full to the brim does not go dancing along like one who has nothing to carry! He is very quiet and steady, for he does not want to spill the contents of the glass. So, the man who has the joy of the Lord filling his soul is often quiethe cannot say much about it. I have even known that joy to get so full that we have scarcely known whether we have been in the body or out of the body. Pain, sickness, depression of spiritall seem to have been taken right away and the man has had so clear a view of Christ and his mind has been so abstracted from everything else, that afterwards it has almost seemed like a dream to him to have felt the love of God in its almighty power lifting him above all surrounding circumstances!   
Then, dear Brothers and Sisters, if it is so with us, the joy of the Lord will be much too full for us ever to forget it. If, at this moment, our soul is filled with Christs joy, it is possible that 20 or 30 years hence, any one of us may be able to say, I remember that first Sabbath night in the year 1875 at the Tabernacle! My Lord then met with me, looked into my soul and saw there was a void thereand He poured His own hearts joy into me until my soul could not hold any more! And perhaps, in some dark time in the future, your present experience will be a great stay to your soul and you will recall Davids words in a similar case, O my God, my soul is cast down within me: therefore will I remember You from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar. And you will say, Though, now deep calls unto deep at the noise of Your waterspouts, the remembrance of that bright season causes me to know that You do not forsake those on whom Your love has once been set. Come close to your Lord, Beloved! I delight to come very near to Him. To touch the hem of His garment is enough for sinners, but it is not enough for saints. We need to sit at His feet with Mary and to lay our heads upon His bosom as John did.   
O you unconverted ones, look to Jesus, for if you look to Him, you shall live! But as for you who are converted, a look will not be enough for you. You need to keep on gazing at Him and for Him to keep on gazing at you till He shall say to you, You have ravished My heart, My Sister, My Spouse; you have ravished My heart with one of your eyes, with one chain of your neck. And you also shall say, He brought me to the banqueting house, and His banner over me was love. Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples: for I am sick of love. Oh, that there might now be such sweet fellowship between Christ and all His bloodsprinkled ones that if we cannot pass the portals of Heaven, we shall be very near them! And if we cannot hear the songs of the angels, at any rate they will hear ours! And if we cannot look within and behold their joys, let us at least tempt them to look without and see ours, and half wish that they might be allowed to sit with us at this Communion Table, though that is an honor reserved for sinners saved by Sovereign Grace,

for *Never did angels taste above   
Redeeming Grace and dying love.*   
Thus may the Master smile on you, my Dearly-Beloved, and make you to   
be such eminent saints that He can have great joy in youfor then His   
joy shall remain in you and your joy shall be full!   
How I wish that everybody here knew my dear Lord and Master! I tell   
you who do not know Christ and do not experimentally know what true   
religion is that five minutes realization of the love of Christ would be  
better for you than a million years of your present choicest delights!   
There is more brightness in the dark side of Christ than in the brightest side of this poor world! I would sooner lie on a bed and ache in every limb with the death-sweat standing on my brow, by the month and year together, persecuted, despised, forsaken, poor and naked, with the dogs to lick my sores and the devils to tempt my soul and have Christ for my Friendthan sit in the palaces of wicked kings with all their wealth, luxury, pampering and sin! Even at our worst estate, it is better to be Gods dog than the devils darling! It is better to have the crumbs and the moldy crusts that fall from Christs table for the dogs than to sit at the head of princely banquets with the ungodly! I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.   
God bless you and save you! And He will do so if you trust in Jesus, His dear Son. As soon as you trust in Jesus, you are saved! God grant that you may do so this very hour for His dear names sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 15:1-11.**

John 15:1. I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. All other vines were but types and shadows. Christ is the substanceGods ideal vinethe true vine. Israel was a vinethe figure is a common one throughout the Old Testamentbut it was a false vine and it bore bitter grapes!

2. Every branch in Me that bears not fruit He takes away. The true description of a real saint is that he is in Christ, that he abides in Christ and that he bears fruit unto Christ. Where there are not these three things, there is no real saintship and so the man is taken away. Whatever he seems to be and seems to have, he is taken away. Oh, the sad loss of many professors in being taken away! What a terrible doom to have had a name to live and then to be taken away!

2. And every branch that bears fruit, He purges it, that it may bring forth more fruit. The vine is very apt to become unclean and unhealthy. There are all sorts of creatures that love to suck its juices, so that even the most fruitful bough needs to be cleansed. Besides, the vine has a great tendency to run to wood, so the pruning knife must be used very sharply. It will be used upon all who are really in Christ and who are abiding in Christ.

3. Now you are clean. Those to whom the Savior spoke. Now you are clean.   
3. Through the word which I have spoken unto you. That is the great purger! Affliction is used, but it is rather the handle of the knife than the knife itself.   
4. Abide in Me. Now that you are clean, do not imagine that you can do without MeAbide in Me  
4. And I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can you, except you abide in Me. It is not a transient faith. It is not saying, I was converted so many years ago. But it is a living faith, an abiding faith, a constant vital union with Christ that marks the true heir of Heaven.   
5. I am the vine, you are the branches: he that abides in Me, and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit: for without Me you can do nothing. Severed from Me, you can bear no fruit whatever. Not only can you not do much, but you can do nothing apart from Me.   
6. If a man abides not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered. As I have already reminded you, it is only an abiding faith that is a real faiththe faith that remains fixed in Christthe vital union with Christ maintains day by day.   
6-11. And men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall you be My disciple. As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you: continue you in My love. If you keep My commandments, you shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Fathers commandments, and abide in His love. These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. If you are Christs disciples now, you are to keep on being His disciples and to grow more and more so as the years advance.

Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307  
PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #1128 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

LOVES CROWNING DEED   
NO. 1128

**A SERMON DELIVERED OF LORDS-DAY MORNING, AUGUST 24, 1873, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.   
John 15:13.**

I HAVE lately in my ministry very much detained you in the balmy region of Divine loving kindness. Our subjects have frequently been full of love. I have, perhaps, repeated myself, and gone over the same ground again and again, but I could not help it. My own soul was in a grateful condition and therefore out of the abundance of the heart the mouth has spoken. Truly I have little reason to excuse myself, for the region of love to Christ is the native place of the Christian. We were first brought to know Christ and to rest in Him through His love, and there, in the warmth of His tenderness, we were born to God. Not by the terrors of justice, nor the threats of vengeance were we reconciled, but Divine Grace drew us with cords of love.

Now, we have sometimes heard of sickly persons, that the physician has recommended them to try their native air, in hopes of restoration. So we, also, recommend every backsliding Christian to try the native air of Christs love and we charge every healthy Believer to abide in it. Let the Believer under decays of Grace go back to the Crossthere he found his hope, there he must find it again. There his love to Jesus beganwe, love Him because He first loved usand there must His love be again inflamed. The atmosphere around the Cross of Christ is bracing to the soul. Get to think much of His love and you grow strong and vigorous in Grace.

As the dwellers in the low-lying Alpine valleys become weak and full of disease in the close, damp atmosphere, but soon recover health and strength if they climb the hillside and tarry there, so in this world of selfishness, where every man is fighting for his own and the mean spirit of caring only for ones own self reigns predominant, the saints become weak and diseased, even as worldlings are. But up on the hillsides, where we learn Christs self-denying, disinterested affection to the sons of men, we are braced to nobler and better lives. If men are ever to be truly great they must be nurtured beneath the wing of Free Grace and dying love.

The grandeur of the Redeemers example suggests to His disciples to make their own lives sublime, and both furnishes them with motives for doing so and with forces to constrain them thereto. Moreover, we may well tarry for many a day in the region of the love of Christ because not only is it our native region and full of bracing influences, but it has an outlook towards the better shore. As shipwrecked mariners upon a desert island have been known to linger most of the day upon that headland which

pushes farthest out into the main ocean, in the hope that, perhaps, if they cannot catch a glimpse of their own country across the waves, they may possibly discern a sail which had left one of the ports of the well-beloved land, so it is that while we are sitting on the headlands of Divine Love we may look across to Heaven and become familiar with the spirits of the just.

If ever we are to see Heaven while we are yet tarrying here, it must surely be from Cape Cross or Mount Fellowshipfrom that jutting piece of holy experience of Divine Love which runs away from the ordinary thoughts of men and approaches the heart of Christ. There, at any rate, do I long to sit for many an hour till the eternal day shall break and the shadows flee away. And I shall dwell with all the chosen in the land where there is no more sinfor if there can be found a Heaven below, it is where Heaven came down from Heaven to die for sinful men, that sinful men might go up to Heaven to live eternally.

Our subject this morning, then, is Divine Love, and we have chosen the highest hill in all the goodly land for you to climb. We shall take you, today, to Loves most sacred shrine, to the Jerusalem of the holy land of Love, to the labor of Love where it was transfigured, and put on its most beautiful garments. Where it became, indeed, too bright for mortal eye fully to gaze upon it, too lustrous for this dim vision of ours. Let us come to Calvary where we find Love stronger than death, conquering the grave for our sakes!

We shall speak, first, upon Loves crowning actGreater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. But, then, since the text, grand as it is, and high, so that we cannot attain unto it, yet seems to fall short of the great argumentthough it is one of the Masters own sayingswe shall speak upon the sevenfold crown of Jesus Love. And when we have done so, we shall have some royal things to say which befit the place whereon we stand when we are gathered at the foot of the Cross.

I. First, then, LOVES CROWNING DEED. There is a climax to everything and the climax of love is to die for a beloved one. Free Grace and dying love are the noblest themes among men and when united they are sublimity itself. Love can do much, can do infinite things, but greater love has no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. This is the ultima thule of loveits sails can find no further shore, its deeds of selfdenial can go no further. To lay down ones life is the most that love can do. This is clear if we consider, first, that when a man dies for his friends, it proves his deep sincerity. Lip-love, proverbially, is a thing to be questionedtoo often is it a counterfeit. Love which speaks can use hyperbolical expressions at its will, and when you have heard all you can hear of loves speech, you are not sure that it is love, for all are not hunters that blow the horn, all are not friends who cry up friendship.

There is much among men of a feeling which bears all the likeness of that priceless thing called love, which is more precious than the gold of Ophir, and yet for all that, as all is not gold that glitters, so it is not all love that walks delicately and feigns affection. But a man is no liar when he is willing to die to prove his love. All suspicion of insincerity must then be banished. We are sure he loves who dies for love. Yes, it is not bare sincerity that we see in such a casewe see the intensity of his affection.

A man may make us feel that he is intensely in earnest when he speaks with burning words and he may perform many actions which may all appear to show how intense he is, and yet for all that, he may but be a skillful player, understanding well the art of simulating that which he does not feel. But when a man dies for the cause he has espoused, you know that his is no superficial passion! You are sure that the core of his nature must be on fire when his love consumes his life. If he will shed his blood for the object lovedthere must be blood in the veins of his loveit is a living love. Who can question the solemn vehemence of a mans love when he passes through the sepulcher and yields his soul up for the thing he professes to love? So that greater love has no man than this, because he can give no greater proof of the sincerity and intensity of his affection than to lay down his life for his friends.

And, again, it proves the thorough self-abnegation of the heart when the man risks life, itself, for love. Love and self-denial for the object loved go hand-in-hand. If I profess to love a certain person and yet will neither give my silver nor my gold to relieve his needs, nor in any way deny myself comfort or ease for his sake, such love is contemptible. It wears the name, but lacks the reality of lovetrue love must be measured by the degree to which the person loving will be willing to subject himself to crosses and lossesto suffering and self-denials. After all, the value of a thing in the market is what a man will give for it, and you must estimate the value of a mans love by that which he is willing to give up for it. What will he do to prove his affection? What will he suffer for the sake of benefiting his beloved? Greater love for friends has no man than this, that he lay down his life for them.

Even Satan acknowledged the reality of the virtue which would lead a man to die, when he spoke concerning Job to God. He made little of Jobs losing his sheep, and his cattle, and his children and remaining patient. But he said, Skin for skin; yes all that a man has will he give for his life; but put forth now Your hand, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse You to Your face. So if love could give up its cattle and its land, its outward treasures and possessions, it would be somewhat strong, but comparatively it would fail if it could not go further and endure personal suffering. Yes, and the laying down of life, itself.

No such failure occurred in the Redeemers love. Our Savior stripped Himself of all His glories and by a thousand self-denials proved His love. But the most convincing evidence was given when He gave up His life for us. Hereby perceive we the love of God, says the Apostle John, because

He laid down His life for us. As if John passed by everything else which the Son of God had done for us and put his finger upon His death and said, Hereby we perceive the love of God towards us. It was majestic love that made the Lord Jesus lay aside, His attire and rings of light, and lend their glory to the stars. He stripped off His azure mantle and hung it on the sky and then come down to earth to wear the poor, mean garments of our flesh and bloodin which to toil and labor like ourselves. But the masterpiece of love was when He would even put off the garment of His flesh and yield Himself to the superlative agonies of death by crucifixion! He could go no further. Self-abnegation had achieved its utmost. He could deny Himself no more when He denied Himself leave to live.

Again, Beloved, the reason why death for its object is the crowning deed of love is this, that it excels all other deeds. Jesus Christ had proven His love by dwelling among His people as their Brother, and participating in their poverty as their Friend, till He could say, Foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but I, the Son of Man, have not where to lay My head. He had manifested His love by telling them all He knew of the Father, unveiling the secrets of eternity to simple fishermen. He showed His love by the patience with which He bore with their faults, never harshly rebuking, but only gently chiding themand even that but seldom. He revealed His love to them by the miracles He worked on their behalf and the honor which He put upon them by using them in His service. Indeed, there were ten thousand princely acts of the love of Jesus Christ towards His own, but none of them can, for a moment, endure comparison with His dying for themthe agonizing death of the Cross surpasses all the rest!

These life-actions of His love are bright as stars, and, like the stars, if you gaze upon them, they will be seen to be far greater than you dreamed, but yet they are only stars compared with this clear, blazing sun of Infinite Love which is to be seen in the Lords dying for His people on the bloody tree. Then, I must add that His death did, in effect, comprehend all other acts, for when a man lays down his life for his friend he has laid down everything else. Give up life, and you have given up wealthwhere is the wealth of a dead man? Renounce life and you have relinquished positionwhere is the rank of a man who lies in the sepulcher? Lay down life and you have forsaken enjoymentwhat enjoyment can there be to the denizen of the morgue? Giving up life, you have given up all things, therefore the force of that reasoning, He that spared not His own Son but freely delivered Him up for us all, how will He not with Him also freely give us all things?

The giving of the life of His dear Son was the giving of all that His Son was. And as Christ is Infinite, and All in All, the delivering up of His life was the concession of All in All to usthere could be nothing more. Beloved, I speak but too coldly upon a theme which ought to stir my soul, first, and yours afterwards. Spirit of the living God, come like a quickening wind from Heaven and let the sparks of our love glow into a mighty furnace just now, even now, if it may so please You! Beloved, we now remark that for a man to die for his friends is evidently the grandest of all proofs of his love in itself. The words glide over my tongue and drop from my lips very readilylay down his life for his friends, but do you know or feel what the words mean?

To die for another! There are some who will not even give of their substance to the poor. It seems like wrenching away a limb for them to give a trifle to Gods poor servants. Such people cannot guess what it must be to have love enough to die for another, any more than a blind man can imagine what colors can be likesuch persons are out of court altogether. There have been loving spirits who have denied themselves comfort and ease, and even common necessities, for the sake of their fellow men. Only such as these are in a measure qualified to form an idea of what it must be to die for another. But still, none of us can fully know what it means. To die for another! Conceive it! Concentrate your thoughts upon it! We start back from death, for under any light in which you may place it, human nature can never regard death as otherwise than a terrible thing.

To pass away into the Glory-land is so bright a hope that death is swallowed up in the victory, but the death itself is a bitter thing, and therefore needs to be swallowed up in the victory before we can bear it. It is a bitter pill and must be drowned in a sweet potion before we can rejoice in it. I am certain that no person, apart from sweet reflections of the Presence of God and the heavenly future, could regard death other than as a dreadful calamity. Even our Savior did not regard His approaching death without trembling! The thought of dying was not, in itself, otherwise than saddening, even to Him. Witness the bloody sweat as it streamed from Him in Gethsemane, and that man-like putting away of the cup with, If it is possible let this cup pass from Me!

As you think of that soul-conflict let it increase your idea of the Godlike Love which took the cup resolutely, with both its hands, and drank right on, and never stayed its dreadful draught till the Lord had drank damnation dry for all His people, swallowing up their deaths in His own most comprehensive death! It is no light thing to die. We speak too flippantly of death, but dying is no childs-play to any manand dying as the Savior diedin awful agonies of body and tortures of soul, it was a great thing, indeed, for His love to do. You may surround death, if you please, with luxury. You may place at the bedside all the dear assuagements of the most tender love. You may alleviate pain by the art of the apothecary and the physician. And you may decorate the dying couch with the honor of a nations anxious carebut death, for all that, is, in itself, no slight thingand when borne for others it is the masterpiece of Love.

And so, closing this point of Loves crowning action, let me say that after a man has died for another, there can be no question raised about his love. Unbelief would be insane if it should venture to intrude itself at the foot of the Cross, though, alas, it has been there and has there proved its utter unreasonableness! If a man dies for his friend, he must love him, nobody can question that! And Jesus, dying for His people, must love

themwho shall cast a doubt upon that fact? Shame on any of Gods children that they should ever raise questions on a matter so conclusively proven! As if the Lord Jesus knew that even this masterpiece of Love might still be intruded upon by unbelief, He rose again from the dead and rose with His love as fresh as ever in His heartand went to Heaven leading captivity captiveHis eyes flashing with the eternal Love that brought Him down!

He passed through the pearly gates and rode in triumph up to His Great Fathers Throne, and though He looked upon His Father with Love ineffable and eternal, He gazed upon His people, too, for His heart was still theirs. Even at this hour, from His Throne among the seraphim, where He sits in Glory, He looks down upon His people with pitying love and condescending Grace

*Now, though He reigns exalted high,   
His love is still as great.   
Well He remembers Calvary,   
Nor let His saints forget.*

He is all Love and altogether Love. Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

II. THE SEVEN CROWNS OF JESUS DYING LOVE are our second point. I hope I shall have your interested attention while I show that above that highest act of human love there is a something in Christs death for loves sake still more elevated. Mens dying for their friendsthis is superlativebut Christs dying for us is as much above mans superlative as that could be above mere commonplace. Let me show you this in seven points. The first is thisJesus is immortal, therefore the special character of His death.

Damon is willing to die for Pythias. The classic story shows that each of the two friends was anxious to die for the other. But suppose Damon dies for Pythias, he is only antedating what must occur, for Damon must die one day and if he lays down his life for his friend, say ten years before he otherwise would have done so, still he only loses that ten years lifehe must die sooner or later. Or if Pythias dies and Damon escapes, it may be that only by a fear weeks one of them has anticipated the departure, for they must both die eventually. When a man lays down his life for his friend, he does not lay down what he could keep altogether. He could only have kept it for a while. Even if he had lived as long as mortals can, till gray hairs are on their head, he must, at last, have yielded to the arrows of Death.

A substitutionary death for loves sake in ordinary cases would be but a slightly premature payment of that debt of Nature which must be paid by all. But such is not the case with Jesus. Jesus needed not die at all! There was no ground or reason why He should die apart from His laying down His life in the place of His friends. Up there in Glory was the Christ of God forever with the Father, eternal and everlasting. No age passed over His brow. We may say of Him, Your locks are bushy and black as the raven, You have the dew of Your youth. He came to earth and assumed our Nature that He might be capable of death, yet remember, though capable of death, His body need not have died. As it was it never saw corruption, because there was not in it the element of sin which necessitated death and decay.

Our Lord Jesus, and none but He, could stand at the brink of the grave and say, No man takes My life from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again. We poor mortal men have only power to die, but Christ had power to live! Crown Him, then! Set a new crown upon His beloved head! Let other lovers who have died for their friends be crowned with silver, but for Jesus, bring forth the golden diadem and set it upon the head of the Immortal who never needed to have died, and yet became a mortal, yielding Himself to deaths pangs without necessity, except the necessity of His mighty love!

Note, next, that in the cases of persons who have yielded up their lives for others they may have entertained and probably did entertain the prospect that the supreme penalty would not have been enacted from them. They hoped that they might yet escape. Damon stood before Dionysius, the tyrant, willing to be slain instead of Pythias. But you will remember that the tyrant was so struck with the devotion of the two friends that he did not put either of them to death and so the proffered substitute escaped. There is an old story of a pious miner who was in the pit with an ungodly man at work. They had lighted the fuse and were about to blast a piece of rock with the powder, and it was necessary that they should both leave the mine before the powder exploded.

They both got into the bucket, but the hand above which was to wind them up was not strong enough to draw the two together, and the pious miner, leaping from the bucket, said to his friend, You are an unconverted man, and if you die your soul will be lost. Get up in the bucket as quickly as you can! As for me, I commit my soul into the hands of God, and if I die I am saved. This lover of his neighbors soul was spared, for he was found in perfect safety arched over by the fragments which had been blown from the rockhe escaped. But remember well that such a thing could not occur in the case of our dear Redeemer. He knew that if He was to give a ransom for our souls He had no loophole for escape. He must surely die. It was either He die, or His people mustthere was no other alternative. If we were to escape from the pit through Him, He must perish in the pit Himself. There was no hope for Him. There was no way by which the cup could pass from Him.

Men have bravely risked their lives for their friends. Perhaps had they been certain that the risk would have ended in death they would have hesitated. Jesus was certain that our salvation involved death to Himthe cup must be drained to the bottomHe must endure the mortal agony and in all the extreme sufferings of death He must not be spared one jot or tittle. Yet deliberately, for our sakes, He espoused Death that He might espouse us. I say again, bring forth another diadem! Put a second crown upon that once thorn-crowned head! All hail, Immanuel! Monarch of Misery, and Lord of Love! Was ever love like Yours? Lift up His praises, all you sons of song! Exalt Him, all you heavenly ones! Yes, set His throne higher than the stars! And let Him be extolled above the angels, because with full intent He bowed His head to Death. He knew that it behooved Him to suffer, it behooved that He should be made a Sacrifice for sin, and yet for the joy that was set before Him, He endured the Cross, despising the shame.

Note a third grand excellency in the crowning deed of Jesus love, namely, that He could have had no motive in that death but one of pure, unmingled love and pity. You remember when the Russian nobleman was crossing the steppes of that vast country in the snow, the wolves followed the sledge in greedy packs, eager to devour the travelers. The horses were lashed to their utmost speed, but needed not the lash, for they fled for their lives from their howling pursuers. Whatever could stay the eager wolves for a time was thrown to them in vain. A horse was loosedthey pursued it, tore it to pieces, and still followed, like grim Death.

At last a devoted servant, who had long lived with his masters family, said, There remains but one hope for you. I will throw myself to the wolves and then you will have time to escape. There was great love in this, but doubtless it was mingled with a habit of obedience, a sense of reverence to the head of the household, and probably emotions of gratitude for many obligations which had been received through a long course of years. I do not depreciate the sacrifice, far from it. Would that there were more of such a noble spirit among the sons of men! But still, you can see a wide difference between that noble sacrifice and the nobler deed of Jesus laying down His life for those who never obliged Him, never served Himwho were infinitely His inferiors and who could have no claims upon His gratitude.

If I had seen the nobleman surrender himself to the wolves to save his servant, and if that servant had in former days tried to be an assassin and had sought his lifeand yet the master had given himself up for the undeserving menialI could see some parallel. But as the case stands, there is a wide distinction. Jesus had no motive in His heart but that He loved us, loved us with all the greatness of His glorious Natureloved us, and therefore for love, pure love, and love aloneHe gave Himself up to bleed and die

*With all His sufferings full in view   
And woes to us unknown,   
Forth to the tack His spirit flew,   
Twas love that urged Him on.*

Put the third crown upon His glorious head! Oh angels, bring forth the immortal coronet which has been stored up for ages for Him alone, and let it glitter upon that ever-blessed brow!

Fourthly, remember, as I have already begun to hint, that in our Saviors case it was not precisely, though it was, in a sense, death for His friends. Greater love has no man than this towards his friends that he lay down his life for them. Read the text so, and it expresses a great truth but greater love a man may have than to lay down his life for his friends, namelyif he dies for his enemies! And here is the greatness of Jesus love, that though He called us friends, the friendship was all on His side at the first. He called us friends, but our hearts called Him enemy, for we were opposed to Him. We loved not in return for His love. We hid, as it were, our faces from Him, He was despised, and we esteemed Him not. Oh the enmity of the human heart to Jesus! There is nothing like it! Of all enmities that have ever come from the Pit that is bottomless, the enmity of the heart to the Christ of God is the strangest and most bitter of all!

And yet for men polluted and depraved, for men hardened till their hearts are like the nether millstone, for men who could not return and could not reciprocate the love He felt, Jesus Christ gave Himself to die! Scarcely for a righteous man one will die, yet perhaps for a good (benevolent) man one could even dare to die, but God commends His love to us in that while we were yet sinners in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

*O love of unexampled kind!   
That leaves all thought so far behind;   
Where length, and breadth, and depth, and height, Are lost to my astonished sight.*

Bring forth the royal diadem again, I say, and crown our loving Lord, the Lord of Love, for as He is King of kings everywhere else, so is He King of kings in the region of affection!

I shall not, I hope, weary you when I now observe that there was another glorious point about Christs dying for us for we had, ourselves, been the cause of the difficulty which required a death. There were two brothers on board a raft once, upon which they had escaped from a foundering ship. There was not enough food, and it was proposed to reduce the number that some, at least, might be able to live. So many must die. They cast lots for life and death. One of the brothers was drawn and was doomed to be thrown into the sea. His brother interposed and said, You have a wife and children at home. I am single and therefore can be better spared. I will die instead of you. No, said his brother, not so. Why should you? The lot has fallen upon me. And they struggled with each other in mutual arguments of love, till at last the substitute was thrown into the sea.

Now, there was no ground of difference between those too brothers whatever. They were friends and more than friends. They had not caused the difficulty which required the sacrifice of one of them. They could not blame one another for forcing upon them the dreadful alternative. But in our case there would never have been a need for anyone to die if we had not been the offenders, the willful offenders. And who was the offended one? Whose injured honor required the death? I speak not untruthfully if I say it was the Christ that died who was, Himself, the offended One. Against God the sin had been committed, against the majesty of the Divine Ruler! And in order to wipe the stain away from Divine Justice it was imperative that the penalty should be exacted and the sinful one should die. So He who was offended took the place of the offender and died, that the debt due to His own Justice might be paid. It is the case of the judge

bearing the penalty which he feels compelled to pronounce upon the culprit!

Like the old classic story of the father who, on the judgment bench, condemns his son to lose his eyes for an act of adultery, and then puts out one of his own eyes to save an eye for his sonthe judge himself bore a portion of the penalty. In our case, He who vindicated the honor of His own Law, and bore all the penalty, was the Christ who loved those who had offended His Sovereignty and grieved His holiness! I say againbut where are the lips that shall say it aright?Bring forth, bring forth a new diadem of more than imperial splendor, to crown the Redeemers blessed head anew, and let all the harps of Heaven pour forth the richest music in praise of His supreme love!

Note, again, that there have been men who died for others, but they have never borne the sins of others. They were willing to take the punishment, but not the guilt. Those cases which I have already mentioned did not involve character. Pythias has offended Dionysius, Damon is ready to die for him, but Damon does not bear the offense given by Pythias. A brother is thrown into the sea for a brother, but there is no fault in the case. The servant dies for his master in Russia, but the servants character risesit is in no degree associated with any fault of the masterand the master is, indeed, faultless in the case. But here, before Christ must die, it must be written, He was numbered with the transgressors, and He bore the sin of many. The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. He made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. He was made a curse for us, as it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangs on a tree.

Now, far be it from our hearts to say that Christ was ever less than perfectly holy and spotless, and yet there had to be established a connection between Him and sinners by the way of substitution, which must have been hard for His perfect Nature to endure. For Him to be hung up between two felons. For Him to be accused of blasphemy. For Him to be numbered with transgressors. For Him to suffer, the Just for the unjust, bearing His Fathers wrath as if He had been guiltythis is amazing and surpasses all thought! Bring forth the brightest crowns and put them on His head, while we pass on to weave a seventh chaplet for that adorable brow! For remember, once more, the death of Christ was a proof of superlative love, because in His case He was denied all the helps and alleviations which in other cases make death to be less than death.

I marvel not that a saint can die joyously. Well may his brow be placid and his eyes bright, for he sees his heavenly Father gazing down upon him and Glory awaiting him! Well may his spirit be rapt in joy, even while the death-sweat is on his face, for the angels have come to meet him and he sees the far-off land, and the gates of pearl growing nearer every hour! But ah, to die upon a Cross without a pitying eye upon you, surrounded by a scoffing multitudeand to die there appealing to God, who turns away His face! To die with this as your requiem, My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me! To startle the midnight darkness with an, Eli, Eli, lama Sabachthani of awful anguish such as never had been heard beforethis is terrible!

The triumph of Love in the death of Jesus rises clear above all other heroic acts of self-sacrifice! Even as we have seen the lone peak of the monarch of mountains rise out from all adjoining alps and pierce the clouds to hold familiar converse with the stars, so does this love of Christ soar far above anything else in human history, or that can be conceived by the heart of man! His death was more terrible, His passing away more grievous by far. Greater love has no man than this, that He lay down such a life in such a fashion, and for such enemies so utterly unworthy! Oh, I will not say, Crown Himwhat are crowns to Him? Blessed Lamb of God, our hearts love You! We fall at Your feet in adoring reverence, and magnify You in the silence of our souls.

III. Lastly, and I must be very brief, as my time has fled, MANY ROYAL THINGS OUGHT TO BE SUGGESTED TO US BY THIS ROYAL LOVE. And first, dear Brothers and Sisters, how this thought of Christs proving His love by His death ennobles self-denial. I do not know how you feel, but I feel utterly mean when I think of what Christ has done for me. To live a life of comparative ease and enjoyment shames me. To work to weariness seems nothing. After all, what are we doing compared with what He has done? Those who can suffer, who can lay down their lives in mission fields and bear hardships, and poverty, and persecution for Christmy Brethren, these are to be enviedthey have a portion above their Brethren!

It makes us feel ashamed to be at home and to possess any comforts when JESUS so denied Himself. I say the thought of the Lords bleeding love makes us think ourselves mean to be what we are. It makes us nothing in our own sight, while it causes us to honor before God the self-denial of others and wish that we had the means of practicing it. And oh, how it prompts us to heroism! When you get to the Cross you have left the realm of little menyou have reached the nursery of true chivalry. Does Christ die?then we feel we could die, too! What grand things men have done when they have lived in the love of Christ! That story of the Moravians comes to my mind, and I will repeat it, though you may often have heard it, how in the South of Africa there was, years ago, a place of lepers into which persons afflicted with leprosy were driven.

There was a tract of country surrounded by high walls, from which none could escape. There was only one gate and he who went in never came out again. Certain Moravians looked over the wall and saw two menone, whose arms had rotted off with leprosy, was carrying on his back another who had lost his legsand between the two they were making holes in the ground and planting seeds. The two Moravians thought, They are dying of a foul disease by hundreds inside that place. We will go and preach the Gospel to them. But, they said, if we go in, we can never come out again. There we will die of leprosy, too. They went in and they never did come out till they went home to Heaven. They died for others

for the love of Jesus.

Two others of these holy men went to the West Indian Islands, where there was an estate to which a man could not go to preach the Gospel unless he was a slave. And these two men sold themselves for slaves, to work as others worked, that they might tell their fellow slaves the Gospel. Oh, if we had that spirit of Jesus among us we should do great things! We need it bad, and must have it. The Church has lost everything when she has lost her old heroism! She has lost her power to conquer the world when the love of Christ no longer constrains her. But mark how the heroics in this case is sweetly tinctured and flavored with gentleness. The chivalry of the olden times was cruel. It consisted very much in a strong fellow cased in steel going about and knocking others to pieces who did not happen to wear similar suits of steel.

Nowadays we could get a good deal of that courage back, I dare say, but we shall be best without it. We need that blessed chivalry of love in which a man feels, I would suffer any insult from that man if I could do him good for Christs sake. And I would be a doormat to my Lords temple gate, that all who come by might wipe their feet upon me, if they could thereby honor Christ. The grand heroism of being nothing for Christs sake, or anything for the Churchs sakethat is the heroism of the Cross, for Christ made Himself of no reputation and took upon Himself the form of a Servant, and being found in fashion as a Man, He became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross. O blessed Spirit, teach us to perform heroic acts of self-abnegation for Jesus names sake!

And, lastly, there seems to come to my ears from the Cross a gentle voice that says, Sinner, Sinner, guilty Sinner, I did all this for you, what have you done for Me? And yet another which says, Return unto Me! Look unto Me and be you saved, all you ends of the earth. I wish I knew how to preach to you Christ Crucified. I feel ashamed of myself that I cannot do better than I have done. I pray the Lord to set it before you in a far better way than any of my words can. But, oh, guilty Sinner, there is life in a look at the Redeemer! Turn, now, your eyes to Him and trust Him! Simply by trusting Him you shall find pardon, mercy, eternal life and Heaven. Faith is a look at the Great Substitute. God help you to get that look for Jesus sake. Amen.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 15. Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307.  
Sermon #2986 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

ONE ASPECT OF CHRISTS DEATH   
NO. 2986

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, MAY 3, 1906.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON THURSDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 14, 1875.**

**Greater love has no man than this, that   
a man lay down his life for his friends.   
John 15:13.**

I FELT, today, after a very weary and, in some respects, a very sorrowful week, as if I could not preach tonightor that if I did stand up to speak, it must be upon some very easy and simple theme and, at the same time, it must be some great subject which would give me plenty of sea-room. I think the text I have read to you fulfills both these conditions. And, although I shall not attempt to sail across it, or to fathom it, for that would be impossible, yet, at any rate, there will be no fear that I shall run aground, or need to exercise great skill in threading my way through a tortuous channel, where, perhaps, one might be on the rock or the sandbank before he was aware of his danger. If there is anything about which Christians are sureand concerning which they can speak with confidence, surely it is the love of Christ! And though that is one of the simplest things in the world, yet it is also the very sweetest. Whenever you spread the table for any meal, you are pretty sure to put bread and salt upon it. And whenever we preach, if we preach as we should, we are sure to have something of the savor of the love of Christ in our preaching. I have heard that in a certain country, the way in which a stranger is welcomed is by giving him just bread and salt nothing more. That is what I am about to do. We will have bread and salt on the tablethe essential things, the common thingsbut, blessed be God, with a fullness of nourishment and a savor of tastefulness in them which those who are taught of God will be able to relish!

The death of Jesus Christ may be viewed in many aspects, but we, Brothers and Sisters, have learned to see very clearly the substitutionary character of it. It is our delight to believe that Christ laid down His life for the sake of His friends, thereby rendering complete satisfaction to offended Justice, presenting Himself as a vicarious Sacrifice in their place, that they might be reconciled to God and might be accepted in the Beloved. We are quite sure about this Truth of God. We do not gather it from this particular verse which I have selected for my text, but from the whole run and tenor of Scripture, but especially from such a passage as this, Forasmuch as you know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

This Doctrine of Redemption tallies with the types of the old Jewish dispensation and corresponds with the prophetic descriptions of the promised Messiah, especially those wonderful chapters in Isaiah and Ezekiel in which His Character is so accurately foretold. This view of Christ dying as the great substitutionary Sacrifice for sinners cannot be dispensed with for a single momentit seems to us to be the very essence of the Gospel. Cloudiness with regard to this great central Truth of God involves mistiness concerning everything else. And the poet was quite right when he wrote

*You cannot be right in the rest   
Unless you think rightly of Him.*   
If you have any question about that great Truth, you will have your brain more or less muddled concerning every other Doctrine in the Word of God. And I would take this Doctrine just as I would the Doctrine of

Justification by Faith, as being the test of a standing or falling church, and of a God-sent ministry!

Yet, Brothers and Sisters, there are other aspects of the death of Christ beside the one I have mentioned and a Christians eyes should see both the greater objects and also the smaller ones. I am always glad that a painter does not merely give us the foreground of his picture, but gives us the background, tooand even when his painting is a portrait and he desires to have all our attention fixed upon the portraityet he does not neglect the little accessories of the picture. They may be unimportant, but if they are properly painted, they will not distract attention from the main subject of the picture, but will rather help to point to it. Now, the death of Christ was the greatest possible display of the love of God to men. Never forget that it was not merely Infinite Justice that blazed forth from the Cross, but also Infinite Affection! Indeed, the Cross displayed all the attributes of God and they can still be plainly perceived by those whose eyes have been Divinely opened. God revealed Himself there, through the dying Savior, in a very wonderful way. If I may use such an imageand I think I maythrough the smoked glass of the humanity of Christ, the Deity of God in all its fullness can be better seen by us than if we could, with our naked eyes, gaze upon the excessive brightness of that Glory. Indeed, blindness would follow upon a vision of absolute Deityif such a vision were even possible. To dwell long upon the Doctrine of the Trinity, and to vex your mind with the various theories of that mysterious subject which men have imagined, is the sure road to Socinianism or some other heresy! But, to see God veiled in human flesh and especially to see Him revealed in the Person of the dying Mediator, is to see God in the only way in which He

can to seen by mortal men! We do, not, therefore, for a moment forget that Christs death was the greatest possible display of Gods love to men.

It was, doubtless, also necessary to complete the perfect example of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He would have set before us a grand example of self-denial and disinterested love, even if He had not died for us, for it was no little thing that He should make Himself of no reputation and take upon Himself the form of a Servant and be made in the likeness of men and humble Himself as He did. Still, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross, was the crown of His life. It was because He endured the Cross, despising the shame, that Paul wrote to the Hebrews, Consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest you be wearied and faint in your minds. We also may remember that we have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin, but Christ has done this and more than this! He knows what it is to be made perfect through sufferings. I have no doubt that they speak the truth who say that the death of Christ was the climax of His example, but I am going to call your attention to another aspect of His death, namely, as a display of His own love to His own peopleGreater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. This is, I believe, what Christ meantthat His love to His friends was to be most clearly made manifest by His dying for them!

There is no need, with such a subject as this, for the use of grand periods and eloquent language, even if I ever indulged in that kind of thing. But I shall just give utterance to a few simple Truths of God which you already know, trying to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance. And, first, let us contemplate the love of Christ resplendent in the act of death, laying down His life for His friends. Secondly, let us see that love enhanced by a consideration of the friends for whom He laid down His life. And then, thirdly, let us see the love of Christ reflected and reproduced by His friends. This, however, will have to be done outside this placeI can only make the rough outline of the picture which is to be drawn by all of you who are the friends of Christ. My text reminds us of one of the strongest reasons why we should love one another even as Christ has loved usGreater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

I. Let us, then, first SEE CHRISTS LOVE RESPLENDENT IN THE LAYING DOWN OF HIS LIFE FOR HIS PEOPLE.   
When He says, Greater love has no man than this, He seems to me to imply that there are manifestations of His love which are not as great as this. The love of the Lord Jesus Christ to His people is always great. I may truly say that it is always greater than any other love. I might even say that it is always in the superlative degreethe greatest love there ever was, or is, or can be! Yet there are displays of that love which can be rightly described as great, greater, greatest. Our Lord had already displayed His love to His people in the great and the greater forms of it now He was about to display it in the highest and greatest of all ways.   
It was great love that made Him come to this earth and be Incarnate here. Have you ever thought of the greatness of the love of Christ in being a Child, a Youth, a Man and of His love in being willing to live in obscurity and retirement as the Son of Mary for 30 years? Wondrous love was there in that arrangement by which He was able, from His own experience, to sympathize with retiring Christians and with young Believers whose duties do not cause them to be conspicuous in the world. The thought of God in the carpenters shop at Nazareth is to me very wonderful. As Moses took off his shoes at the sight of God in the burning bush, we may well manifest our awe and reverence as we see the Son of God, the express image of His Fathers Person, in the midst of the implements used by the village carpenter! That was truly great love.   
Then, when the time arrived for Him to come forth from His obscurity, He showed great love to His friends in calling them to Him one by one. His mind was altogether unique. He had the tenderness of a woman, yet He was to the highest degree, manly. Indeed, all the attributes of a perfect man and a perfect woman appear to have been blessedly blessed in His perfect Humanity. We might have supposed that He would have looked for companions somewhat like Himself, though I know not where He could have found them, but He seems to me to have looked for those whom, in a wondrous way, He could make to be like Himself rather than for those who were already like Himself! So He finds some fishermen very rough fellows to be associated with the gentle Jesus! He finds a taxgatherercommercial, graspinga strange companion for Him who cared not one farthing for gold or silver! The Apostles, as a whole, were a motley crew. Speaking after the manner of men, one could almost account for Jesus choosing John and there are some points in Peter that are very lovable, yet, as a band of men called to such exceptional service, they were rough and coarse! We might have thought that Christ would have looked for more refinement in those who were to be His daily companions for three yearsand had He been thinking only of Himself, He might have sought others than He did seek. Certainly, Brothers and Sisters, in my own case, I have often felt that I could adopt the language of Faber, which we sang just now   
*How many hearts You might have had   
More innocent than mine!   
How many souls more worthy far   
Of that pure touch of Thine!   
Ah, Grace! Into unlikeliest heart   
It is your boast to come   
The glory of your light to find   
In darkest spots a home.*   
So Jesus Christ showed His love to His friends in the very act of calling them to be His friends. And He also showed His love in fitting them for the position to which He had called them. He laid Himself out to teach them, to train them, to build up their characters upon a firm foundation and to infuse into their minds right principles and noble sentiments so that they could be fully qualified to be the servants of the churches and the glory of Christvessels to be used no longer for merely worldly purposes, but to be meet for the Masters use! With what singular wisdom He trained them! With what patience He bore with them! Had they had any other master, they would, many a time, have been liable to be discharged for their stupidity, but He simply said, Have I been so long a time with you, and yet have you not known Me, Philip?   
This was a proof of great love on His part, yet He seems to me to have shown even greater love when, towards the end of His life, He bade these friends of His sit and eat and drink with Him at His Table and expressed His desire that His friends should continue, in all later ages, thus to remember Him. Then, after the Supper, He rose from the table, laid aside His outer garment, took a towel and girded Himselfpoured water into a basin and washed His disciples feet! Oh, this was great love indeed!   
Still, our text talks about a greater display of Christs love than this, so we conclude that while to choose and call, to instruct and edify, to entertain and refresh was proof of very great love on Christs partto die for His friends was evidence of still greater love. There are, in this world, many persons who will lay themselves out to help their fellow creatures to resist temptation and to struggle out of the ways of vice into the path of virtue and who would, with heroic self-denial, bring themselves wellnear to the graves mouth to accomplish these endsbut they will not lay down their lives for their fellows. If they did, it would be the greatest thing they could possibly do for them, for the text is true, Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.   
But our Lord was willing to die for His friends. Some people might lay down their lives for their friends, but it would be quite unwillingly that they would do so. They might make the supreme sacrifice under the force of some strong compelling passion, yet they would escape if they could. But look at our blessed Lord and Master! When the time came for Him to go out of this world unto His Father, He did not make the slightest effort to escape from death. Judas knew the place where He was in the habit of going for private meditation and prayerand to that very place our Master went, as He had often gone before, although He knew that He would meet the traitor there. When the officers and men from the chief priests and Pharisees came there with lanterns and torches and weapons, a word from Him made them fall to the ground! He could, therefore, in an instant, have driven them all out of the garden and have escaped from them. But He did not do so. He could never have been delivered up to be put to death, either by Jews or by Romans, if He had not been perfectly willing to die! From the time when they took Him to Annas to the moment when they nailed Him to the Cross, one solitary wish on His part would have scattered all His foes and He could have gone wherever He pleasedbut He would not express such a wish, or even cherish it. Admire the wonderful reticence of Christ! That He did not speak in His own defense, was marvelous, but, that He did not even wish to escape, or think of escaping, is still more amazing, for a thought would have been sufficient to have procured His release! How wonderfully Omnipotence held in check Omnipotence! How majestic does that almighty attribute appear when it proved its power over itself by not using the power which it manifestly possesses!  
More than that, remember that our Lord Jesus Christ was under no sort of necessity to die. When a man lays down his life for his friendand how seldom has that been donehe only anticipates the debt of Nature which, in any case, he has to pay before long. If you were to die for me, or I were to die for you, tomorrow, we would, both of us, only do a little earlier what we must both ultimately do! Death will, before long, claim everyone of us, and to the sepulcher we must all descend unless our Lord should speedily come. But He possessed inherent immortality! No sentence of death was written across His browHe could live on forever even when He was in the gravecorruption could have no dominion over Him. He could say, with an emphasis that the Psalmist could not use, You will not leave My soul in Hell; neither will You suffer your Holy One to see corruption. So Jesus Christs laying down of His life for His friends was beyond anything that could ever happen in any other mans life, a voluntary act and, consequently, a more wonderful display of love than could ever be given in any other case. Greater love has no man than this.

We must also remember that our Lord Jesus Christ had been accustomed, for many years, to contemplate the laying low of His life before He actually did so. No, I must not speak of yearsdoubtless from eternity He had foreseen that terrible time when He would have to do battle on His peoples behalf, with all the powers of Darkness. He had looked forward to that hour with the strong glance of the eyes that could weep for sorrow, but could not grow dim with fear. And, often, when He was here below, He seemed to long for the time when He could make the master-sacrifice of His life. He said, I have a baptism to be baptized with and how am I straitened till it is accomplished! His face was set, not merely once, but in very deed always, steadfastly to go unto Jerusalem, knowing well all that would befall Him there. Now, what man is there who could look death in the face, for the sake of his friend, year after year, and even contemplate it with ardent desire? We might, in an outburst of strong affection, in a moment of unusual excitement, be willing to leap into the gulf of death in order to rescue a sinking friend, but as for the quiet resolution that could calmly think it all over and weigh every circumstanceand ponder over every detail and then deliberately give oneself up to deathwhere could you find such a spirit as that? It is only to be seen in Him who has given the grandest display of love that was ever manifested on earth or even in Heavenand whose death was the grandest manifestation of that love!  
Let me also further remind you that our Lord Jesus Christ did actually die for His friends. He was not merely willing to do so and long contemplated dying, but He did really die and He died under circumstances that rendered the laying down of His life for His friends the more remarkable! He died for them, yet they had all forsaken Him in the hour of His greatest need, after having fallen asleep and left Him to endure in utter loneliness the agony of bloody sweat. When He was arraigned before His enemies, Peter, the boldest man in His little band of disciples, was so cowed with fear that he denied, with oaths and curses, that he even knew Him! These friends of His were quite unworthy of His love, yet He died for them. Do men generally die for such friends as they proved themselves to be? No, but they have often cried with Job, Miserable comforters are you all. Yet Christ died for His friends though they forsook Him when He most needed their sympathy and support.   
And He had to die for them under a criminal charge. I believe that there are many of us who would not be nearly as much startled by death as by a criminal accusation. When I have seen some good man whom I have highly esteemed, charged falsely, as I think, with high misdemeanors, I have felt that I would sooner die than be guilty of the crime of which he has been accused. But here is our gracious Lord and Master willingly giving Himself up to death although He is innocent of the crimes laid to His chargesedition against the State and blasphemy against God. It is a felons death that He must dienot merely a death like that of a felon, but the death of a felon, for the verdict of one tribunal after another is that He is worthy of deathand the popular voice applauds the verdict, and cries, Let Him be crucified! O You blessed Son of God, were You thus numbered with the transgressors? Yes, He was. And this was the greatest manifestation of His love.   
Let us not forget, too, that Christs death was attended by cruelties of the grossest sort. I will not harrow up your feelings with any description of that terrible flagellation which He received at the hands of the Roman lictors. Yes, Christ did suffer intensely in many ways, as the Prophet Isaiah had foretold that He wouldHe was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. All the sufferings of Christsphysical, mental, and spiritualwhich were attendant upon His death, are to be regarded by us with awestruck and grateful emotions, for they help to make up the perfection of His wondrous work of laying down His life for His friends!   
Remember, too, dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, as I have already reminded you, that Christ, although He was absolutely innocent, did die as the Substitute for sinners. Paul wrote to the Corinthians, For He (that is, God) has made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. And to the Galatians He wrote, Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangs on a tree. To a pure mind, contact with sin in any form is truly horrible. I can imagine the Savior being willing to suffer and even being willing to die but His holy Nature must have revolted at the thought that He must stand in the sinners place, that He must be reckoned as the sinner, that against Him the sword of Divine Justice must be drawn and that in His heart it must find a sheath! The great terror of Christs death upon the Cross must have been that it was the penalty for sinthe execution of the righteous judgment of God against unrighteousness and iniquity! None of us can even guessperhaps the lost souls in Hell cannot tell what it must have been for Christ to have come thus under the wrath of God because of the sins of His people. When we have been deeply convinced of sin, we may have had some slight conception of what it was, but our most vivid imagination must have been dim and feeble compared with the terrible reality!   
Above all else, let us remember that our Savior died forsaken of His God. Even the martyrs were not obliged to do that. They stood at the stake and clapped their handsthey even sang songs of triumph amidst the fury of the flames! But Jesus had to cry, My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? That is the pitiful wail of a broken heart and a sinking spirit. It does not surprise us that the earth did quake and the rocks splitit would have been a greater wonder if they had not been stirred at the sound of such grief as His! O Beloved, greater love has no man than this, that he will even dare to die forsaken of his God! I thank God that we are not asked to do this! But Jesus did it for us, His friends. Oh, what amazing love is His! There is much more that might be said upon this stupendous theme, but I must ask the Holy Spirit to lead you into the mystery of those unknown deeps of suffering by which Christ manifested His love to His friends.   
II. Now, secondly, I want to show you that THE LOVE OF CHRIST, IN LAYING DOWN HIS LIFE, WAS GREATLY ENHANCED BY THE CHARACTER OF THOSE FOR WHOM HE LAID DOWN HIS LIFE, namely, His friends.   
Let it never be forgotten by us that this sacred title is one which our Lord Himself gave to His disciplesI have called you friends. If we are His disciples, we are also His friends. Our original title would have been enemies, for that is what we werebut He has transformed us into His friends, for, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son. The text would not be true if you were to put the emphasis in the wrong place. Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends, for Christ manifested greater love than that in laying down His life for His enemies. It is indeed surprising that He should have laid down His life for those who were His enemies and who are only His friends because He has made them so. You scorned Him, you despised Him, you crucified Him, your sins were the nails and the spear that pierced His hands, feet and sideyet He died for you! He was the sandalwood tree, and yours was the hand that held the axe that wounded Him, yet He perfumed the axe, and also the hand that wielded itand healed that hand of all its leprosiesyes, healed your whole being of whatever disease it had. Thank God for love like that!   
Then, putting aside the fact that we were once His enemies, think of the greatness of His love is laying down His life for such insignificant people as we are. I have heard the argument used by unbelievers that it is not feasibleconsidering the immense size of the universe and the inconceivable number of starry worlds in it, that this little inconsiderable speck of a globe, which, in proportion to the rest of the universe, is as a single atom of dust to the entire chain of the Alpsto think that Christ should come to redeem the inhabitants of such a poor little world as this is and that if He came to the earth at all, many of the poorest and meanest of the people would be the peculiar objects of His choice! Well, it is marvelous! It is a marvelous instance of the condescension of Christ and while it may stagger the faith of some, it certainly inflames the love of others! We feel that if He condescends to choose us, our love shall rise to the utmost heights that it can reachand we will bless and magnify the name of the Lord in that, while He took not up angels, He took up the seed of Abraham! While He left the fallen angels to perish without hope, He has come to save us, the fallen sons of Adam, and has laid down His life for us!   
There is, however, a Truth of God that is even more significant and instructive than that. It is not merely true that we were once Christs enemies and that we were also utterly insignificant and unworthy of His notice, but it is amazing that He should lay down His life for such unworthy friends, even as friends, as we are. There are some professing Christians who can speak of themselves in terms of admiration, but, from my inmost heart I loathe such speeches more and more every day that I live. Those who talk in such boastful fashion must be constituted very differently from me. While they are congratulating themselves upon all the good things that they find within themselves, I have to lie humbly at the foot of Christs Cross and marvel that I am saved at all, for I know that I am saved. I have to wonder that I do not believe Christ more and equally wonder that I am privileged to believe in Him at allto wonder that I do not love Him more, and equally to wonder that I love Him at allto wonder that I am not holier and equally to wonder that I have any desire to be holy at all considering what a polluted, debased, depraved nature I find still within my soul notwithstanding all that Divine Grace has done in me! If God were ever to allow the fountains of the great deeps of depravity to break up in the best man that lives, he would make as bad a devil as Satan, himself, is. I care nothing for what these boasters say concerning their own perfectionsI feel sure that they do not know themselves, or they could not talk as they often do! There is tinder enough in the saint who is nearest to Heaven to kindle another Hell if God should but permit a spark to fall upon it. In the very best of men, there is an infernal and well-near infinite depth of depravity! Some Christians never seem to find this out. I almost wish that they might not do so, for it is a painful discovery for anyone to makebut it has the beneficial effect of making us cease from trusting in ourselves and causing us to glory only in the Lord.

Why should Christ ever have loved us? Why should He ever have loved us? When at His Table, we often have wandering thoughts. Even in our faith we often find a mixture of unbelief. Even when we love Him, we grieve that we do not love Him more. Even when we are closest to Him in communion, we have to smite our breast and mourn that we do not enjoy the nearness we might have, and ought to have, for, after being so greatly loved by Christ, we ought to be sinless! Under such obligations to Christ as we have, we ought to be wholly sanctifiedspirit, soul, and bodyand never have a wandering thought or an unholy desire. But that we are not what we ought to be is very clear. And the wonder is that Jesus Christ should ever have laid down His life for such miserable friends as we have proven ourselves to be! Beauty, you know, will often win affection against a mans better judgment, for there is something about it which is so attractive that it overcomes him. But Christs love to us was not won by any beauty that He saw in us. When He says to us as the Bridegroom in the Song of Solomon says to His bride, Turn away your eyes from Me, for they have overcome Me. And when He says, You are all fair, My love; there is no spot in you, I think He must see Himself mirrored in us and that this is why He loves us, for certainly there is nothing lovable in us but what He has bestowed upon us by His Grace! I do not know what you, Beloved, say concerning this theme upon which I have been speaking, but I think you will agree with me when I say that, to me, the superlative point of the love of Christ is that He laid down His life for me, unworthy as I have been even since I have been His friend!   
III. I must speak very briefly upon the last point which is that THIS GREAT LOVE OF CHRIST IS TO BE REFLECTED AND REPRODUCED BY HIS FRIENDS.   
Christ is the sun in our heavens and His Church is the moon. Why does the sun shine upon the moon? For the moons sake? Yes, in part, but also for the sake of the earth, which would be dark at night if the moon did not reflect the light it receives from the sun. Brother, Sister, the light of Christs love has fallen upon you, not only that it may benefit you, but also that you may reflect it.   
First, reflect it upon Christ. He has loved you, so love Him in return! It is a blessed thing, sometimes, to do nothing but love Christ for a while. It is well, at least now and then, for us not to think so much of what we are going to do for Christ as of what He did for us and what He is to us. If I ever try to secure a quiet half-hours meditation upon His love to me, somebody is pretty sure to come and knock at the door. But if I can keep the door-knocker still, and get alone with my Lord and only think about His love to menot trying to elaborate any theories, or to understand any doctrines, but just sitting down with the view of loving Him who gave Himself for meI tell you, Sirs, that this thought is positively inebriating to the soul! It not merely refreshes, quickens, consoles, but it absolutely overcomes us with intense delight till we feel as though we could only fall upon our face and worship the Lamb who was slain for us! At such times we have to make our expressive silence mean His praise, for our soul is so full of His love that we cannot possibly express it. That is the first thing for Christians to doas Christ is shining upon you with His love shine back upon Him with your love!   
Then, next, He said to His disciples, This is My commandment, That you love one another, as I loved you. As you have received the light of Christs love, pass it on to your fellow Christians. Do you want to know where to find Christ? He is dwelling in His people and especially in His poor people, in His suffering people, in His tried people! So, when your heart is full of love to your Lord, let some of the light of it shine upon them. Perhaps this is a dark time with them and a kind word from you, or a kind action, will be like the light of the moon to them in the middle of the night, and will cause them great gladness. The moon cannot shine as brightly as the sun does, and you cannot love as much as Christ doesbut you can be like the moon and shine with borrowed lightyou can reflect upon others the light of the love which Christ has shed upon your own soul.   
And when you have done that, remember that your light will be even more needed in the dark world of the ungodly. Christ died for the ungodly, and that is what you were once! O Beloved, I pray you, love the sons of men! Somebody has asked, How are we to convert sinners? That is not our work. It is only the Spirit of God who can do that. But what we can do is this, we can love sinners to Christ. That is the way in which God says that He workedI drew them with words of a man, with bands of love. I will give you this message as a text for you to preach upon practically all your lifeLove sinners to Christ! Love the enmity out of them if they hate the Gospel. Love the prejudice out of them if they cannot bear to hear it preached. Love them out of their vices! Love them up from their degradation, for love is of God, and God is Love and God dwells in love. That which is in Him and comes from Him, is the best thing in the world to draw people to Him! So use no other cords but the cords of a man, and no bands but the bands of love. When you really love souls, it is amazing how wise you will be in dealing with them.   
I have never heard that anybody has opened a school for teaching young mothers how to manage their first babies, but, somehow or other, when love is in the mothers heart, she finds out the proper way to care for her baby. And better than any College training for the home or the foreign field of service for the Savior is it to get your heart full of love to your Lord. Then you will know how to do His workit will come to you by a sort of sacred instinct. You will know when you are to tell them of the terrors of the Law, and when to speak of the loveliness of Christ, and just how to deal with them under all manner of circumstances. The love of Christ will teach you how to do this if it is shed abroad in your heart by the Holy Spirit which is given unto you.   
Oh, that all men knew, by happy personal experience, what the love of Jesus is! I have not said much to you unconverted people who are present, but I have often thought that when we are preaching about Christ, even if we do not say much directly to you, the subject itself speaks to you. It is like spreading a dinner where there are hungry people near. You have only to say to such persons, You are welcome to all there is on the table, and there is no need of a sermon, or any eloquence. Their mouths begin to water while you are laying the cloth and the sight of the provisions makes them begin to eat as soon as you say, Come along. What big slices they take! Well, poor starving souls, here is the great Gospel feastmay your mouths water for a taste of it! All I have to say is   
*Come and welcome, sinner, come.*   
Come and taste the great love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. May His gracious Spirit bring you, for Jesus Christs sake! Amen.

Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #1552 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE FRIENDS OF JESUS   
NO. 1552

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, AUGUST 8, 1880, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. John 15:14.**

OUR Lord Jesus Christ is beyond all comparison the best of friendsa friend in need, a friend indeed. Friend! said Socrates, there is no friend! But Socrates did not know our Lord Jesus, or he would have added, except the Savior. In the heart of our Lord Jesus there burns such friendship towards us that all other forms of it are as dim candles to the sun. Greater love has no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friend. An ordinary man has gone as far as he can when he has died for his friend and yet he would have died anyway, so that in dying for his friend he does but pay, somewhat beforehand, a debt which must inevitably be discharged a little further on. With Christ there was no necessity to die at all and this, therefore, places His love and His friendship by itself.

He died who needed not to die and died in agony when He might have lived in Glorynever did man give such proof of friendship as this! Let the friendship of our Lord to us stand as the model of our friendship to Him. It cannot be so in all respects because our situations and conditions are different. His must always be the love of the greater to the less, the love of the Benefactor to one in need, the love of the Redeemer to those who are bought with a price but, setting those points aside, the whole tone and spirit of our Lords friendship are such that the more closely we can imitate it the better. Such friendship as His should be reflected in a friendship most hearty and self-sacrificing on our part.

Our Lord does not, I think, in this text speak to us about His being our friend, but about our being His friends. He is the friend of sinners, but sinners are not His friends till their hearts are changed. You are My friends if you do whatever I command youwe are not His friends till then. His love to us is entirely of Himself, but friendship needs something from us. Friendship cannot be all on one sideone-sided friendship is more fitly called mercy, grace, or benevolencefriendship in its full sense is mutual. You may do all you will for a man and be perfectly benevolent and yet he may make you no returnfriendship can only exist where there is a response.

Therefore we have not before us the question as to whether Christ loves us or not, as to whether Christ has pity on us or not, for in another part of Scripture we read of His great love wherewith He loved us even when we were dead in trespasses and sins. He befriended us when we were enemies, but that is not our subject just nowthe question is about

our being friends to Him and such we must be made if, indeed, there is to be any intimacy of mutual friendship. Friendship cannot be, as I have said before, all on one side. It is like a pair of scalesthere must be something to balance on the other sidethere must be a return of kindly feeling from the person loved.

Jesus tells us here that if we are to be His friends, we must do whatever He commands us and that out of love to Him. Beloved, it is the highest honor in the world to be called the friend of Christ. There is surely no title that excels in dignity that which was worn by Abraham, who was called, The friend of God. Lord Brooke was so delighted with the friendship of Sir Philip Sydney that he ordered to be engraved upon his tomb nothing but thisHere lies the friend of Sir Philip Sydney. There is beauty in such a feeling, but yet it is a small matter compared with being able to say, Here lives a friend of Christ!

O wondrous condescension that He should call me, Friend! If I am, indeed, a true Believer, not only is He my friend, without which I could have no hope here or hereafter, but He has, in the abounding of His Grace, been pleased to regard me as His friend and write me down in the honored list of intimates who are permitted to speak familiarly with Him as those do between whom there are no secrets, for their hearts are revealed to Him while He hides nothing from them, but says, If it were not so I would have told you.

Beloved, in what a light this sets obedience to Christs commandments! I cannot help, at this early moment in the sermon, noting how the doctrine of our text transfigures obedience and makes it the joy and glory of life! How precious it is, for it is a better seal to friendship than the possession of the largest gifts and influence. Christ does not say, You are My friends if you rise to a position of respectability among men, or honor in the Church. No, however poor you may be and those to whom He spoke these words were very poor, He says, You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. Obedience is better than wealth and better than rank! Jesus values His friends, not by what they have, or what they wear, but by what they do.

The 11 Apostles we may put down as having remarkable qualifications for their lifework, yet their Lord does not say, You are My friends because I have endowed you with abilities for the Apostleship. Even to these leaders of His sacramental host Jesus says plainly, You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. That is the point by which your friendship shall be testedIf you are obedient you are My Friends. He says neither less nor more to any of us who, this day, aspire to the high dignity of being contained within the circle of His personal friends. You must, my Brothers and Sisters, yield obedience to your Master and Lord and be eager to do it, or you are not His bosom friends.

This is the one essential which Grace, alone, can give us. Do we rebel against the request? Far from it! Our joy and delight lie in bearing our Beloveds easy yoke.

I. Let us come to the subject more closely and notice first, that OUR LORD HIMSELF TELLS US WHAT OBEDIENCE HE REQUESTS from those who call themselves His friends. True friends are eager to know what they can do to please the objects of their love. Let us gladly listen to what our adorable Lord now speaks to the select circle of His chosen. He asks of one and all obedience. None of us are exempted from doing His commandments. However lofty or however lowly our condition, we must obey. If our talent is but one, we must obey and if we have 10, still we must obey. There can be no friendship with Christ unless we are willing, each one, to yield Him hearty, loyal service.

Let it go round, then, to all of you upon whom the name of Jesus Christ is namedif enrolled among the friends of Jesus, you must be careful about your own personal obedience to His blessed will. Forget not that even to the queen, standing on His right in gold of Ophir, the word is given, He is your Lord and worship you Him. It must be active obedience, notice that. You are My friends, if you do whatever I command you. Some think it is quite sufficient if they avoid what He forbids. Abstinence from evil is a great part of righteousness, but it is not enough for friendship. If a man can say, I am not a drunk, I am not dishonest, I am not unchaste, I am not a violator of the Sabbath, I am not a liar, so far so goodbut such righteousness does not exceed that of the scribes and Phariseesand they cannot enter the kingdom of God!

It is well if you do not willfully transgress, but if you are to be Christs friends there must be far more than that. It would be a poor friendship with your Master which only said, I am Your friend and to prove it, I dont insult You, I dont rob You, I dont speak evil of You. Surely there must be more positive evidence to certify friendship! The Lord Jesus Christ lays great stress upon positive duties. It is, if you do whatever I command you. At the Last Day He will say, I was hungry and you gave me meat: I was thirsty and you gave me drink. In that memorable 25th chapter of Matthew nothing is said about negative virtuesonly positive actions are cited and dwelt upon in detail.

You know it is an old English saying, He is my friend who grinds at my mill. That is to say, friendship shows itself in doing helpful acts which prove sincerity. Fine words are mere wind and go for nothing if not backed up with substantial deeds of kindness. Friendship cannot live on windy talk, it needs the bread of matter of fact. The Inspired Word says, Show Me a proof of your love; show it by doing whatever I command you. We are clear, from the wording of the text, that the obedience Christ expects from us is continuous. He does not say, If you sometimes do what I command youif you do it on Sundays, for instanceif you do what I command you in your place of worship, that will suffice. No, we are to abide in Him and keep His statutes even unto the end.

I am not now preaching works as the way of salvation but as the evidences of fellowship, which is quite another thing. We must seek in every place, at all times and under all circumstances to do as Jesus bids us out of a cheerful spirit of reverence to Him. Such tender, loving subjection as a godly wife gives to her husband must be gladly yielded by us throughout life if we are His friends. This obedience must also be universal. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. No sooner is anything discovered to be the subject of a command than the man who is a true friend of Christ says, I will do it, and he does it. He does not pick and choose which precept he will keep and which he will neglect, for this is self-will and not obedience.

I have known some professors err greatly in this matter. They have been very strict over one point and they have blamed everybody who did not come up to their strictness, talking as if that one duty fulfilled the whole Law of God! Straining at gnats has been a very leading business with many. They have bought a choice assortment of strainers of the very finest net to get out all the gnats from their cup, but at the same time, on another day they have opened their mouths and swallowed a camel without a qualm. This will not do! The test is, If you do whatever I command you. I do not mean that little things are unimportantfar from it. If there is a gnat that Christ bids you strain, strain it out with great diligencedo not let a midge escape you if He bids you remove it.

The smallest command of Christ may often be the most important and I will tell you why. Some things are great, evidently great and, for many reasons even a hypocritical professor will attend to them. But the test may lie in the minor points, which hypocrites do not take the trouble to notice, since no human tongue would praise them for doing them. Here is the proof of your love. Will you do the smaller thing for Jesus as well as the more weighty matter? Too many say, I do not see any use in it. I can be saved without it. There are a great many different opinions on the point, and so on. All this comes of evil and is not consistent with the spirit of friendship with Christ, for love pleases, even in trifles.

Is it Christs will? Is it plainly a precept of His Word? Then it is not yours to reason why, nor to raise any question. The reality of your subjection to your Lord and Master may hinge upon those seemingly insignificant points. A domestic servant might place the breakfast on the table and feel that she had done her duty, but if her mistress told her to place the salt at the corner and she did not, she would be asked the cause of her neglect. Suppose she replied to her mistress, I did not think it necessary. I placed the breakfast before you, but a little salt was too trifling a matter for me to troubled about. Her mistress might answer, But I told you to be sure and put out the saltcellar. Mind you, do so tomorrow.

Next morning there is no salt and the maid says she did not see the need of setting it on the table. Her mistress is displeased and tells her that her wish must be carried out. Will she not be a very foolish and vexatious girl if she refuses to do so because she does not see the need of it? I think it is likely that the young woman would have to find other employment before long, for such conduct is very annoying. So it is with those professors who say, I have attended to the main things and what I neglect is quite a minor matter. Such are not even good servants and they can never be friends! I beseech you, dear Brothers and Sisters, labor after universal obedience. Whatever He says to you, do it. Only by an earnest endeavor to carry out the whole of His will can you live in happy fellowship with Him and be, indeed, His friends.

Note well that this obedience is to be rendered as to Christ Himself. Put the emphasis on the little word, IYou are My friends if you do whatever I command you. We are to do these things because Jesus commands them. Does not the royal Person of our Lord cast a very strong light upon the necessity of obedience? When we refuse to obey, we refuse to do what the Lord, Himself, commands! When the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God and our Redeemer, is denied obedience, it is treason! How can rebels against the King be His Majestys friends? The precepts of Scripture are not the commandments of man nor the ordinances of angels, but the Laws of Christ and how dare we despise them! We are to act rightly because Jesus commands us and we love to do His pleasurethere can be no friendship without this. Oh for Grace to serve the Lord with gladness!

To close this first point, it appears that our Lord would have us obey Him out of a friendly spirit. Obedience to Christ as if we were forced to do it under pains and penalties would be of no worth as a proof of friendship. Everyone can see that. He speaks not of slaves, but of friends. He would not have us perform duties from fear of punishment or love of reward. That which He can accept of His friends must be the fruit of love. His will must be our Law because His Person is our delight. Some professors need to be whipped to their duties. They must hear stirring sermons and attend exciting meetings and live under pressure. But those who are Christs friends need no spur but love. The love of Christ constrains us. True hearts do what Jesus bids them without flogging and dogging, urging and forcing. Constrained virtue is spoiled in the making, as many a piece of earthenware is cracked in the baking. The wine of our obedience must flow freely from the ripe cluster of the souls love or it will not be fit for the royal cup. When duty becomes delight and precepts are as sweet as promises, then are we Christs friends and not till then.

II. Having thus set forth what kind of obedience Christ requests, I now notice, in the second place, that our Lord leads us to gather from this sentence that THOSE WHO DO NOT OBEY HIM ARE NOT FRIENDS OF HIS. He may yet look upon them and be their friend by changing their hearts and forgiving their sins, but as yet they are no friends of His, for a man who does not obey Christ does not give the Savior His proper place and this is an unfriendly deed. If I have a friend, I am very careful that if he has honor anywhere, he shall certainly have due respect from me. If he is my superior, I am anxious that he should not think me intrusive, or imagine that I would take undue advantage of his kindness. He will be higher in my esteem than in the regard of anyone else.

He who is truly Christs friend delights to honor Him as a great King, but he who will not yield Him His sovereign rights is a traitor and not a friend. Our Lord is the Head over all things to His Church and this involves the joyful submission of the members. Disobedience denies to Christ the dignity of that holy Headship which is His prerogative over all the members of His mystical body and this is not the part of a true friend. How can you be His friend if you will not admit His rule? It is vain to boast that you trust His Cross if you do not reverence His crown! He who does not do His commandments cannot be Christs friend because he is not of one mind with Christthat is evident. Can two walk together unless they are agreed?

True friendship exists not between those who differ upon first principles and there can be no points of agreement between Jesus Christ and the man who will not obey Him, for he, in fact, says, Lord Jesus, Your pure and holy will is obnoxious to me! Your sweet and gracious commands are a weariness to me! What friendship can be here? They are not of one mindChrist is for holinessthis man is for sin! Christ is for spiritual-mindednessthis man is carnal-minded. Christ is for love, this man is for self. Christ is for glorifying the Father, this man is for honoring himselfhow can there be any friendship when they are diametrically opposed in design, object and spirit? It is not possible!

He who obeys not Christ cannot be Christs friend though he may profess to be. He may be a very high and loud professor and for that reason he may be all the more an enemy of the Cross, for when men see this man walking according to his own lusts, they cry out, You, also, were with Jesus of Nazareth, and they attribute all his faults to his religion and straightway begin to blaspheme the name of Christ! Through the inconsistent conduct of our Lords professed friends, His cause is more hindered than by anything else! Suppose you and I had some very intimate associate who was found drunk in the street, or committing burglary or theft? Should we not feel disgraced by his conduct? When he was brought before the magistrate would you like to have it said, This person is the bosom friend of So-and-So?

Oh, you would cover your face and beg your neighbors never to mention it. For such a fellow to be known as your friend would compromise your name and character. We say this even weeping, that Jesus Christs name is compromised and His honor is tarnished among men by many who wear the name of Christian without having the spirit of Christ! Such cannot be His dear companions. Alas for the wounds which Jesus has received in the house of His friends! When Caesar fell, he was slain by the daggers of his friends! In trust he found treason. Those whose lives he had spared, spared not his life. Woe to those who, under the garb of Christianity, crucify the Lord afresh and put Him to an open shame!

Nothing burns Christs cheeks like a Judas kiss and He has had many such. Those that obey Him not cannot be acknowledged by Jesus as His friends, for that would dishonor Him, indeed. Time wasI know not how it is nowwhen if any man wanted to be made a count, or to get an honorable title, he had only to pay so much at Rome into the Papal bank and he could be made a noble at once. The titles thus purchased were neither honorable to those who gave them nor to those who received them. Whatever his pretended vicar may do, our Lord Himself sells no dignities. The title of Friends of Jesus goes with a certain character and cannot be otherwise obtained.

Those are His friends who obey HimIf you love Me, keep My commandments. He grants this patent of nobility to all Believers who lovingly follow Him, but on His list of friends He enters none beside. Do you not see that His honor requires this? Would you have our Lord stand up and say, The drunk is My friend? Would you hear Him say, That fraudulent bankrupt is My intimate companion? Would you have Jesus claim friendly companionship with the vicious and profane? A man is known by his companywhat would be thought of Jesus if His intimate associates were men of loose morals and unrighteous principles? To go among them for their good is one thing. To make them His friends is another.

Where there is no kinship, no likeness, no point of agreement, the fair flower of friendship cannot take root. We may, therefore, read the text negatively, You are not My friends, if you do not the things which I command you.

III. Our third observation isTHOSE WHO BEST OBEY CHRIST ARE ON THE BEST OF TERMS WITH HIM. You are My friends, He seems to say, and live near to Me, enjoying practical personal friendship and daily communion with Me when you promptly obey. Some of you know by personal experience, Brothers and Sisters, that you cannot walk in holy union with Christ unless you keep His commandments. There is no feeling of communion between our souls and Christ when we are conscious of having done wrong and yet are not sorry for it. If we know that we have erred, as we often do, and our hearts break because we have grieved our Beloved and we go and tell Him our grief and confess our sin, we are still His friends and He kisses away our tears, saying, I know your weakness. I willingly blot out your offenses. There is no breach of friendship between us. I will still manifest Myself to you.

When we know that we are wrong and feel no softening of heart about it, then we cannot pray, we cannot speak with the Beloved and we cannot walk with Him as His friends. Familiarity with Jesus ceases when we become familiar with known sin. If, again, knowing any act to be wrong we persevere in it, there cannot be any happy friendship between us and our Savior. If conscience has told you, dear Brother, that such-and-such a thing ought to be given up and you continue in it, the next time you are on your knees you will feel yourself greatly hampered. And when you sit down before your open Bible and hope to have communion with Christ as you have formerly enjoyed, you will find that He has withdrawn Himself and will not be found by you. Is there any wonder?

If sin lies at the door, how can the Lord smile on us? Secret sin will poison communion at the fountainhead. If there is a quarrel between you and Christ and you are hugging to your bosom that which He abhors, how can you enjoy friendship? He tells you that sin is a viper that will kill you, but you reply, It is a necklace of jewels and, therefore, you put it about your neck. Do you wonder that because He loves you He is grieved at such mad behavior? Oh, do not thus bring injury upon yourself! Do not thus pour contempt upon His wise commands! Some Christians will never get into full fellowship with Christ because they neglect to study His Word and search out what His will is. It ought to be a serious work with every Christian, especially in commencing his career, to find what is the will of his Lord on all subjects.

Half the Christian people in the world are content to ask, What is the rule of our Church? That is not the questionthe question isWhat is the rule of Christ? Some plead, My father and mother before me did so. I sympathize, in a measure, with that feeling. Filial reverence commands admiration, but yet, in spiritual things we are to call no man, father, but make the Lord Jesus our Master and exemplar. God has not placed your conscience in your mothers keeping, nor has He committed to your father the right or the power to stand responsible for youevery man must bear his own burden and render his own account.

Search the Scriptures for yourselves, each one of you, and follow no rule but that which is Inspired. Take your light directly from the sun! Let holy Scripture be your unquestioned rule of faith and practice and, if there is any point about which you are uncertain, I charge you by your loyalty to Christ, if you are His friends, try and find out what His will is. And when you once are sure upon that point, never mind the human authorities or dignitaries that oppose His Law. Let there be no question, no hesitation, no delay. If He commands you, carry out His will though the gates of Hell thunder at you! You are not His friends, or, at any rate, you are not His friends so as to enjoy the friendship unless you resolutely seek to please Him in all things!

The intimacy between you and Christ will be disturbed by sin. You cannot lean your head upon His bosom and say, Lord, I know Your will, but I do not mean to do it. Could you look up into that dear facethat visage once so marred, now lovelier than Heaven, itselfand say, My Lord, I love You, but I will not do Your will in every point? By the very love He bears to you, He will chasten you for that rebellious spirit if you indulge in it! It is a horrible evil! Holy eyes will not endure it! He is a jealous lover and will not tolerate sin, which is His rival. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. Oh, Beloved, see to this! Under all the crosses and losses and trials of life, there is no comfort more desirable than the confidence that you have aimed at doing your Lords will.

If a man suffers for Christs sake while steadily pursuing the course of holiness, he may rejoice in such suffering. Losses borne in the defense of the right and the true are gains! Jesus is never nearer His friends than when they bravely bear shame for His sake. If we get into trouble by our own folly, we feel the smart at our very heart. But if we are wounded in our Lords battles, the scars are honorable. For His sake we may accept reproach and bind it about us as a wreath of honor. Jesus delights to be the Companion of those who are cast out by kinsfolk and acquaintances for the Truth of Gods sake and for fidelity to His Cross.

They may call the faithful one fanatic and enthusiast and all such illsounding names, but over these there is no need to fret, for the honor of being Christs friend infinitely outweighs the worlds opinion. When we follow the Lamb wherever He goes, He is responsible for the resultswe are not

*Though dark is my way, since He is my guide, Tis mine to obey, tis His to provide.*   
The consequences which follow from our doing right belong to God! Abhor the theory that for the sake of a great good you may do a little wrong! I have heard men say, yes, Christian men, too, If I were strictly to follow my convictions I should have to leave a post of great usefulness and, therefore, I remain where I am and quiet my conscience as well as I can. I should lose opportunities of doing good which I now possess if I were to put in practice all I believe and, therefore, I remain in a position which I could not justify on any other ground.   
Is this according to the mind of Jesus? Is this your kindness to your Friend? How many bow in the house of Rimmon and hope that the Lord will have mercy upon His servants in this thing? We shall see if it will be so. We may not do evil that good may come! If I knew that to do right would shake this whole island I should be bound to do it! God helping me, I would do it! And if I heard that a wrong act would apparently bless a whole nation, I have no right to do wrong on that account. No bribe of supposed usefulness should purchase our conscience. Right is right and must always end in blessingand wrong is wrong and must always end in curse, though for a while it may wear the appearance of surpassing good. Did not the devil lead our first parents astray by the suggestion that great benefit would arise out of their transgression? Your eyes shall be opened and you shall be as gods, said the arch-deceiver!   
Would it not be a grand thing for men to grow unto gods? Certainly, says Eve, I would not lose the opportunity. The race which is yet to be would blame me if I did. I would not have men remain inferior creatures through my neglect. For the sake of the promised good, she ventured upon evil. Thousands of people sin because it seems so advantageous, so wise, so necessary, so sure to turn out well. Hear what Christ saysYou are My friends if you do whatever I command you. If you do evil that good may come, you cannot walk with Jesus! But if your heart is set towards His statutes you shall find Him loving you and taking up His abode with you.   
IV. Fourthly, by our text we are taught that THE MOST FRIENDLY ACTION A MAN CAN DO FOR JESUS IS TO OBEY HIMYou are My friends if you do whatever I command you. Rich men have thought to do the most friendly act possible towards Christ by giving an immense sum to build a church, or to found almshouses or schools. If they are Believers and have done this thing as an act of obedience to Christs Law of stewardship, they have done well and the more of such munificence the better. But where splendid benefactions are given out of ostentation, or from the idea that some merit will be gained by the consecration of a large amount of wealth, the whole business is unacceptable!   
If a man should give all the substance of his house for love it would utterly be contemned. Jesus asks not lavish expenditure, but ourselves. He has made this the token of true loveIf you do whatever I command you. To obey is better than sacrifice and to listen than the fat of rams. However much we are able to give, we are bound to give it and should give it cheerfully. But if we suppose that any amount of giving can stand as a substitute for personal obeying we are greatly mistaken. To bring our wealth and not to yield our hearts is to give the casket and steal the jewels. How dare we bring our sacrifice in a leprous hand? We must be cleansed in the atoning blood before we can be accepted and our hearts must be changed before our offering can be pure in Gods sight. Others have imagined that they could show their friendliness to Christ by some remarkable action of self-mortification. Among Romanists, especially in the old times, it was believed that misery and merit went together and so men tortured themselves that they might please God. They went for many a day without washing themselves or their clothes and fancied that they thus acquired the odor of sanctity! I do not believe that Jesus thinks a man any more His friend because he is dirty. Some have put on a hair shirt, or have worn a chain belt next to their skin which made raw wounds. I do not think that the kind Lord Jesus counts these things to be friendly acts. Ask any humane person whether he would be gratified by knowing that a friend wore a hair shirt for his sake and he would answer, Pray let the poor creature wear whatever is most comfortable to him and that will please me best.   
The loving Jesus takes no delight in pain and discomfortthe starving of the body is no doctrine of His. John the Baptist might be an ascetic, but certainly Jesus was notHe came eating and drinking, a man among men! He did not come to demand the rigors of a hermitage or a monastery, else He had never been seen at feasts. When we hear of the nuns of St. Ann sleeping bolt upright in their coffins, we take no particular satisfaction in their doing soa kind heart would beg them to go to bed. I went to a monastery some time ago and over each bed was a little cat-onine tails, which I sincerely hope was used to the satisfaction of the possessor, but I did not copy the idea and buy a couple for my sons! Neither have I sent one to each of my special friends, for I should never ask them to flog themselves as a proof of friendship!   
Our Lord cannot be gratified by self-inflicted, self-invented tortures! These things are will-worship, which is no worship at all! You may fast 40 days if you like, but you will gain no merit by it. Jesus Christ has not demanded this as the gauge of friendship, neither will He regard us as His friends for this. He says, You are My friends if you do whatever I command you, but He does not command you to starve, or to wear sackcloth, or to shut yourselves up in a cell. Pride invents these things, but Grace teaches obedience! Certain persons have thought it would be the noblest form of holy service to enter into brotherhoods and sisterhoods. They fancied that they would be Christs friends, indeed, if they joined the Society of Jesus.   
I have sometimes asked myself whether it might not be well to form a league of Christian men all banded together, to live alone for Jesus and to give themselves up entirely and wholly to His workbut assuredly the formation of guilds, sisterhoods, or brotherhoods other than the great brotherhood of the Church of God is a thing never contemplated in the New Testamentyou shall find no foreshadowing of Franciscans and Dominicans there! All godly women were Sisters of Mercy and all Christ-like men were of the Society of Jesus, but of monastic and conventual vows we read nothing! That which is not commanded in Scripture is superstition! We are to worship God according to His will, not according to our will. And though I were to consecrate myself entirely to what Papists called the religious life and get away from the associations of ordinary men and try to spend my whole time in lonely contemplations, yet there would be nothing in it, because the Lord Jesus never required it at my hands. The thing that He does ask for is that we will do whatever He commands us. Why is it that people try to do something which He never commanded? A schoolmaster will suffer me to appeal to him on this point. If he said to a boy in the school, Now is the time for you to take your slate and attend to arithmetic, and the boy, instead, fetched his copy-book, would he not ask if he had understood him? If, after a few minutes, he finds the boy writing, does he say, You have written that line very well? Not at all! It is small matter whether the writing is well or ill done, for to be writing at all when he was told to be ciphering is a gross act of insubordination! So is it with you and me. We may do something else and do it splendidly well and other people may say, What a pious man he is. But if we do not the Lords will, we shall not be His friends. We may wear a piece of leather for a sandal and brown serge for a garment and not wear boots and coats, but there is no Grace in apparel! Excellence lies in doing what Christ has commanded! Some think it a very friendly act towards Christ to attend many religious services in a consecrated building. They are at matins and vespers and feasts and fasts without number. Some of us prefer to have our religious services each day in our own homes and it will be a dreadful thing when family prayer is given up for public services. But a number of people think little of family devotionthey need to go to the parish church or to some other temple made with handsbut let no man

dream that Jesus is thus made our friend!   
We are not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is. It is well to be found meeting with Gods people as often as we can. But still, you may multiply your sacraments and increase your ceremonies and you may attend to this service and to the other service until your heart is worn away with grinding at the mill of outward religionbut you are Christs friends only if you do whatever He commands youthat is a better test than early communion or daily mass. It comes to this, dear friends, that we must steadily, carefully, persistently, cheerfully do the will of God from the heart in daily lifefrom the first waking moment till our eyes are closed. Say concerning everything, What would Jesus have me do about this? What is the teaching of Christ as to this? Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks unto God and the Father by Him. You may be a domestic servant and never be able to give a pound to church work, but you are Jesus friend if you do whatever He commands you. You may be a housewife and not able to do anything outside of the little family which requires all your attention, but if you are fulfilling your duty to your children, doing that which Christ commands you, you are among the friends of Jesus! You may be only a plain working man, or a tradesman with a small shop. Nobody hears of your name, but if you set the example of honesty, uprightness and piety, doing all things as to Christ because He has saved you, He will call you His friend. What patent of nobility can equal this? Friendship with Christ is worth a thousand dukedoms!   
The practical outcome of it all is thisexamine every question as to duty by the light of this one enquiryWill this be a friendly action to Christ? If I do this, shall I act as Christs friend? Will my conduct honor Him? Then I am glad. If it will dishonor Him, I will have nothing to do with it. Set each distinct action, as far as you are able, in the scales and let this be the weightis it a friendly action towards your Redeemer? I wish that we all lived as if Jesus were always present, as if we could see His wounds and gaze into His lovely countenance. Suppose that tomorrow you are brought into temptation by being asked to do something questionable? Decide it this wayif Jesus could come in at that moment and show you His hands and His feet, how would you act in His sight?   
Behave as you would act under the realized Presence of the WellBeloved. You would not do anything unkind to Him, would you? Certainly you would not do anything to grieve Him if you saw Him before your eyes! Well, keep Him always before you. The Psalmist cried, I have set the Lord always before me. You will need much of the Holy Spirits anointing to do this. May God give it to you. Live, dear Friends, as if Christ would come at once and detect you in the very act. Do that which you would not be ashamed of if the next instant you should see the Lord sitting on the Throne of His Glory and calling you before His bar. Thus living, you shall delight yourself in the abundance of peace   
*So shall your walk be close with God,   
Calm and serene your frame.   
So purer light shall mark the road  
That leads you to the Lamb.*   
Obedience will gladden you with the blissful Presence of your Lord and in that Presence you shall find fullness of joy. You shall be the envied of all wise men, for you shall be the beloved of the Lord. And your pathway, if it is not always smooth, shall always be safe, for Jesus never leaves His friends and He will never leave you! He will keep you even to the end. May this be my happy case and yours. Amen.

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FRIENDSHIPS GUIDE   
NO. 3437

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 17, 1914.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 11, 1870.

**You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. John 15:14.**

IT is very easy to understand how Jesus Christ is our Friend. Did ever anyone deserve the name so well? Who can prove his friendship as Jesus proved it by laying down His life for those He calls His friends? But it is a mark of wonderful condescension on His part that He should call us His friends and it confers upon us the highest conceivable honor that such a Lord as He is, so infinitely superior to us, should condescend to enter into terms of friendship with us. My Friend, O Jesus, You are, for You have redeemed my soul from death and Hellbut that I should be Your friendnothing but Your loving, condescending tenderness could ever have conceived of this! If you do put such a title as this upon me, teach me how I may act in conformity with it. Beloved, there is a mutual friendship between Christ and the Believer. There cannot be friendship if it is all on one side. There is bounty, there is kindness and there may be some gratitude in return, but friendship is a reciprocal thing. In its fullest sense, it is between two, and the one heart must be as the other heart, or else there is no friendship. Now every Believer is a friend to Jesus, and Jesus is a Friend to him. They are friends because they have a mutual love for each other. The Believer does not love His Lord as much as Jesus loves him, for his heart is little compared with Jesus heart. But when the Believer is in a right state, he loves Jesus with all his heart, soul and strength. He feels that there is none in the world that can have a place in his affections at all comparable with his Lord and Master. He can say

*My Jesus I love You: I know You are mine,*

*For You, all the follies of sin I resign.*   
And if Jesus loves us, we also love Him. Friendship has in it a mutual delight. Two friends value each other. Now the delight of Jesus is with the sons of men. In those whom He has redeemed with His blood, He sees the satisfaction for the travail of His soul. He says of His Church that her name is HephzibahMy delight is in herand on the other hand, the Believers delight is in Christ. He is all my salvation and all my desire, says the Believer. He is the chief among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely. None can be compared with Him. It is sweet to think of the saint looking on the Savior and the Savior looking on the saintand the two, together, blending their love in mutual delight in each other. This love and this delight lead to mutual converse. Persons can hardly maintain friendship if they only see each other now and then. If there is no communion by letter or in any other way, I should think friendship could scarcely be maintained. But oh, Jesus reveals Himself to His people and His people tell out their hearts to Jesus! Do not suppose that because He is not here, for He is risen, that therefore we have no conversation with Him. Our prayers speak into His ears, our tears fall into His heart. When we are wounded, His wounds bleed afresh. He is the Head, and we the members and, however great the body, if you wound the body, the head feels it at once, so close is the communion. Yes, and we do converse with Him in meditation, in adoration, alone in our chambers. Though we have not seen Him with these eyes, which are, after all, poor things, we have seen Him with our souls eyes, which are brighter eyes by far! And as we have beheld Him, our soul has melted for joy in the glance of His beauty.

Now to make friendship, there will be not only mutual love, delight, and conversation, but friends must have harmony of thought. I will not say identity, for man and man must always be two, and Christ and His people, though one in some respects, are two existences. But though two notes, though different, may be in perfect harmony, so is it with the heart of Christ and the heart of His renewed child. What Jesus loves, we love. what Jesus hates, we hate. What Jesus seeks, we seekwhat Jesus shuns, we shun. This is true friendship when there is but one heart in two bodies, and when one heart in the two produces with undivided strength one objective. Now Christs objective is His Fathers Glory. If you are Christs friends, that objective is yours, too. His objective is to seek and save the lostif you love Him, you also seek to save the lost in your way. He loves truth, holiness, righteousness. He delights in that which puts an end to misery, to evil, to cruelty, to wrong-doing. Do you delight in the same? If so, unity of design, harmony of thought will very greatly make up the friendship between you and Jesus. Oh, and we are going to the same great end! Where He is, there our hearts are drawn. We are living here for the same purpose that brought Him hereand when our work is done, the same reward that gladdened Him, shall also gladden uswe also shall enter into the joy of our Lord! Some of you do not know much about thisI am talking strange things to some of you. Jesus yes, you read of Him. Jesusyou hear of Him. It is proper to receive His name, but oh, you have never spoken with Him! You have never known Him to be real nor conceived of Him as such! I pray that you may be made spiritual, may be born-again. Until you are, you cannot be a friend of Christ. But when you are, and may it come now, this very hour, may you discover that He is a great Friend, and then, out of love to Him, may you become a friend of His!

Now we are not left in the dark as friends of Jesus as to the best way of showing our friendship. Two persons may be great friends and one may wish to serve the other, and say, I hardly know what I can do to please my friend. I wish I knew his needs. I wish I knew his desiresI would strive to gratify them. Now you have, tonight, given to you as lovers of Jesusyou have the guide as to how you can prove yourselves His friends. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. We have, then, in the text, the guide for friendship, and I will say this about itit contains seven things. The first is

I. TRUE FRIENDS OF CHRIST, HIMSELF, DISTINCTLY ACKNOWLEDGE HIS TRUE POSITION TOWARDS THEMSELVES.   
That position is contained in these words, I command you. We are friends of Jesus, but Jesus must still be firstI command you. The genuine friend of Christ does not command himselfhe has taken Christs yoke upon him and is now Christs servant. He does not, now, follow his own whims in religion, nor does he think he is to be dictator to himself. In becoming Christs friend, he agrees to subordinate his mind and will to the supremacy of Christ Jesus the Lord. Now then, friend of Jesus, note this! You are not your ownfrom now on not your own master, neither are you your own guide. I am often afraid when I hear persons talk of the glorious excellence of liberty of conscience, that they make a mistake as to what liberty of conscience is. What is liberty of conscience? Is it liberty to believe anything I likeliberty to hold any Doctrine I please? No! It is such liberty with regard to the civil magistrate and with regard to my fellow man. Before my fellow man I have a right to believe what I will, and he may not call me to accountI am free there. But does such freedom exist before God? I think not! The friend of Jesus asks to have his conscience taught. He lays his judgment at the feet of the great Teacher and all the liberty that he wants for his conscience is to have it purified and cleansed, that it may be a fit guide for him to follow otherwise a distorted, perverted, dark, polluted conscience may as readily lead a man to Hell as if he never had a conscience at all! It is not because I am conscientious that I am right. As I have often told you, a man may conscientiously drink arsenic or prussic acid and believe that it will do him goodbut he would die for all that. Ah, and a man might conscientiously believe a lie, and he will reap the fruit of that lie! You are a friend of Jesus, to take your command from His lips and lay down at His feet, for He says, I command you.   
But mark, though Christ has to command His friends, we are not to let anyone else command us. Oh, shun the slavery of all who take their religion from men, be they who they may, whether called priests or presbyters, or from human creeds or books! Read them, gather what you can from them all, but, One is your Master, even Christ, and all you are brethren. No Church may lord it over your minds, for the Church may err, but not so Christ. Whatever I command you, says He. He is InfallibleHe will bid you do no ill! But a Church of fallible men is still fallible, and may slide aside, first a little, then more, then much, then monstrouslythen utterly apostatize from the faith of Gods elect! Therefore your Guide, your Leader, is no one but Jesus! Do whatever I command you. There is too much among us of doing whatever our particular religion may command us. I charge you, Brothers and Sisters, do nothing of the sort! What are your councils? What are your assemblies? Nothing less than nothing, I think! If they decree anything contrary to Gods will, they are mischief makers. Christ is the Head of the Church, and He has not vacated His high position in the midst of His Israel. Yield to Him! Go to the fountainhead, the statute book that shows His will, and get it there. You have enough there, though all contradict you. You have enough there, and all the councils of the fathers, and all the Church will be less than the small dust in the balance if you find not the law to be Christs! Whatever He says, the true friend of Jesus doesneither less nor morefor he knows that none can legislate in his realm but the King, Himself, and all that pretend to legislate do but err when they get away from the, It is written, of the grand old Word of God!   
Remember, too, all friends of Christs, that this Doctrine of Christs supremacy stands good always. He is your Lord and He is to command you everywhere, not only in your religious thought, but at home, in the chamber, in the parlor, in the drawing room, outside, in the street, on the mart, on the Exchange, in your shop. His rule contained in His own lifeHis Golden Rule, Do you to others as you would have them do to youHis new commandment that you love one anotherthese are always binding! A soldier may have a furlough, but a Christian never does. You might plead that concerning such-and-such a law you were exempt before menbut to Christ you are never exempt, nor would you wish to be, for His service is freedom, and His Law, O friend of Christ, has now become your delight! Grasp, then, that first thought, You are My friends if I command youif you recognize Him as being the Leader and the Commander unto you, His people. You must recognize Christ in that capacityand Him onlyor you are not His friends!  
But note, again, the text has in it a word which I may paraphrase in this way   
II. WE ARE TO RECOGNIZES OUR OWN PERSONAL OBLIGATIONS.   
You are my friends if you do whatever I command you. The mass of mankind who pretend to be religious, suppose this Bible to be written to all sorts of good people, but not particularly to themselves. And there are they who think that the commands of Christ are very proper to be read, and to be heard, and to be proclaimedbut they do not look upon them as being binding on themselves. Friend of Jesus, Jesus has a right to your service and to your obedience! What He bids, He bids youif to no other, yet to you. Then the zeal of some good men does not exempt me. If my minister is very useful, that is not myself. I am Christs friend if I do whatever He commands me. Then the intense fervor of the Church does not permit me to recoil and say, There is nothing for me to do. No, I am His friend if I do what He commands me. If, on the other hand, I dwell among a slumbering Church, if I see all around me the signs of sloth, yet I am not to judge the Church and excuse myself, and say, I do as much as othersperhaps a little more. I am not so hardhearted as So-and-So. Oh, Sirs, what have you to do with your brethren, with your fellow servants? To your own Master you must stand or fall, as they mustand you are Christs friend if you do whatever He commands you! It does seem to be very difficult to get men to individualize themselves in the things of God. They do not count themselves rich because England is richthey do not consider themselves to be getting rich because the bank interest rate is lower! They want to get the solid coins in their own grasp and to their own banking account! But when I come to religion, men talk of this denomination and that Church, and that other anything but about themselves! But you, O friend of Christ, you must live before the Lord as though there were no other! You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. Now we will lay the force of our thought on another word. Observe here that   
III. THE TRUE FRIEND OF CHRIST OBSERVES CAREFULLY ALL THAT CHRIST SAYS.   
It is not You are My friends if you do some things that I command you. But, You are My friends if you do whatever I command you whatever. Are there public duties? Do they require courage? I must perform them. Are there private duties? Are they unseen of men? They are as much incumbent upon meI must discharge them. Are there commands of precept by way of ordinance? I must keep them. Are there commands by way of morals? I must obey them, however hard or stern they may seem. Whatever Christ commands is the Law to His people. O England, England, when will the day come back when this Book which is said to be the only religion of Protestants shall be truly so? The Bible, and the Bible, only, is the religion of Protestantsso they say, but it is not so! There are many things practiced by so-called Protestants that are not here! Where are your holy baptisms? Where are your confirmations? Where are half the ceremonies, if not all, of the Church of England and many other bodies? They are inventions of man, and man only, having not so much as a shred or trace of foundation in Gods own Book! You have made another bookyour bishops have made another bookand laid it on the top of Gods own book, and these are your Biblenot the Bible, and the Bible only, but the Book of Common Prayer! And with other denominationsdissenting denominationsthere is too much of the same sort of thing. What said John Calvin? What care I what he said, or did not say? What said John Wesley? What care I what John Wesley said, or did not say? The Masterthe MASTERlet us do whatever HE commands us! These were His good servants, as I believe, both of them, John Wesley and John Calvinand if they did better than I, which I know they did, therein will I rejoice and bless God, and wherein they followed the Master, I, with unequal footsteps, would seek to follow, too but to say that I will do this because John this or John that taught it shame on the Christian that dares to bow his head to such a yoke as that! Let every Christian contend for thisthat he is to do whatever Christ commands! Does it kick over the conventionalities of the Church? Let them go over! Does it burn the tag rags you thought so much ofyour venerable things that you laid up as holy relics? Burn every one of them! What right have they to stand in contradiction to the Law of Christ? No, whatever He commandsnot more, not lessthis is to be our religion and our Law, and to it let every Christian stand! Happy day shall it be for the Church and for the world when this is true! Once more, it is clear from one word, that   
IV. THE TEXT IS VERY PRACTICAL.   
You are My friends if you do whatever I command younot if you do some things. Not, if you talk about it, for lip service is hypocrisy! Not, if you tell others to do itthere is a great deal of religion that is very much like charity, and you know what charity is! A sees B is very badly off and he writes a letter at once to C to help B. So is it with religionA sees it a duty that such a thing should be done and tells B that he is very wrong not to do it. That is what is called religion. But as I understand religion, it is thisA sees B needing help and gives it to him! A sees a duty and does it, himself, and after he has done it, himself, then he may talk to B about itbut not till then! You are My friends if you

do whatever I command you. Well, some of you have been thinking about it a long whileit is time for you to do it! He commands you to love your brother you have been talking about thatwell, do it! Dont grumble and complain, and criticize any longer. You know He commands you to forgive any who offend you. Do not know it any longer, but go and do it! Some of you believe that you ought to be baptized and make a profession of your faith. What is the good of thinking of it? Go and do it! Go and do it! It is in the keeping of His commandments that there is great reward! He does not do the will of God who says, Well, I am turning it over, and one of these days I suppose I shall be moved to do it. What do you need to move you but thisthat you owe everything to Christand that Christ commands you? A soldier in the day of battle only needs the command, and on he marchesand a true friend of Jesus pays to Him as perfect an obedience as a soldier to his captain, or at least he desires to do it. A lift of Jesus finger and away he goes! One look from Jesus eyes shall cause him to stop, or make a rapid advance, just as the word may be!   
V. THIS COMMAND IS VERY SIMPLE.   
I shall close by commending this text to you because it is so. You are My friends if you acknowledge Me your Master in everythingyour own personal Masterand then do what I tell you. Now how plain is this? There is no mistake about it. It is obedience Christ asks for! To obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams. And what a blessing it is that this text gives us such a very simple thing to do! Suppose Jesus Christ were to say, That man is My friend who will support a minister, who will build a place of worship, who will go out abroad for a missionary. Oh, there are some of you who would weep and say, I can do none of those things! I wish I could! It would be my greatest pleasure if I could. My dear Friends, the poorest man, the poorest woman here who is a true friend of Christ can do thisyou can do whatever He commands you! By the power of His blessed Spirit who has made you love Him, you can watch earnestly to be holy, to be loving as Jesus was. The notion with a great many is, I need to show that I am Christs friend now I must shut myself up and get away from everybody. That is not what Christ says! He says, Do whatever I command younot run away from the battle, but fight through and win it. No, but, says another, what can I do to praise my Savior? I must speak about Him. Yet, perhaps, that dear friend could not put three words together consecutively. Dear Brother, if God has not given you that gift, you need not cry that you have not got it! Go and do whatever He commands youthat will be better than sacrifice. I know some persons who are very attentive to sermons. I am glad they are. They wish to get out on weeknights, and I am glad they are. I wish all were able to. But many a mother will be serving God much better by keeping the house clean, and the garments mended, than by coming to hear a sermon! You must do whatever He commands you, and what He commands you as a wife, is to discharge a wifes duty.   
When I sometimes see a religious serving man, a great talker, who does not groom his employers horses well, and who, if he can get an excuse for leaving work, will, I think, That man might do more good in minding his employers business than in running here and there to make a show of religion. I believe plain, holy, godly living is more neededa great deal morethan fine preaching! And if my preaching does not, by Gods Grace, produce in you a finer character than that, then I am preaching for nothing! I heard of a man the other day who could preach with his feet, and I know a great many who do. That is, preaching with living and daily walk and conversation. It is, after all, to be upright in business, to be affectionate in the family, to make those around you happy, to live Christthat is, after all, true friendship with Christ! No big words of ready talkers, no polished periods, no gift of prayer will ever be so acceptable to the Lord Jesus Christ as the simple piety that graces the fireside, that adorns the private and the public life of the Believer. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. Practically to prove that Jesus Christ is your Lord is the highest service that you can, any of you, render to Him! May God help you to render it from this time forth with undeviating correctness! And with the help of His Spirit may you yet do it more and more. Let me conclude by observing that though this seems a very simple thing, yet after all   
VI. IT IS A MOST USEFUL AND NECESSARY THING.   
It is not possible that a rebel should be a friend to Christ. If a man says of any Law of Christ, I do not mean to keep that, then, Sir, you have virtually said, I do not mean to have Christ for my Lord, and that means that you cannot have Him as your Savior. If you do not know a thing to be Christs, well, I believe you are still sinful, for you ought to know it. The laws of our country never excuse a person for breaking the law because he says he did not know the law. It is presumed that everybody ought to know it. And the Bible is not such a Book as they cannot understand if they try. Any person can find out Christs will if he likes. But suppose you know it is Christs will, and do not choose to do itif you put your foot down and say, I shall not do it, then there is an end of all friendship! Obedience, then, is an essential of true friendship to Christ, for those who make a profession of friendship and dont do what He commands are the worst enemies He has! No city that is besieged need fear so much the enemy outside, as treachery inside. If there is known to be treachery inside, then the stress of war becomes severe. So if inside the Church there are persons who deliberately say, We are disciples of Christ, but we will not be obedient to His will, there is sedition and treason inside the camp! And these are they of whom Paul said, I have told you even weepingthat they are the enemies, the special enemies, of the Cross of Christ. And let me say this keeping of the Law of Christ is, after all   
VII. THE BEST WAY OF SERVING HIM AS A MATTER OF USEFULNESS.   
Sermons preached at home are the best sermons. Sermons at sick beds by holy women, sermons to drunk husbands by the patient godliness of the much-suffering wife, sermons by holy fathers and mothers in their loving anxiety for wayward sons and daughters, sermons by servants in the rectitude of their conduct to their employers, sermons by Christian tradesmen preached in their bills and in their trade by strict attention to everything uprightthese are sermons that the world must hear! These are things that will glorify Christ! These are the most friendly actions that you can do for Jesus. You raise His name in the market, you make men think the better of His religion by the holiness and consistency of your conduct. You are His friend!  
I dismiss you with this upon your minds. If you are His friends, obey His command, imitate His example and seek to have this not in theory, but as a matter of fact of daily life. The day will come, my Hearers, when to be a friend of Christ will be the grandest thing beneath the heavens. He is an exiled Prince in regard to this world, now, and men despise Him, but He is coming to His crown before long! And when He shall appear in the clouds of Heaven, as He shortly shall, all those who were His friends on earth, who stood in the pillory with Him and suffered for Himthese shall shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of His Father! Oh, it will then be a grand day, a brave day, for those who died for Him, for those who were made poor for conscience sake, for those who left kindred and friends for His name. I think I hear the King say, Make way, angels! Make way, cherubim and seraphim! These poor men and women were friends of Mine! When I was in exile, they suffered with Me. They were willing to bear reproach for Melet them come! They shall be courtiers round My Throne. They were friends of Mine in My humiliationthey shall be friends with Me in My Glory. Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from before the foundation of the world. And oh, how will all men who were not His friendshow they will hide their heads and wish they had never been born to continue at enmity with Him! They did not know who it was they were despising when they laughed at His people. They did not know what it was they trampled on when they put their profane feet upon the Cross of Christ. They did not know who they insulted when they broke the Sabbath and lived godless, Christless livesbut they will know it then, when they see the King on His throne, for their cry will betheir bitter lament shall beFall on us, you mountains! Cover us, you rocks, and hide ushide us from the face of Him that sits on the Throne. What? Can you not face Him? You used to jeer at His people! You used to say, It is all nonsense, this religion. Cannot you face Him? Cannot you face Him? He has not spoken yet! No thunderbolts are in His hand. Can you not face Him? No, they are ashamedthey dare not look, they dare not gaze on such heavenly beauty! They seek shelterthey hold their hands before their eyes. They ask the mountains to afford them a hiding place, for could they be such fools as to despise Him who died for His enemies, to despise the Christ of God, to despise the Everlasting Creator who out of mighty love, gave up His life for men? Before He speaks a word, before He pronounces a sentence, this shame shall begin their Hell, Hide us from the face of Him that sits on the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.   
God bless you, dear Friends, save you by His great mercy, richly bless every one of you and make you Christs friends. Amen and amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 12:37-50; ISAIAH 6.**

Verse 37. But though He had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on Him. They had an opportunity of seeing with their eyes what the Christ could do. He had even raised the dead in the midst of themand yet this is the sorrowful statement.

38-40. That the saying of Isaiah the Prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke, Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Isaiah said again, He has blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their hearts and be converted, and I should heal them. This passage is very frequently quoted in the Old Testamentit was so exceedingly appropriate to the condition of the unbelieving Jews. They were willfully blinded. They could see it. They were forced to hear it. There was much that even touched their hearts, but they hardened their hearts against it, and to this day they remain the same!

41-43. These things said Isaiah, when he saw His glory and spoke of Him. Nevertheless, among the chief rulers also many believed on Him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue. For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. And this is a common disease to this day. There are many who know the Truths of God who, nevertheless, keep very quiet about it. They do not like to be despised. They cannot endure to seem to be separate from their fellow menit is not respectable to be decided for Christ and to come out from among themso they love the praise of men more than the praise of God!

44. Jesus cried and said, He that believes on Me, believes not on Me, but on Him that sent Me. Faith in Christ is faith in Godhe that trusts the Son has accepted the witness of the Father!

45. And He that sees Me sees Him that sent Me. Wonderful expression! Perhaps we never fully realize it. Christ is seeable. God is notbut when we see the Christ, we do virtually see all of God that we may desire to see! The Invisible has made Himself visible in Christin Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

46. I am come a light into the world, that whoever believes on Me should not abide in darkness. True faith in Christ sheds light on everything concerning which light is desirable. You shall understand things when you have come unto the right standpoint, when you have gotten to believe in Christ. I wonder not that those who doubt concerning Him, doubt about everythingif they will not have this light, how shall they see?

47. And if any man hears My words and believes not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. Under this present dispensation, it is not the time of judgment. The Lord leaves you that are unbelievers to yourselves. He does not come as yet, to judge youthere is a Second Coming when He will be both Judge and Witnessand Condemner of those who have rejected Him! But at present it is a dispensation of pure mercy. He that rejects Me, and receives not My words, has One that judges Him. There is a great God above who reckons this to be among the greatest of all human crimesthat they reject His Son. We speak of unbelief very lightly, and there are some who trifle with it as if it had no moral quality at allbut God does not!

48. He that rejects Me, and receives not My words, has One that judges him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. Look, you, to thatthe Gospel which you refuse will judge you at the last day! We know that the Lord Jesus Christ shall judge the world, says Paul, according to my Gospel, and he that sins against the Gospel of love will certainly involve himself in the most solemn condemnation! He perishes that sins against the lawhe dies without mercy at the mouth of one or two witnesses. Of how much sorer punishment shall he be thought worthy, who sins against love and rejects the Savior?

49. For I have not spoken of Myself; but the Father which sent Me, He gave Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. God at the back of Christ. Omnipotence supporting Love. The expostulations of Christ, not left to our will to do as we like with them, but solemnly sanctioned by the royalties of God, so that to refute them is treason against the Majesty of Heaven!

50. And I know that His commandment is life everlasting: whatever I speak, therefore, even as the Father said unto Me, so I speak. The eternal authority of God is at the back of the testimony of Christ. Oh, that men would not be so unwise as to reject it! Now in our reading at the 41st verse we met with these words These things said Isaiah, when he saw His Glory and spoke of Him. Now let us read the passage which gives us an account of Isaiahs seeing the Glory of Christ.

**ISAIAH 6.**   
Verse 1. In the year King Uzziah died. You remember him, that leprous king, that king who had thrust himself into the priests office and was struck with leprosy, and shut up in a separate house during the rest of his life. In the year that he died, Isaiah saw a greater King, whom no defilement can ever touch, a King that reigns and lives forever, though Uzziah dies.

1. I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and His train filled the Temple. Whenever you read in the Old Testament that any man saw the Lordunderstand it is the Second Person of the Divine Trinitythe Lord Jesus Christ! He makes Himself, as we have said, visible to men, and God in Him.

2. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he did fly. There are the spirits that dwell in the Presence of God, nearest to Him, and as He is a consuming fire, they come to be like He, for the seraphims are burning ones, consumers, burning and shining lights who wait upon God who is Light of Life. Notice how humble they are in that Presence they cover themselves before that Infinite Majesty!

3, 4. And one cried upon another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of Hosts: the whole earth is full of His Glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. And if even the voice of a seraph moved the very foundations of the Temple, what will the voice of God do when He shall speak once more? According to that word, He shall shake not only earth, but also Heaven! What awe and trembling should be upon us when we wait upon God, if even the posts of the doors move! Then said I, woe is me! All Gods saints do this when they get a view of Him. There was never a boastful thought in any mans mind in the Presence of God. They that talk of their own purity have not known God, neither seen Him. How could they? This is the cry of all the purified when they come into the Presence of GodWoe is me, for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips. What made him think of lips, but the voice of the seraphim as responsively they cried to one another, Holy, holy, holy? Then Isaiah thought of his own lips! Oh, Brothers and Sisters, what impurity comes out of our lips! Perhaps more, there, than anywhere else is the impurity of the heart discovered in our idle words, our evil words.

5-7. Then said I, Woe is me! For I am undone because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of Hosts. Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar. And he laid it upon my mouth and said, Lo, this has touched your lips; and your iniquity is taken away, and your sin purged. Just where Isaiah felt the impurity, there he felt the expiation! His lips were unclean, but now a touch of the altar coal, a communication from the great Sacrifice, has taken all his iniquity away and his sin is buried!

8. Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us? Then said I, Here am I: send me. Observe the unity and the plurality, Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us? Upon what theory, but that of the Doctrine of the Trinity, can we explain so singular a change from the singular to the plural? Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us? Then said I, Here am I: send me. This man, now so lowly, so purified with the vision of God, just seen by Him, how cheerfully does he spring forward at the word of invitation! Here am I: send me. Now see what a sorrowful mission, God, in these next verses, assured Isaiah that his ministry so far as the conversion of the Jews were concerned, would be altogether fruitless! They would not receive his testimony.

9, 10. And He said Go, and tell this people, Hear you, indeed, but understand not; and see you, indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes lest they see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed. What a ministrydark with insufferable light! So bright, so clear, that men should have willfully to harden their hearts and shut their eyes if they did not understand and receive it!

11, 12. Then said I, Lord, how long? And He answered, Until the cities are wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land is utterly desolate. And the LORD has removed men far away and there is a great forsaking in the midst of the land. So it happened, as you know the people were carried away captive. They still refusedthey would not believe even when Christ came! And then the destruction of Jerusalem and the sweeping clear of their country was the final stroke of God. But yet in it shall be a tenth. There is always a gleam of light from Gods Grace in the thickest darkness of His Justice. God has His tithe.

13. But yet in it shall be a tenth, and it shall return, and shall be eaten: as a teil tree, and as an oak, whose substance is in them, when they cast their leaves; so the holy seed shall be the substance thereof. And, therefore, the Jewish nation is not destroyed, but still existsand the Church of God is not destroyed, despite all that happens to it. There is a substance in it, according to the election of Grace, for which may God be praised!

Adapted from the C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software.   
PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #194 The New Park Street Pulpit 1

HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY   
NO. 194

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON THE SABBATH MORNING, MAY 16, 1858, BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE MUSIC HALL, ROYAL SURREY GARDENS.

**If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin.   
John 15:22.**

THE peculiar sin of the Jews, the sin which aggravated above everything their former iniquities, was their rejection of Jesus Christ as the Messiah. He had been very plainly described in the books of the Prophets and they who waited for Him, such as Simeon and Anna, no sooner beheld Him even in His infant state, than they rejoiced to see Him and understood that God had sent forth His salvation.

But because Jesus Christ did not answer the expectation of that evil generationbecause He did not come arrayed in pomp and clothed with power, because He had not the outward garnishing of a prince and the honors of a king, they shut their eyes against Him. He was a root out of a dry ground, He was despised and they esteemed Him not.

Nor did their sin stop there. Not content with denying his Messiahship, they were exceeding hot against Him in their anger. They hunted Him all His life, seeking His blood. Nor were they content till their fiendish malice had been fully glutted by sitting down at the foot of the Cross and watching the dying throes and the expiring agonies of their crucified Messiah. Though over the Cross itself the words were written, Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews, yet they knew not their king, Gods everlasting Son. And knowing Him not, they crucified Him, for had they known Him, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory.

Now, the sin of the Jews is every day repeated by the Gentiles. That which they did once, many have done every day. Are there not many of you now present this day, listening to my voice, who forget the Messiah? You do not trouble yourself to deny Him. You would not degrade yourselves, in what is called a Christian country, by standing up to blaspheme His name. Perhaps you hold the right doctrine concerning Him and believe Him to be the Son of God as well as the Son of Mary. But still you neglect His claims and give Him no honor and do not accept Him as worthy of your trust. He is not your Redeemer. You are not looking for His second advent, nor are you expecting to be saved through His blood. No, even worseyou are this day crucifying Himfor know you not that as many as put away from them the Gospel of Christ, they crucify the Lord afresh and open wide His wounds?

As often as you hear the Word preached and reject it, as often as you are warned and stifle the voice of your conscience, as often as you are made to tremble and yet say, Go your way for this time, when I have a

more convenient season, I will send for you, so often do you in effect grasp the hammer and the nail and once more pierce His hands and make the blood issue from His side. And there are other ways by which you wound Him through His members. As often as you despise His ministers, cast stumbling blocks in the way of His servants, impede His Gospel by your evil example, or by your hard words seek to pervert the seeker from the way of the Truth of Godthen you commit that great iniquity which brought the curse upon the Jew and which has doomed him to wander through the earth, until the day of the second advent when He shall come who shall even by the Jew be acknowledged the King of the Jewsfor whom both Jew and Gentile are now looking with anxious expectation, even Messiah, the Prince who came once to suffer, but who comes again to reign.

And now I shall endeavor this morning to show the parallel between your case and that of the Jew. Not doing so in set phrase, but yet incidentally, as God shall help me. I will appeal to your conscience and make you feel that in rejecting Christ you commit the same sin and incur the same doom. We shall note, first of all, the excellence of the ministry, since Christ comes in it and speaks to menIf I had not spoken to them. We shall notice, secondly, the aggravation of sin caused by the rejection of Christs messageIf I had not spoken to them they had not had sin. Thirdly, the death of all excuses, caused by the preaching of the WordNow they have no cloak for their sin. And then, in the last place, we shall briefly, but very solemnly announce the fearfully aggravated doom of those who thus reject the Savior and increase their guilt by despising Him.

I. In the first place, this morning it is ours to say and to say truly, too, that in THE PREACHING OF THIS GOSPEL THERE IS TO MANS CONSCIENCE THE COMING OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST AND THE SPEAKING OF THE SAVIOR THROUGH US. When Israel of old despised Moses and murmured against him, Moses meekly said, You have not murmured against us, but you have murmured against the Lord God of Israel. And truly the minister may, with Scripture warrant, say the samehe that despises us, despises not us, but Him that sent us. He who rejects the message rejects not what we say, but rejects the message of the everlasting God.

The minister is but a man. He has no priestly power, but is a man called out of the rest of mankind and endowed with the Holy Spirit to speak to his fellow men. And when he preaches the Truth of God with power sent down from Heaven, God owns him by calling him His ambassador and puts him in the high and responsible position of a watchman on the walls of Zion. And God bids all men take heed that a faithful message, faithfully delivered, when despised and trampled on, amounts to rebellion against Him and to sin and iniquity against the Most High.

As for what I may say, as a man, it is but little that I should say it. But if I speak as the Lords ambassador, take heed that you slight not the message. It is the Word of God sent down from Heaven which we preach with the power of the Holy Spirit, earnestly beseeching you to believe it. And remember, it is at the peril of your own souls that you put it from you, for it is not we that speak, but the Spirit of the Lord our God who speaks in us. With what a solemnity does this invest the Gospel ministry!

O you sons of men, the ministry is not the speaking of men, but the speaking of God through men. As many as are the real, called, and sent servants of God, are not the authors of their message. But they first hear it from their Master and they speak it to the people and they see ever before their eyes these solemn wordsTake heed unto yourself and unto the doctrine. Continue in themfor in doing this you shall both save yourself and them that hear you.

And they hear behind them this awful threatIf you warn them not they shall perish, but their blood will I require at your hand. Oh, that you might see written in letters of fire before you this day the words of the ProphetO earth, earth, earth, hear the Word of the Lord. For as far as our ministry is true and untainted by error, it is Gods Word and it has the same right and claim to your belief as if God Himself should speak it from the top of Sinai, instead of speaking it through the humble ministry of the Word of God.

And now let us pause over this doctrine and let us ask ourselves this solemn question. Have we not all of us grossly sinned against God in the neglect that we have often put upon the means of grace? How often have you stayed away from the House of God when God Himself was speaking there? What would have been the doom of Israel if, when summoned on that sacred day to hear the Word of God from the top of the mountain, they had perversely rambled into the wilderness, rather than attend to hear it?

And yet that is what you have done. You have sought your own pleasure and listened to the siren song of temptation. You have shut your ear against the voice of the Most High. And when He has Himself been speaking in His own House, you have turned aside unto crooked ways and have not regarded the voice of the Lord your God. And when you have come up to the House of God, how often has there been the careless eye, the inattentive ear! You have heard as though you heard not. Your ear has been penetrated, but the hidden man of the heart has been deaf and you have been like the deaf adder. Charm we never so wisely, you would not listen nor regard us.

God Himself has spoken, too, at times in your conscience so that you have heard it. You have stood in the aisle and your knees have knocked together. You have sat in your pew and while some mighty Boanerges has thundered out the Word you have heard it said, as with an angels voice, Prepare to meet your Godconsider your wayset your house in order, for you shall die and not live. And yet you have gone out of Gods House and have forgotten what manner of men you were.

You have quenched the Spirit, you have done despite to the Spirit of Grace. You have put far from you the struggles of your conscience. You have throttled those infant prayers that were beginning to cry in your heart. You have drowned those new-born desires that were just springing

up. You have put away from you everything that was good and sacred. You have turned again to your own ways and have once more wandered on the mountains of sin and in the valley of iniquity. Ah, my Friends, just think, then, for a moment, that in all this you have despised God.

I am certain if the Holy Spirit would but apply this one solemn truth to your consciences this morning, this Hall of Music would be turned into a house of mourning and this place would become a Bochim, a place of weeping and lamentation. Oh, to have despised God! To have trampled under foot the Son of Man, to have passed by His Cross, to have rejected the wooings of His love and the warnings of His grace! How solemn! Did you ever think of this before? You have thought it was but despising manwill you now think of it as despising Christ? For Christ has spoken to you.

Ah, God is my witness that oftentimes Christ has wept with these eyes and spoken to you with these lips. I have sought nothing but the winning of your souls. Sometimes with rough words have I endeavored to drive you to the Cross and at other times with weeping accents have I sought to weep you to my Redeemer. And I am sure I did not speak myself then, but Jesus spoke through me. And inasmuch as you did hear and weep and then went away and did forget, remember that Christ spoke to you.

It was He who said, Look unto Me and be you saved, all the ends of the earth. It was He who said, Come unto Me, all you that labor and are heavy laden. It was He who warned you that if you neglected this great salvation you must perish. And in having put away the warning and rejected the invitation you have not despised us, but you have despised our Master. And woe unto you, except you repent, for tis a fearful thing to have despised the voice of Him that speaks from Heaven.

II. And now we must notice the second point, namely, that THE REJECTION OF THE GOSPEL AGGRAVATES MENS SIN. Now, do not let me be misunderstood. I have heard of persons who, having gone to the House of God, have been filled with a sense of sin and at last they have been driven almost to despair, for Satan has tempted them to forsake the House of God. For says he, The more you go, the more you increase your condemnation. Now I believe that this is an error. We do not increase our condemnation by going to the House of God. We are far more likely to increase it by staying away. For in staying away from the House of God there is a double rejection of Christ.

You reject Him even with the outward mind, as well as with the inward spirit. You neglect even the lying at the pool of Bethesdayou are worse than the man who lay at the pool, but could not get in. You will not lie there and therefore, neglecting the hearing of the Word of God, you do indeed incur a fearful doom. But if you go up to the House of God sincerely seeking a blessingif you do not get comfortif you do not find grace in the means, still, if you go there devoutly seeking it, your condemnation is not increased.

Your sin is not aggravated merely by the hearing of the Gospel, but by the willful and wicked rejection of it when it is heard. The man who listens to the sound of the Gospel and after having heard it, turns upon his heel with a laugh, or who, after hearing time after time and being visibly affected, allows the cares and the pleasures of this wicked life to come in and choke the seedsuch a man does in a fearful measure increase his guilt.

And now we will just notice why, in a two-fold measure, he does this. Because, in the first place he gets a new sin that he never had before and beside that, he aggravates all his other sins. Bring me here a Hottentot, or a man from Kamschatkaa wild savage who has never listened to the Word. That man may have every sin in the catalogue of guilt except one. But that one I am sure he has not. He has not the sin of rejecting the Gospel when it is preached to him. But you, when you hear the Gospel, have an opportunity for committing a fresh sin. And if you have rejected it, you have added a fresh iniquity to all those others that hang about your neck.

I have often been rebuked by certain men who have erred from the Truth of God, for preaching the doctrine that it is a sin in men, if they reject the Gospel of Christ. I care not for every scornful titleI am certain that I have the warrant of Gods Word in so preaching and I do not believe that any man can be faithful to mens souls and clear of their blood unless he bears his frequent and solemn testimony upon this vital subject.

When He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will reprove the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgmentof sin, because they believe not in Me. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world and men loved darkness rather than light. He that believes not is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sinbut now have they both seen and hated both Me and My Father.

Woe unto you, Chorazin! Woe unto you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the Judgment, than for you. If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin. Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?

He that despised Moses law died without mercy under two or three witnesses; of how much sorer punishment, suppose you, shall he be thought worthy, who has trodden under foot the Son of God and has counted the blood of the Covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing and has done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know

Him that has said, Vengeance belongs unto Me, I will recompense, says the Lord. And again, the Lord shall judge His people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

I have been quoting, you see, some Scripture passages and if they do not mean that unbelief is a sin and the sin, which, above all others, damns mens souls, they do not mean anything at all, but they are just a dead letter in the Word of God. Now, adultery, murder, theft and lyingall these are damning and deadly sinsbut repentance can cleanse all these, through the blood of Christ. But to reject Christ destroys a man hopelessly. The murderer, the thief, the drunkard may yet enter the kingdom of Heaven, if, repenting of his sins, he will lay hold on the Cross of Christ. But with these sins a man is inevitably lost if he believes not on the Lord Jesus Christ.

And now, my Hearers, will you consider for one moment what an awful sin this is, which you add to all your other sins? Everything lies in the heart of this sinthe rejecting of Christ. There is murder in this. For if the man on the scaffold rejects a pardon, does he not murder himself? There is pride in this. For you reject Christ because your proud hearts have turned you aside. There is rebellion in this. For we rebel against God when we reject Christ. There is high treason in this. For you reject a king. You put far from you Him who is crowned king of the earth and you incur therefore the weightiest of all guilt.

Oh, to think that the Lord Jesus should come from Heavento think for a moment that He should hang upon the treethat there He should die in agonies extreme and that from that Cross He should this day look down upon you and should say, Come unto Me, you weary and you heavy ladenthat you should still turn away from Himit is the unkindest stab of all. What more brutish, what more devilish, than to turn away from Him who gave His life for you? Oh that you were wise, that you understood this, that you would consider your latter end!

But again, we do not only add a new sin to the catalogs of guilt but we aggravate all the rest. You cannot sin so cheaply as other people, you who have had the Gospel. When the unenlightened and ignorant sin, their conscience does not prick them. And there is not that guilt in the sin of the ignorant that there is in the sin of the enlightened. Did you steal before? That was bad enough. But hear the Gospel and continue a thief and you are a thief, indeed. Did you lie before you heard the Gospel? The liar shall have his portion in the lake. But lie after hearing the Gospel, and it seems as if the fire of Tophet should be fanned up to a seven-fold fury. He who sins ignorantly has some little excuse. But he who sins against light and knowledge sins presumptuously.

Under the Law there was no atonement for thispresumptuous sins were out of the pole of legal atonement. But blessed be God, Christ has atoned for even these and he that believes shall be saved, despite even his guilt. Oh, I beseech you, remember that the sin of unbelief blackens every other sin. It is like Jeroboam. It is said of him he sinned and made Israel to sin. So unbelief sins itself and leads to every other sin. Unbelief is the file by which you sharpen the axethe coulter and the sword which you use in rebellion against the Most High. Your sins become more exceeding sinful the more you disbelieve in Christ, the more you know of Him and the longer you reject Him. This is Gods Truth. But a Truth that is to be spoken with reluctance and with many groans in our spirits.

Oh to have such a message to deliver to you, to you I say, for if there is a people under Heaven to whom my text applies, it is you. If there is one race of men in the world who have more to account for than others, it is yourselves. There are doubtless others who are on an equality with you, who sit under a faithful and earnest ministry. But as God shall judge between you and me at the Great Day to the utmost of my power I have been faithful to your souls. I have never in this pulpit sought by hard words, by technical language, to magnify my own wisdom.

I have spoken to you plainly. And not a word, to the best of my knowledge, has escaped these lips which every one of you could not understand. You have had a simple Gospel. I have not stood here and preached coldly to you. I could say as I came up yon stairs, The burden of the Lord was upon me. For my heart has come here heavy and my soul has been hot within me. And when I have preached feebly, my words may have been uncouth and my language far from proper, but my heart never has been wanting. This whole soul has spoken to you. And if I could have ransacked Heaven and earth to find language that might have won you to the Savior, I would have done so.

I have not shunned to reprove you, I have never minced matters. I have spoken to this age of its iniquities and to you of your sins. I have not softened down the Bible to suit the carnal tastes of men. I have said damn, where God said damnI have not sweetened it into condemn. I have not minced matters, nor endeavored to veil or conceal the Truth of God, but as to every mans conscience in the sight of God, have I endeavored to commend the Gospel earnestly and with power and with a plain, outspoken, earnest and honest ministry.

I have not kept back the glorious doctrines of grace, although by preaching them the enemies of the Cross have called me an Antinomian. Nor have I been afraid to preach mans solemn responsibility, although another tribe have slandered me as an Arminian. And in saying this, I say it not in a way of glorying. I say it for your rebukeif you have rejected the Gospelfor you shall have sinned far above that of any other men in casting away Christ. a double measure of the fury of the wrath of God shall fall on you. Sin, then, is aggravated by the rejection of Christ.

III. And now, in the third place, THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST TAKES AWAY ALL EXCUSE FROM THOSE WHO HEAR IT AND REJECT IT. Now have they no cloak for their sin. A cloak is a very poor covering for sin. When there is an all-seeing eye to look through it in the great day of the tempest of Gods wrath, a cloak will be a very poor shelter. But man is always fond of a cloak in the day of cold and rain. We see men gathering their cloaks about them and if they have no shelter and no refuge, still they feel a little comforted by their garment. And so it is with

you. You will gather together, if you can, an excuse for your sin and when conscience pricks you, you will seek to heal the wound with an excuse.

And even in the Day of Judgment, although a cloak will be a sorry covering, yet it will be better than nothing at all. But now you have no cloak for your sin. The traveler is left in the rain without his covering, exposed to the tempest without that garment which once did shelter him. Now you have no cloak for your sindiscovered, detected and unmasked, you are left inexcusable, without a cloak for your iniquity. And now let me just notice how the preaching of the Gospel, when it is faithfully performed, takes away all cloaks for sin.

In the first place, one man might get up and say, I did not know I was doing wrong when I committed such and such an iniquity. Now, that you cannot say. God has by His Law told you solemnly what is wrong. There stand the Ten Commandments. And there stands the comment of our Master where He has enlarged upon the Commandment and told us that the old Law you shall not commit adultery forbad also all sins of the lascivious look and the evil eye. If the Sepoy commits iniquity, there is a cloak for it. I doubt not that his conscience tells him that he does wrong, but his sacred books teach that he is doing right and therefore he has that cloak.

If the Mohammedan commits lust, I doubt not his conscience does prick him, but his sacred books give him liberty. But you profess to believe your Bibles and have them in your houses and have the preachers of them in all your streets. And therefore when you sin, you sin with the proclamation of the Law upon the very wall before your eyesyou do willfully violate a well-known Law which has come from Heaven and come to you.

Againyou might say, When I sinned, I did not know how great would be the punishment. Of this also, by the Gospel, you are left without excuse. Did not Jesus Christ tell you and does He not tell you every day, that those who will not have Him shall be cast into outer darkness, where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth? Has He not said, These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal? Does He not Himself declare that the wicked shall be burned up with unquenchable fire?

Has He not told you of a place where their worm dies not and where their fire is not quenched? And the ministers of the Gospel have not shunned to tell you this, too. You have sinned, though you knew you would be lost by it. You have taken the poisonous draught, not thinking that it was harmlessyou knew that every drop in the cup was scalding with damnation and yet you have taken the cup and drained it to its dregs. You have destroyed your own souls with your eyes open. You have gone like a fool to the stocks, like an ox to the slaughter and like a lamb you have licked the knife of the butcher. In this, then, you are left without excuse.

But some of you may say, Ah, I heard the Gospel, it is true, and I knew that I was doing wrong, but I did not know what I must do to be saved. Is there one among you who can urge such an excuse as this? Methinks you will not have the impudence to do so. Believe and live, is preached every day in your hearing. Many of you these ten, twenty, thirty, forty, or fifty years have been hearing the Gospel and you dare not say, I did not know what the Gospel was.

From your earliest childhood many of you have listened to it. The name of Jesus was mingled with the hush of lullaby. You drank in a holy Gospel with your mothers milk and yet despite all that, you have never sought Christ. Knowledge is power, men say. Alas! Knowledge, when not used, is wrath, WRATH, WRATH to the uttermost, against the man who knows and yet does that which he knows to be wrong.

Methinks I can hear another say, Well, I heard the Gospel preached, but I never had a good example set me. Some of you may say that and it would be partially true. But there are others of you, concerning whom I may say that this would be a lying excuse. Ah, Man. You have been very fond of speaking of the inconsistencies of Christians. You have said, They do not live as they ought. And alas, there is too much truth in what you have said. But there was one Christian whom you knew and whose character you were compelled to admire. Do you not remember her? It was the mother who brought you forth.

That has always been the one difficulty with you up to this day. You could have rejected the Gospel very easily, but your mothers example stood before you and you could not overcome that. Do you not remember among the first early darkling of your recollection how you opened your little eyes in the morning and you saw a mothers loving face looking down upon you and you caught her with a tear in her eye and you heard her say, God bless the child, may he call the Redeemer blessed! You remember how your father did often chide youshe did seldom chideshe often spoke in tones of love. Recollect that little upper room where she took you aside and putting her arms round your neck, dedicated you to God and prayed that the Lord would save you in your childhood?

Remember the letter she gave you and your book in which she wrote your name when you left the parental roof to go abroad and the sorrow with which she wrote to you when she heard you had begun to plunge in gaiety and mix with the ungodly? Remember that sorrowful look with which she did wring your hand the last time you left her? Remember how she said to you, You will bring my hairs with sorrow to the grave, if you walk in the ways of iniquity?

Well, you knew that what she said was not cant. There was reality in that. You could laugh at the minister, you could say it was his business, but at her you could not scoff. She was a Christian, there was no mistake about it. How often did she put up with your angry temper and bear with your rough manners, for she was a sweet spirit, almost too good for earthcan you remember that? You were not there when she was dying, you could not arrive in time. But she said to her friend as she was dying, There is only one thing that I want, then I could die happyoh, that I

could see my children walking in the Truth of God. Now, I apprehend such an example leaves you without a cloak for your wickedness and if you commit iniquity after that, how fearful must be the weight of your woe!

But others of you can say that you had no such mother. Your first school was the street and the first example you ever had was that of a swearing father. Remember, my Friend, there is one perfect example Christ and Him you have heard of, though you have not seen Him. Jesus Christ, the Man of Nazareth, was a perfect Man. In Him was there no sin, neither was there guile in His mouth. And if you have never seen anything like Christian worth anywhere else, yet you can see it in Christ. And in venturing such an excuse as this, remember you have ventured upon a lie, for the example of Christ, the works of Christ, as well as the Words of Christ, leave you without excuse for your sin.

Ah, and I think I hear one more excuse offered and that is this: Well, I certainly had many advantages, but they were never sent home to my conscience so that I felt them. Now, there are very few of you here who can say that. Some of you will say, Yes, I heard the minister, but he never made an impression upon me. Ah, young men and young women and all of you this morning, I must be a witness against you in the Day of Judgment that this is untrue. For, but now, your consciences were touched. Did I not see some soft tears of repentanceI trust they were suchflowing but just now? No, you have not always been unmoved by the Gospel. You have grown old now and it takes a deal to stir you, but it was not always so.

There was a time in your youth when you were very susceptible of impressing. Remember the sins of your youth will cause your bones to rot, if you have still persevered in rejecting the Gospel. Your old heart has grown hardstill you are without excuse. You did feel once, yes, and even now you cannot help feeling. I know there are some of you that can scarcely keep your seats at the thought of your iniquities. And you have almost vowed, some of you, that this day you will seek God and the first thing you will do will be to climb to your chamber and shut the door and seek the Lord.

Ah, but I remember a story of one who remarked to a minister, what an amazing thing it was to see so many people weeping. No, said the minister, I will tell you something more amazing stillthat so many will forget all they wept about when they get outside the door. And you will do this. Still, when you have done it, you will remember that you have not been without the strivings of Gods Spirit. You will remember that God has, this morning, as it were, put a hurdle across your road, dug a ditch in your way and put up a hand-post and said, Take warning! Beware, beware, beware! You are rushing madly into the ways of iniquity!

And I have come before you this morning and in Gods name I have said, Stop, stop, stop, thus says the Lord, consider your ways, why will you die? Turn you, turn you, why will you die O house of Israel? And, now, if you will put this from you, it must be even so. If you will put out these sparks, if you will quench this first burning torch, it must be so! On your own head be your bloodat your own door lay your iniquities.

IV. But now I have one thing more to do. And it is awful work. For I have, as it were, to PUT ON THE BLACK CAP AND PRONOUNCE THE SENTENCE OF CONDEMNATION. For those who live and die rejecting Christ there is a most fearful doom. They shall perish with utter destruction. There are degrees of punishment. But the highest degree is given to the man who rejects Christ. You have noticed that passage, I dare say, that the liar and the whoremonger and drunkards shall have their portionwhom do you suppose with?with unbelieversas if Hell were made first of all for unbelieversas if the pit were dug not for whoremongers and swearers and drunkards, but for men who despise Christ, because that is the A-1 sin, the cardinal vice and men are condemned for that.

Other iniquities come following after them, but this one goes before them to judgment. Imagine for a moment that time has passed and that the Day of Judgment is come. We are all gathered together, both quick and dead. The trumpet blast waxes exceeding loud and long. We are all attentive, expecting something marvelous. The exchange stands still in its businessthe shop is deserted by the tradesman. The crowded streets are filled. All men stand still. They feel that the last great business day is come and that now they must settle their accounts forever.

A solemn stillness fills the airno sound is heard. All, all is noiseless. Presently a great white cloud with solemn state sails through the sky and thenhark! the twofold clamor of the startled earth. On that cloud there sits one like unto the Son of Man. Every eye looks and at last there is heard a unanimous shoutIt is He! It is He! And after that you hear on the one hand, shouts of Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Welcome, Welcome, Welcome Son of God.

But mixed with that there is a deep bass, composed of the weeping and the wailing of the men and women who have persecuted Him and who have rejected Him. Listen! I think I can dissect the sonnet, I think I can hear the words as they come separately, each one of them, tolling like a death knell. What say they? They say, Rocks hide us, mountains fall upon us, hide us from the face of Him that sits upon the throne. And shall you be among the number of those who say to the rocks Hide us?

My impenitent Hearer! Suppose for a moment that you have gone out of this world and that you have died impenitent and that you are among those who are weeping and wailing and gnashing their teeth. Oh, what will then be your terror! Blanched cheeks and knocking knees are nothing compared to your horror of heart, when you shall be drunk, but not with wine. And when you shall reel to and fro with the intoxication of amazement and shall fall down and roll in the dust for horror and dismay.

For there He comes and there He is, with fierce, fire-darting eyes. And now the time is come for the great division. The voice is heard, Gather My people from the four winds of Heaven, My elect in whom My soul delights. They are gathered at the right hand and there they are. And now says

He, Gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn. And you are gathered and on the left hand there you are, gathered into the bundle. All that is wanted is the lighting of the pile. Where shall be the torch that shall kindle them? The tares are to be burnedwhere is the flame?

The flame comes out of His mouth and it is composed of words like theseDepart, you cursed into everlasting fire, in Hell, prepared for the devil and his angels. Do you linger? Depart! Do you seek a blessing? You are cursed. I curse you with a curse. Do you seek to escape? It is everlasting fire. Do you stop and plead? No, I called and you refused. I stretched out My hands and you regarded Me not, therefore I will mock at your calamity, I will laugh when your fear comes. Depart, again, I say, depart forever!

And you are gone. And what is your reflection? Why, it is thisOh, would to God that I never had been born! Oh, that I had never heard the Gospel preached, that I might never have had the sin of rejecting it! This will be the gnawing of the worm in your conscienceI knew better but I did not do better. As I sowed the wind, it is right I should reap the whirlwind. I was checked, but I would not be stopped. I was wooed, but I would not be invited. Now I see that I have murdered myself. Oh, thought above all thoughts most deadly! I am lost, lost, lost! And this is the horror of horrorsI have caused myself to be lost. I have put from me the Gospel of Christ. I have destroyed myself.

Shall this be so with you, my Hearer? Shall this be so with you? I pray it may not! O may the Holy Spirit now constrain you to come to Jesus, for I know that you art too vile to yield, unless He compels you. But I hope for you. Methinks I hear you say, What must I do to be saved? Let me tell you the way of salvation and then farewell. If you would be saved, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved. For the Scripture says, He that believes and is immersed shall be saved. He that believes not shall be damned! There Jesus hangs, dying on His Cross! Look to Him and live

*Venture on Him, venture wholly,   
Let no other trust intrude;   
None but Jesus   
Can do helpless sinners good.*

Be you wicked, filthy, depraved, degradedyou are still invited to Christ. The devils castaways Christ takes inthe offscouring, the dross, the scum, the chaff, the sewage of this worldare now invited to Christ. Come to Him now and obtain mercy. But if you harden your hearts

*The Lord in anger dressed   
Shall lift His hand and swear,   
You that despised My promised rest,   
Shall have no portion there.*

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HATRED WITHOUT CAUSE   
NO. 89

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON SABBATH MORNING, JUNE 29, 1856, BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT NEW PARK STREET CHAPEL, SOUTHWARK.

**They hated Me without a cause.   
John 15:25.**

IT is usually understood that the quotation our Savior here refers to is to be found in the 35th Psalm, at the 19th verse, where David says, speaking of himself, immediately, and of the Savior, prophetically, Let not them who are My enemies rejoice over Me, neither let them wink with the eye that hate Me without a cause. Our Savior refers to that as being applicable to Himself and thus He really tells us, in effect, that many of the Psalms are Messianic, or refer to the Messiah! And therefore Dr. Hawker did not err when he said he believed the Psalms referred to the Savior, though he may have carried the Truth of God too far. But it will be a good plan, in reading the Psalms, if we continually look at them as alluding not so much to David, as to the Man of whom David was the type, Jesus Christ, Davids Lord.

No Being was ever more lovely than the Savior. It would seem almost impossible not to have affection for Him. Certainly at first sight it would seem far more difficult to hate Him than to love Him. And yet, loveable as He was, altogether lovelyno Being so early met with hatred and no creature ever endured such a continual persecution as He had to suffer! He is no sooner ushered into the world than the sword of Herod is ready to cut Him off. The innocents of Bethlehem, by their dreadful massacre, gave a sad foretaste of the sufferings which Christ would endure and of the hatred that men would pour upon His devoted head! From His first moment, to the Cross, save the temporary lull while He was a child, it seemed as if all the world were in league against Him and all men sought to destroy Him! In different ways that hatred displayed itself. Sometimes in overt deeds, as when they took Him to the brow of the hill and would have cast Him down headlong. Or when they took up stones, again, to stone Him, because He said that Abraham desired to see His day and saw it and was glad. At other times that hatred showed itself in words of slander, such as theseHe is a drunken man and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. Or in looks of contempt, as when they looked suspiciously at Him because He did eat with publicans and sinners and sat down to table with unwashed hands. At other times that hatred dwelt entirely in their thoughts and they thought within themselves, This Man blasphemes, because He said, Your sins are forgiven you. At almost every time there was a hatred towards Christ! Even when they took Him and would have made Him kingand a shallow fleeting flood of popular applause would have wafted him onto an unsteady throneeven then, there was a latent hatred towards Him! A hatred only kept hidden by loaves and fishes, but which only needed an equal quantity of loaves and fishes offered by the priests to develop it, itself, into the cry of, Crucify Him, crucify Him, instead of the shout of, Hosanna! Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord.

All grades of men hated Him. Most men have to meet with some opposition. But then it is frequently a class opposition and there are other classes who look at them with respect. The demagogue, who is admired by the poor, must expect to be despised by the rich. And he who labors for the aristocracy, of course, meets with the contempt of the many. But here was a Man who walked among the people, who loved them, who spoke to rich and poor as though they were (as indeed they are) on one level in His blessed sightand yet all classes conspired to hate Him! The priests cried Him down because He spoiled their dogmas. The nobles would put Him to death because He spoke of being a king. The poor, for some reasons best known to themselves, though they admired His eloquence and frequently would have fallen prostrate in worship before Him, on account of the wondrous deeds He dideven these, led by men who ought to have guided them betterconspired to put Him to death and to consummate their guilt by nailing Him to the tree! Then they wagged their heads, bade Him, if He could build a Temple in three days, to save Himself and come down from the Cross. Christ was the Hated One, the Slandered and Scorned OneHe was despised and rejected of men, a Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief.

Now, we shall try, this morning, first, to justify the Saviors remarks, that He was hated without a cause. And secondly, to dwell upon the sin of menthat men hated Him without a cause. In the third place, to give a lesson or two to Christs own people which they may well learn from the fact that their Savior was hated without a cause.

I. First, then, Beloved, let us JUSTIFY WHAT THE SAVIOR SAID They hated Me without a cause. And we remark, that apart from the consideration of mans sinfulness and Christs purity, there certainly is no cause whatever to be discovered why the world should have hated Him!

First let us regard Christ in His Person. Was there anything in Christs Person as a Man, when He lived in this world, which had a natural tendency to make any person hate Him? Let us remark that there was an absence of almost everything which excites hatred between man and man! In the first place, there was no great rank in Christ to excite envy. It is a well-known fact that let a man be ever so good, if he is at all lifted above his fellow creatures by riches, or by titlethough many will respect himyet many will often speak against him. Not so much for what he is, as for his rank and his title. It seems to be natural to men to despise nobles. Each man, individually, thinks it a wonderful thing to know a lord. But put men together and they will despise lords and bishops and speak very lightly of principalities and powers. Now Christ had none of the outward circumstances of rank. He had no chariot, no long sleeves, no elevation above His fellows. When He walked abroad, there were no heralds to attend Him, there was no pomp to do Him honor. In fact, one would think that Christs appearance would naturally have engendered pity! Instead of being lifted above men, He did, in some sense, seem to be below them, for foxes had holes and the birds of the air had nests, but the Son of Man had not where to lay His Head. Many a democrat has railed against the archbishop when he has gone by Lambeth Palace. But would he curse or despise him if he were told the archbishop had not where to lay his head, but simply toiled for the Truths sake and had no reward? The envy, naturally excited by rank, station and such-like, could not have operated in Christs case. There was nothing in His garb to attract attention. It was the garb of the peasant of Galileeof one piece, woven from the top throughout. Nor was there anything in His rank. He might have been the son of an ancient royal family but its royalty was apparently extinct and He was only known as the Son of the Carpenter. They hated Him, then, in that sense, without a cause.

Many persons seem to have envy excited in them against those who exercise rule or government over them. The very fact of a man having authority over me stirs up my evil passions and I begin to look at him with suspicion because he is invested with that authority. Some men naturally fall into the groove and obey simply because the rule is made. Principalities and powers are established and they submit themselves for the Lords sake. But the many, especially in these republican times, seem to have a natural tendency to kick against authority, simply because it is authority! But if authorities and governments were changed every month, I believe that in some countries, in France, for instance, there would be revolutions as much under one government as under another! In fact, they hate all government there and wish to be without law, that each man may do what is right in his own eyes. But this did not operate in Christs caseHe was not a king. He did not assume sway over the multitude. It is true He was Lord over tempests and seas. It is true He could command demons and, if He pleased, men would have been His obedient servants. But He did not assume power over them. He marshaled no armies, He promulgated no laws, He made Himself no great one in the land! The people did just as they liked, for all the authority He exercised over them. In fact, instead of binding laws upon them which were severe, He seemed to have loosened the rigidity of their system! For when the adulterous woman, who, otherwise, would have been put to death, was brought before Him, He said, Neither do I condemn you. And He relaxed, to a certain extent, the rigidity of the Sabbatical ordinance which was, in some respects, too burdensome, saying, The Sabbath was made for man. Surely, then, they hated Him without a cause.

Some men make others dislike them because they are proud. I know some men that I could have liked very well if the starch had been left out of them. I could really sympathize with them and admire them if they had the least degree of condescensionbut they seem to walk about the world with such a style of pride! They may not be proudvery likely they are notbut, as an old Divine said, When we see a foxs tail sticking out of a hole, we naturally expect the fox is there. And, somehow or other, the human mind cannot bear pride. We always kick against it. But there was nothing of that in our Savior. How humble He was! Why He stooped to anything! He would wash His disciples feet. And when He walked about among men, there was no parade about Him, as if He would say to them, See My talent, see My power, see My rank, see My dignitystand byI am greater than you. No, He takes His seatthere is Matthew, the publican, sitting beside Himand He does not think He is hurt by the publican, although He is the worst of sinners. And there is a harlotHe speaks to her. There is another with seven devilsHe casts the devils out of her. And another, who has the leprosy and He even touches the leper to show how humble He was and that there was nothing of pride about Him. Oh, could you have seen the Savior, He was the very paragon of humility! There were none of your forms of etiquette and politeness about Him. He had that true politeness which makes itself affable to all men because it is kind and loving to all. There was no pride in the Savior and, consequently, there was nothing to excite mens anger on that account. Therefore, they hated Him without a cause.

There are others who you cannot help disliking because they are so snappish and waspish and angry. They look as if they were born on some terribly dark stormy day and as if, in the mixture of their body, no small quantity of vinegar was employed. You could not sit long with them without feeling that you have to keep your tongue on a pretty tight chain. You must not talk freely, or there would be a quarrel, for they would make you an offender for a word! You may say, Such an one is, no doubt, a good man. But really, that temper of his, I cannot bear it. And when a man stands prominently before the public, with a nasty sour disposition, one feels inclined to dislike him. But there was nothing of this about our Savior. When He was reviled, He reviled not again. If men spat in His face, He said nothing to them. And when they smote Him, He did not curse them. He sat still and bore their scorn. He walked through the world with contempt and infamy constantly poured upon Him. But, He answered not a word. He was never angry. You cannot find, in reading the Saviors life, that He spoke one angry word, save those words of holy wrath which He poured, like scalding oil, upon the head of Pharisaic pride! Then, indeed, His wrath did boil, but it was holy wrath! With such a loving, kind, gentle spirit, one would have thought that He would have gone through the world as easily as possible. His kind spirit seemed to make a straight road for His feet. But, notwithstanding all that, they hated Him! Truly, we can say, they hated Him without a cause.

There is another set of people you can scarcely help disliking. They are selfish people. Now we know some persons who are very excellent in temper, who are extremely honest and uprightbut they are so selfish! When you are with them, you feel that they are just friends to you for what they can get out of you. And when you have served their turn, they will just lay you aside and endeavor to find another. In trying to do good, their good deeds have ulterior objectives, but, somehow or other, they are always found out! And no man in the world gets a greater share of public odium than the man who lives a selfish life. Among the most miserable men in the universe, kicked about the world like a football, is the selfish miser! But in Christ there was nothing selfish. Whatever He did, He did for others. He had a marvelous power of working miracles, but He would not even change a stone into bread for Himself. He reserved His miraculous power for others. He did not seem to have a particle of self in His whole Nature. In fact, the description of His life might be written very brieflyHe saved others, Himself He did not save. He walked about. He touched the poorest, the meanest and those who were the most sick. He cared not what men might say of Him. He seemed to have no regard for fame, or dignity, or ease, or honor. Neither His bodily nor His mental comforts were in the least regarded by Him. Self-sacrifice was the life of Christ. But He did it with such an ease that it seemed no sacrifice. Ah, Beloved, in that sense, certainly they hated Christ without a causefor there was nothing in Christ to excite their hatredin fact, there was everything, on the contrary, to bind the whole world to love and reverence a Character so eminently unselfish.

Another sort of people there are that I do not likethe hypocritical no, I think I could even live with the selfish man if I knew him to be selfish. But the hypocritedo not let him come anywhere near where I am! Let a public man be a hypocrite, once, and the world will scarcely trust him again. They will hate him! But Christ was, in this particular, free from any blame. And if they hated Him, they hated Him not for thatfor there never was a more unvarnished man than Christ. He was called, you know, the Child Jesusbecause as a child speaks itself out and has no reserve and no craftinesseven so was it with Jesus. He had no affectation, no deceit. There was no change about Him. He was without variableness or shadow of turning. Whatever the world may say of Christ, they never said they believed He was a hypocrite. And among all the slanders they brought against Him, they never disputed His sincerity. Had they been able to show that He really had been imposing upon them, they might have had some grounds for hating Him, but He lived in the sunlight of sincerity and walked on the very mountaintop of continual observation. He could not be a hypocrite and men knew He could not. And yet men hated Him. Verily, my Friends, if you survey the Character of Christ, in all His loveliness, in all His benevolence, in all His sincerity, in all intense eagerness to benefit man, you must say, indeed, they hated Him without a cause. There was nothing in Christs Person to lead men to hate Him.

In the next place, was there anything in Christs errand which could make people hate Him? If they had asked Him, For what reason have You come from Heaven? Would there have been anything in His answer likely to excite their indignation and hatred? I think not. For what purpose did He come? He came, first of all, to explain mysteriesto tell them what was meant by the sacrificial lamb, what was the significance of the scapegoat, what was intended by the ark, the brazen serpent and the pot of manna. He came to rend the veil of the Holy of Holies and to show men secrets they had never seen before. Should they have hated One who lifted the veil of mystery and made dark things light and expounded riddles? Should they have hated Him who taught them what Abraham desired to see and what Prophets and kings had longed to know, but died without a knowledge of? Was there anything in that to make them hate Him? What else did He come for? He came on earth to reclaim the wanderer. And is there anything in that, that should make men hate Christ? If He came to reform the drunkard, to reclaim the harlot, gather in the publicans and sinners and bring prodigals to their fathers houses, again, surely that is something with which every philanthropist should agree! It is that for which our governments are formed and fashionedto bring men to a better state! And if Christ came for that purposewas there anything in that to make men hate Him? For what else did He come? He came to heal the diseases of the bodyis that a legitimate object of hatred? Shall I hate the physician who goes about gratuitously healing all manner of diseases? Are deaf ears unstopped, are mouths opened, are the dead raised, are the blind made to see and widows blest with their sons? Are these causes why a man should be hated? Surely, He might well say, For which of these works do you stone Me? If I have done good works why do you speak against Me? But none of these works were the cause of mens hatredthey hated Him without a cause! And He came on earth to die, that sinners might not diewas that a cause of hatred? Ought I to hate the Savior because He came to quench the flames of Hell for me? Should I despise Him who allowed His Fathers flaming sword to be quenched in His own blood? Shall I look with indignation upon the Substitute who takes my sins and griefs upon Him and carries my sorrows? Shall I hate and despise the Man who loved me better than He loved Himselfwho loved me so much that He visited the gloomy grave for my salvation? Are these the causes of hatred? Surely His errand was one that ought to have made us sing His praise forever and join the harps of angels in their rapturous songs! They hated Me without a cause.

But once more was there anything in Christs Doctrine that should have made us hate Him? No, we answer. There was nothing in His Doctrine that should have excited mens hatred. Take His perceptive Doctrines. Did He not tell us to do to others as we would they should to us? Was He not also the exponent of everything lovely and honorable and of good repute? And was not His teaching the very essence of virtueso that if virtues self had written itit could not have written such a perfect code of lovely morals and excellent virtues? Was it the ethical part of His Doctrines that men hated? He taught that rich and poor must stand on one level. He taught that His Gospel was not to be confined to one particular nation, but was to be gloriously expansive, so as to cover the world. This perhaps, was one principal reason of their hating Him. But surely there was no justifiable cause for their indignation in this. There was nothing in Christ to lead men to hate Him. They hated Him without a cause.

II. And now, in the second place, I come to dwell on MANS SIN, that he should have hated the Savior without a cause. Ah, Beloved, I will not tell you of mans adulteries and fornications and murders and poisonings and sodomies. I will not tell you of mans wars and bloodsheds and cruelties and rebellions. If I want to tell you of mans sin, I must tell you that man is a deicidethat he put to death his God and slew his Savior! And when I have told you that, I have given you the essence of all sinthe masterpiece of crimethe very pinnacle and climax of the terrific pyramid of mortal guilt. Man outdid himself when he put his Savior to death and sin did out-Herod, Herod, when it slew the Lord of the Universe, the Lover of the race of man who came on earth to die! Never does sin appear so exceedingly sinful as when we see it pointed at the Person of Christ whom it hated without a cause! In every other case when man has hated goodness, there have always been some extenuating circumstances. We never see goodness in this world without alloyhowever great may be any mans goodnessthere is always some peg whereon we may hang a censure. However excellent a man may be, there is always some fault which may diminish our admiration or our love. But in the Savior, there was nothing of this! There was nothing that could blot the picture holiness stood out to the very life! There was holinessonly holiness! Let a man hate Whitefield, one of the holiest men that ever lived, he would tell you he did not hate his goodness, but he hated his ranting, preaching and the extraordinary anecdotes he told. Or he would pull out something that dropped from his lips and hold it up to derision. But in Christs case, men could not do that. For though they sought for false witnesses, yet their witnesses agreed not together! There was nothing in Him but holinessand any person with half an eye can see that the thing men hated was simply that Christ was Perfect. They could not have hated Him for anything else. And thus you see the abominable, detestable evil of the human heartthat man hates goodness simply because it is such! It is not true that we Christian people are hated because of our infirmities. Men make our infirmities a nail whereon to hang their laughterbut if we were not Christians, they would not hate our infirmities. They hold our inconsistencies up to ridicule. But I do not believe our inconsistencies are really what they care about. We might be as inconsistent as all the rest of the world if we did not profess religion, or if they did not think we had any. But because the Savior had no inconsistencies or infirmities, men were stripped of all their excuses for hating Himbut it came out that man naturally hates goodnessbecause he is so evil that he cannot but detest it!

And now let me appeal to every sinner present and ask him whether he ever had any cause for hating Christ. But someone says, I do not hate Him. If He were to come to my house, I would love Him very much. But it is very remarkable that Christ lives next door to you, in the person of poor Betty, there. She goes to such-and-such a Chapel, and you say she is nothing but a poor canting Methodist! Why dont you like Betty? She is one of Christs members and, Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these, you have done it unto Me. You say you do not hate Christ. Now, look across the Chapel. Dont you know a man, a member of this place, a very holy man, but somehow or other you cannot stand him because he once told you of your faults? Ah, Sir, if you loved Christ you would love His members! What? Tell me you love my head, but you do not love my hands? My dear Fellow, you cannot cut my head off and let me be the same person! If you love Christ, the Head, you must love His members. But you say, I do love His people. Very well, then. You have passed from death unto life, if you love the Brethren. But you say, I am not sure that I am a changed character. I am not aware that there is any opposition in my heart to Christ and His Gospel. You may not be aware of it, but it is your not being aware of it that makes your case all the more sad! Perhaps if you knew it and wept over it, you would come to Christ. But since you do not know it and do not feel it, that is a proof of your hostility. Now, listen, I must suppose you to be hostile to Christ unless you love Him! For I know there are only two opinions of Him. You must either hate Him or love Him. As for indifference with regard to Christ, it is just a clear impossibility. A man might as well say, I am indifferent towards honesty. Why, then he is dishonest, is he not? You are indifferent to Christ? Then you hate Him. And why is it that you hate Him? Many a time you have been wooed by the Gospel. You have resisted appeals, many of themcome, nowfor which of Christs works do you hate Him? Have I a persecutor here? Sinner! For what do you hate Christ? Do you curse Him? Tell me what He has done that you should be angry with Him. Point to a single fault of His in His carriage towards you. Has Christ ever hurt you? Oh, says one, He has taken my wife and made her one of His children and she has been baptized and comes to Chapel and I cannot bear that. Ah, Sinner, is that why you hate Christ? Would you have hated Christ if He had snatched your wife from the flames, if He had saved her from going down to death? No, you would love Him! And He has saved your wifes soul. Ah, if He never saves you, if you love your wife, you will have enough cause to love Him, to think He has been so good to you! I tell you, if you hate Christ, you not only hate Him without a cause, but you hate Him when you have ample cause to love Him! Come, poor Sinner, what have you got by hating Christ? You have stings of conscience. Many a sinner, by hating Christ, has been locked up in jail, has a ragged coat, a diseased body, a nasty filthy house, with broken windows, a poor wife, nearly beaten to death and children that scamper out of the way as soon as father comes home. What have you got by hating Christ? Oh, if you were to estimate your gains, you would find that getting Christ would be a gain, but that hating Him is a dead loss to you!

Now, if you hate Christ and Christs religion, I tell you that you hate Christ without a cause! And let me give you one solemn warning, which is thisif you keep on hating Christ till you dieyou will not hurt Christ by it, but you will hurt yourself most awfully. Oh, may God deliver you from being haters of Christ! There is nothing to get by it, but everything to lose by it. For what cause do you hate Christ, Sinner? For what cause do you hate Christ, Persecutor? For what cause do you hate Christ, you carnal, ungodly men? What do you hate Christs Gospel for?His Ministers? What hurt have they done you? What hurt

can they do you when they long to do you all the good in the world? Why is it you hate Christ? Ah, it is only because you are so desperately set on mischiefbecause the poison of asps is under your lips and your throat is an open sepulcher! Otherwise, you would love Christ. They hated Him without a cause.

And now, Christian, I must preach at you for just a moment. Surely, you have great reason to love Christ, now, for you once hated Him without a cause. Did you ever treat a friend ill and did not know it? It has been the misfortune of most of us to do it, sometimes. We had some suspicion that a friend had done us an injury. We quarreled with him for weeks and he had not done it at all! What he had done was only to warn us. Ah, there are never tears like those we shed when we have injured a friend. And should we not weep when we have injured the Savior? Did He not come to my door one cold, damp, night and I shut my door against Him? Oh, I have done what I cannot undo! I have slighted my Lord, I have insulted my Friend, I have thrown dishonors upon Him whom I admire! Shall I not weep for Him? Oh, shall I not spend my very life for Him? For my sins, my own treachery spilled His blood! Monuments, ah, monuments I will build wherever I live, wherever I go. Ill pile up monuments of praise that His name may be spread. And wherever I wander, Ill tell what He did, with many a tear, that I so long have ill-treated Him and so fearfully misunderstood Him. Brothers and Sisters, we hated Him without a cause, therefore let us love Him!

III. Two LESSONS TO THE SAINTS.   
In the first place, if your Master was hated without a cause, do not expect to get off very easily in the world. If your Master was subject to all this contempt and all this pain, do you suppose you will always ride through this world in a chariot? If you do, you will be marvelously mistaken! As your Master was persecuted, you must expect to be the same. Some of you pity us when we are persecuted and despised. Ah, save your pity, keep it for those of whom the world speaks well! Keep it for those against whom the woe is pronounced, Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you. Save your pity for earths favorites! Save your pity for this worlds lords that are applauded by all men! We ask not for your pity. No, Sirs, in all these things, we rejoice and glory in tribulations, also, knowing that the things which happen unto us, happen for the furtherance of the Gospel. And we count it all joy when we fall into manifold temptations for we rejoice that thus the name of Christ is known and His kingdom extended!

The other lesson is, take careif the world does hate youthat it hates you without a cause. If the world is to oppose you, it is of no use making the world oppose you! This world is bitter enough without my putting vinegar in it. Some people seem to fancy the world will persecute them therefore they put themselves into a fighting postureas if they invited persecutions. Now, I do not see any good in doing that. Do not try and make other people dislike you. Really, the opposition some people meet with, is not for righteousness sake, but for their own sins sake, or their own nasty tempers sake! Many a Christian lives in a housea Christian servant girl, perhaps. She says she is persecuted for righteousness sake. But she has a bad disposition. She sometimes speaks sharplyand then her mistress reproves her. That is not being persecuted for righteousness sake! There is another, a merchant in the city, perhaps. He is not looked upon with much esteem. He says he is persecuted for righteousness sake, whereas it is really because he did not keep a bargain some time ago. Another man says he is persecuted for righteousness sake. But he goes about assuming authority over everybody and, now and then, persons turn round and upbraid him! Look to it, Christian people, that if you are persecuted, it truly is for righteousness sake. For if you get any persecution yourself, you must keep it yourself. The persecutions you bring on yourself for your own sinsChrist has nothing to do with themthey are chastisements on you! They hated Christ without a cause. Then fear not to be hated. They hated Christ without a cause. Then court not to be hated and give the world no cause for it.

And now may you who hate Christ, love Him! Oh that He would bring Himself to you now! Oh, that He would show Himself to you! And then surely you must love Him at once. He that believes on the Lord Jesus will be sure to love Him and He that loves Him shall be saved! Oh, that God would give you faith and give you love, for Christ Jesus sake. Amen.

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #2709 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

CHRISTS PAST AND PRESENT WITNESSES   
NO. 2709

A SERMON   
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, JANUARY 13, 1901.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, MARCH 7, 1880.

**And you also shall bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning.   
John 15:27.**

OUR Lord Jesus Christ ought to be believed upon His own unsupported Word, first, because of the Divinity of His Nature. God cannot lie and that Christ is God is abundantly proved by His miracles. He did that which none but God could do. He ought also to be believed because of the perfection of His Character, for even the enemies of the Gospel have been obliged to confess that the perfection of the Character of Jesus is altogether undeniable. They have critically examined it, but they have not been able to find a single fault or flaw in it. They have thrust the Character of Christ into a furnace such as that in which men try silver and they have heated the furnace seven times hotter than usualyet has the Character of Christ come forth unhurt from every trial. A perfect Man ought to be believed when He speaks. The perfection of His Character proves Him to be worthy of confidence.

Put together, then, the Godhead and the perfect Manhood of Christ, and I am not too bold when I say that He deserves to be believed upon His bare Word without any further witness. Yet such is the natural infidelity of the human heart with regard to anything that comes from God so resolutely do men shut their eyes against the light lest they should be reproved by itthat our Lord Jesus Christ has not left Himself without witnesses. The first and chief Witness to Christ is the Holy Spirit. Read again the verse preceding our text, upon which I have already commentedWhen the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceeds from the Father, He shall testify of Me. The Holy Spirit is still here on earth, working spiritual miracles in the hearts of men, and those works of His are the attestation and seal of the mission of Christ, that He is, indeed, the Savior of men. There are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one. The water and the blood are two things about which we, ourselves, become witnesses, as I shall show you directly, but the point I want you to notice just now is that as it was with the Apostles, so is it in a measure with ourselves, for we are called, as they were, to the most honorable office conceivable, seeing that we are called to do what the Holy Spirit, Himself, deigns to do, that is, to witness to Christ, for, after He had spoken of the testimony of the Spirit of Truth, He added, And you also shall bear witness. We are to be laborers together with the Holy Spirit! We are to stand, as it were, in the witness-box with Him, and bear similar testimony to that which He bears concerning ChristHe shall testify of Me: and you also shall bear witness. Oh, what an honorable position we are to occupy! What a grand work we are to doa work which an angel might envy us, for we are to be witnesses, together with the Holy Spirit, concerning Christ!

In handling this text, I shall have, first of all, to remark that the Apostles were witnesses to the facts of Christs life. He said to them, You also shall bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning. Then I shall have to show you that Believers are now witnesses to the results of Christs Gospel. We have not been with Him from the beginning and, therefore, our witness is not concerning the facts of His lifebut we can testify to the results of His Gospel. When I have spoken upon those two themes, I shall close by noticing the objective of both these forms of testimonythe Apostles witness to the facts of Christs life and the Believers witness to the results of those facts.

I. First, then, the Apostles were stated by Christ to be WITNESSES TO THE FACTS OF HIS LIFE, from the time when they became His disciples, right down to the day when He was taken up into Heaven.

You know, dear Friends, how any historical fact comes to be accepted as a fact. It is by the weight of the evidence by which it is supported. If Tacitus, for instance, makes a statement in his history, as a rule we believe what he says because he is known to be a veracious historian. But Tacitus is certainly not more reliable than is Matthew, or Mark, or Luke, or John, because Tacitus never died for the defense of any statement that he made. But those who bore witness concerning Christ, and were His historians, were ready to die and did die rather than deny anything that they had said concerning their Lord and Master. When we find discrepancies in the writings of historians, we examine and weigh the evidence as to any contradictions, so as to see which is the correct record of the facts in question. If anyone made a statement that such-and-such a thing happened yesterday, and you needed to ascertain if the statement were true, you would call witnesses who saw it. Suppose you could not get those witnesses for a monththeir testimony would be just as good in a months time as it is today. Suppose you could not get them together for 50 yearstheir evidence would be just as valid. Or if they had written their testimony, and had it duly attested, what they had written would be just as good evidence 50 years hence as it would be today and, if true at all, it would stand trueyes, as true as the testimony of these witnesses stands though 1,800 years and more have elapsed since they bore their witness! We have, concerning the life of Christ, the testimony of those who were with Him from the beginningand their testimony is good because it complies with certain rules which usually apply to reliable evidence.

The first rule is, when witness is borne to any fact, that the witnesses must be sufficiently numerous. There were 11 true Apostles, and 11 good men are quite enough to testify to any fact known to them. There were others besides the Apostles who were with Christ from the beginning, and in the mouth of any two of these good honest witnesses a fact might be established, so that, in the mouth of the eleven, the truth remains beyond all doubt.

Further, the 11 Apostles had actual sight of the things to which they bore witness. You remember that John says, concerning the blood and the water which flowed from Christs side when the soldier pierced it with a spear, He that saw it bares record, and his record is true: and he knows that he says true. And the same might have been said of all the facts which John records in his Gospel, for he was an eyewitness of themand so was Matthew. He was on the spot and what he wrote was not hearsay, but what he saw with his eyes, and his ears had heard, and his hands had handled. Well, now, 11 witnesses who have actually seen a certain thing would be a sufficient number to prevent mistakes and, as I have already reminded you, there were many more than 11 witnesses on many occasions, especially the witnesses to our Lords Resurrection, for there were over 500 brethren at once, and it was not possible that such a large company as that should have been deceived.

Again, these witnesses bore their testimony at or near the time when the events happened, for the Apostles came forward and spoke concerning Christ and His holy, useful, and miraculous life, and His wondrous death and Resurrection just after the events had occurred. They only waited a little while, according to their Lords instructions, and then they stood up in the midst of JerusalemPeter, who had been with Christ from the beginning, and the other Apostles, bearing witness that these things were even so. Had they been liars and false witnesses, they would have been put to confusion, and would have been unable to open their mouths again! But, as they said, these things were not done in a corner, they were common town talk and admitted by everybody to be facts. Moreover, in order especially to establish historical facts, the witnesses must bear testimony on the spotand these 11 men did not go off to Rome and there begin to publish that Jesus was the Son of God, and that He worked miracles, and that He rose from the dead! They did go to Rome and everywhere else, ultimately, but they began at Jerusalem where they would have been contradicted if men could contradict them anywhere! But so fully was their witness known to be true that the very first time they stood up to bear their testimony, though they were unlearned and ignorant men, there were 3,000 persons who became the disciples of their slain Master simply through their witness as blessed by the Holy Spirit!

I do not know whether you are prepared to doubt their testimony, but I am not. I am resolved to believe that what they spoke was true and the more so because they spoke very plainly. When a man wants to take you in, he often speaks in a roundabout fashion. He guards his statements and puts them in such a way that he can afterwards say, Ah, you did not quite understand me! You made a mistake in thinking that was what I meant. But when the people who listened to Peter and John saw their boldness, and heard the plain manner in which they gave their testimony, they knew that the Apostles were speaking of the things which they had themselves witnessed. There was no misunderstanding their languagethey were plain, honest, simple-minded, straightforward witnesses to Christ who gave their testimony with great plainness of speech.

Besides, they all agreed in their testimony. True, when we read the four Gospels, we notice that they contain just those little differences which prove the men to have been honest, for, if you set four men to tell a story, they will all tell it differently even though each one of them speaks the truth, for each of them will look at the matter from a different standpoint. If all four of them spoke in exactly the same words and there were no apparent discrepancies between them, you would know that they had laid their heads together and concocted the tale in order to deceive their hearers. A judge in court would soon find them out and he would say, That is a trumped-up story, so they, none of them, go an inch beyond the other for fear they should contradict one another, and so be found out. But the four Evangelists differ in their statements only as honest men must of necessity differ if they are independent witnessesand their agreement in the facts to which they testify helps to confirm their witnessand to make assurance doubly sure.

Best of all, remember that these men had nothing to gain by their witness concerning Christ. They left all and followed Him. Instead of gaining by their testimony, they were losers of their property, they were losers of their reputation, they were losers of their comforts, they were losers, even, of their lives! They were so certain that what they had seen was really true that, rather than deny it, they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented. Yet not one of the 11 ever drew back and denied the truth of the testimony that he had given! And even the 12th , who was a traitor, confessed that he had taken blood money for the betrayal of his innocent Master. In committing suicide, he gave such witness as the son of perdition could that, after all, the Bible was true. His testimony did not, in the least, invalidate the witness of the 11 Apostles.

Now, my dear Friends, it is upon the evidence of these witnesses that the Gospel first commenced to win belief among the sons of men. True, the Spirit of God witnessed to the truth of that Gospel, but, as far as human instrumentality was concerned, the Apostles were also witnesses and they were good and sufficient witnesses. Nobody ought to ask for any better onesand if anyone will not believe them, it may be truly said, Neither would he believe though one rose from the dead.

II. Having spoken of the Apostolic witnesses to the facts of Christs life, I am now to speak of THE PRESENT WITNESSES TO THE RESULTS OF HIS GOSPEL.

We who were not with Christ from the beginning cannot bear our personal testimony to the facts of His life. We neither saw Him in Bethlehems manger, nor on Calvarys Cross, nor in Josephs tomb, nor as He ascended into Glory from the Mount of Olives, so we cannot testify to those facts as the Apostles could. But we can bear witness to some other things. We can testify to the results of the Gospel as we have realized them in ourselves. And here we are something better even than eyewitnesses, for we feel as well as see the things concerning which we testify. I want, my dear Brothers and Sisters, to put very briefly before you some things about which you are to bear witness of Christ. Read the text again, with the exception of the last three wordsYou also shall bear witness, because you have been with Meand learn from it that you cannot witness for Christ unless you have been with Him. You must have had spiritual dealings with the Lord Jesus Christ and felt the power of His spiritual Presence upon you, or else you cannot be such a witness as our text describes. But if you have been with Him, you can testify of Him.

The first thing to which some of us can bear witness is the peacegiving power of His precious blood. We were once thoroughly convinced that we had broken the Law of God and we were under a dreadful apprehension that God, the Just One, would punish us for this sin. We sought all sorts of ways to find comfort, but we never found any. We tried every nostrum of the wise men of the day, but they all failed us altogether. But the very first time that, by faith, we saw Jesus hanging on the Cross, and knew that by His Sacrifice, He had made Atonement for our sinI say that, the very moment we put our trust in Him, our conscience found a wonderful peace and rest! Was it not so with you, Beloved? You were, by faith, with Jesus as you saw Him hanging upon the accursed tree as your Substitute and Surety! Did you not, then, by the Grace of God, find immediate relief from the terrible burden of sin which threatened to crush you to the earth? Well, now that you have thus been with Him, you can bear witness to that fact, can you not?

I know that my witness about it did not need to be told with my lips, for I had not long been in the house, that morning when I found the Savior, before one who had been anxious about me, said, There is a change come over my son. And a delicate question was put, which soon drew out of me the confession that I had looked to Christ and that I was lightened. Why, they could all see in my face the evidence of the change that had been workedthere was all the difference between bondage and liberty, or between despair and delightand it was because I had been with Christ that I had, in a moment, leaped out of natures darkness into His marvelous light! So, now, whenever anybody says to me, Your view of the Atonement, you know, is very old-fashionedthe Doctrine of Substitution is quite out of dateI am not at all shaken in my belief. The gentlemen of the modern-thought school, who have been to Germany for their theology, do not like that glorious Doctrine of Substitution! They think that the Atonement is a something or other, that in some way or other, somehow or other, has something or other to do with the salvation of menbut I tell them that their cloudy Gospel might have surrounded me till my hair grew gray, but I would never have been any the better for it! I would never have found peace with God, nor come to love the Lord at all if it had not been that I distinctly saw that He, who knew no sin, was made sin for me, that I might be made the righteousness of God in Him! When I realized that although I had gone astray from God, and broken His righteous Law, He had laid my iniquity on Christ, and punished Him in my place, my soul found rest at once and, to this day, it cannot rest under any other explanation of the Atonement of Christ! So I bear my own personal witness, and many of you can heartily join with me in bearing similar testimony. You have

been with Christ, so you can speak of the power of His substitutionary Sacrifice as begetting peace in your soul!

Next, we can bear witness to another thing. As soon as we believed in Jesus Christ, we found ourselves strangely altered. Perhaps we had formerly had a merely moral struggle against sinthat was quite proper as far as it went, yet we never succeeded in that struggle. I have known many persons who were accustomed to give way to passion, and who never could curb their temper, but when they believed in Jesus, to their surprise they found that the lion was changed into a lamb. I have known men who had fallen into the habit of using profane language and who could not break away from the evil even when they became aware of the wrong of itbut when they have, by faith, looked to Jesus, and so have been savedthey have never had a temptation to use an oath again. All inclination to that sin seems to have gone clean away from them. Many a time have I seen a drunk, who has signed the pledgea very good thing to dobut it has not been any use in his case, for he has not kept it. Yet have I known him, when he has been converted to Christ, keep that pledge and a great deal morehe has gone beyond abstinence from strong drinkand has had multitudes of virtues. There are many persons, here present, who do not need to tell people that believing in Christ has worked a complete change in them, because anybody who is acquainted with them can see it.

One mans wife knows all about that change. She had a black eye last year, but she never gets one now. She is as happy as the birds in the air with that husband of hers who has given up going to the public house, and who is now found walking in the ways of God. There is a mother who said to me, I know that my boy is converted, Sir. Oh, what a trouble he had been to me! What a rebellious, disobedient child he was! But, now, though he is only a little boy, he makes a conscience of obeying his mother and he tries to make everybody happy. This is witness-bearing, and this is what our Lord Jesus Christ meant you who have been with Him, and have learned of Him, to do. His transforming hand has touched you, and changed youand you can bear witness of that fact. Why, if all the unbelievers in the world were to say to some people whom I know, The Grace of God has made no difference in you, they would be obliged to laugh with a holy laughter like that of Abraham! They could not help it, for the Grace of God has so completely changed them that if Hell were made into Heaven, the difference would not be much greater than is the change from what they were to what they now are! Well, this is good witness. I pray God that many of you may be able to bear it.

There is a third witness which many of us can also bear. When we get near to Christ in holy fellowship and commune much with Him in private prayer, we find that our love for good things becomes very strong, our zeal for Gods cause is intensified and, moreover, our love to all mankind is increased. We find ourselves willing to forgive our adversaries and we are anxious in every way to prove the reality of our love to God. But if we get away from Christ, we do not take much interest in holy things. Then our chief concern consists in making as much money as we can, or in enjoying as much so-called pleasure as we can. If any of you, Brothers and Sisters, try the modern theology, you will soon see whether it will do your soul any good. I have known some who have tried it and I have noticed the change in their life and conversationno spirituality, no love to God, and no care about the best things. They talk about political religion, but there is very little of vital godliness that is ever spoken of by them.

But if you get near to Christ and learn the power of His precious blood, and dwell in Him, and live upon Him, you will then see whether it does not sanctify you. I am sure you must all bear witness, you who live farthest away from Christ, that you are worse men and worse women when you wander away from Him, and that the nearer you get to Him, and the more He occupies your thoughts, the more swiftly is your evil temper overcome, and your whole heart filled with love to God and love to men. I know it is so! And that is another witness to the Truth of the Gospel, for that which promotes holiness cannot be, itself, a lie! I lay it down as an axiom that whatever makes men holy must be true, because truth and right are in the same line of things. That which creates evil is itself a falsehood, and that which creates holiness is and must be true.

Another thing to which we can bear witness is, the renewing power of Gods Grace. Whenever we grow dull with regard to eternal things, and careless concerning our own souls, we find, I think, that getting near to Christ again, coming back to the Cross, plunging afresh in the

*Fountain filled with blood,   
Drawn from Immanuels veins*   
sitting at His feet again, eating His flesh and drinking His blood again

all this wonderfully refreshes us. There is a fable concerning a bath, of which it was said that if old men washed therein, it took the furrows from their brows and made them young again. But, certainly, when we dwell in Christ, He takes away the decrepitude of our declining Grace and we grow vigorous once more. We renew our youth, like the eagles, when our mouth is satisfied with the good things of Christ! Have you not found it to be so, you who had grown dull and cold? Have you not been refreshed and revived by coming back to Him? The very genius of the Christian religion is enthusiasm, but the enthusiasm is created by contact with Christ. As we come near to our great Captain, every soldier in the ranks of the Kings army feels that he must be a hero. We look at His scars and wounds, and see what He did and suffered, and then we feel that it would be mean and contemptible on our part to be otherwise than altogether in earnest for so great and good a Lord, and for so grand a cause!

I think that many of you must also have noticedand if so, you can bear witness to itthe comforting power of the Presence of Christ with you. All of you who know the Lord have had troubles of different kinds to carry to the Lord in prayer. I will suppose that you, my Friend, have lost a good deal of money in business, and that you have fretted and worried a great deal over it. If it has been so with you, I will tell you when you worried over your lossit was before you took the matter to the Lord in prayer. But after you had spread the whole case before Him, it is amazing how different it looked! The circumstances seemed quite changed and you took up the cross, and you found it very light compared with what it had been before. Perhaps some of you know what it is to be teased and perplexed by unreasonable and wicked men, and you have been apt to get very snappish under their attacks. If that is what has happened to you, my Brother, I know when it wasit was when you had not been with Jesus and tried to meet the trouble by yourself. But after you have had a few minutes of private prayer, you have come down into the arena and you have seemed to say, I am ready for you now! You may do what you like, for I am calm and quiet, and I can bear it all, for I have been with Jesus, and He has given me strength according to my day. If you have been slandered and persecuted for righteousness sake, and have had your heart wounded by some cruel stab, you have been restored by getting near to Christ, and you have been able to sing

*If on my face for Your dear name,   
Shame and reproaches be,   
All hail reproach, and welcome shame,   
If You remember me.*

On the bed of sickness, or by the grave where your loved ones are buried, your heart has been sustained and comforted if you have been with Jesus! Yes, that witness is true, and tens of thousands can confirm it, that there is no sustaining power in anything else that is worthy to be compared with the sustaining energy of communion with the Lord Jesus Christ! Those who have ever felt its gracious influence must know that this is the Truth of God, for Christs Presence most wondrously bears their spirit up when everything else gives way.

One of the evidences of the Truth of the Gospel which, perhaps, strikes onlookers more than any other, is the serenity with which the Presence of Christ endows His people when they come to die. Their end is often very peaceful and very beautiful. There died, last week, not far from here, a young man whose brother, as he watched him, saw tokens of such wonderful happiness in him that he said to him, Brother, what can I do to be as happy as you are? The dying mans answer was, It is all in Number 1,500. It is all in Number 1,500. You know that sermon of mine

about the bronze serpent? [Volume 25, #1500 LIFTING UP THE BRONZE SERPENT read/download the entire sermon free of charge at http://www.spurgeongems.org .] The young

man said to his brother, It is all in Number 1,500. It is Jesus only, Jesus only. Look to Jesus, look and live. It is all there. His brother said that he could not tell exactly when he passed away, so sweet was the serenity that the Presence of the Master gave him. I could take you to the Stockwell Orphanage, to the bedside of a little boy who may be in Heaven by now, but when I saw him on Monday, he said to me, I shall soon die, Mr. Spurgeon. And when I think I am going, as I sometimes do at night, I clap my hands at the thought that I shall so soon be with Jesus. Poor little fellow, he could hardly lift those thin hands of his, yet he clapped them with delight at the thought that he should so soon be with Jesus! It would have done you good if you could have seen him, and so it would if you could have seen our dear Sister, Mrs. White, the wife of our beloved elder, when she knew that she had a cancer which would soon take her Home. The look of her face is with me now. I sat by her bedside and it was more than a sermon to meit made me feel willing to die at any time when I saw the calm serenity with which that suffering saint looked forward to her departure. She did not regard death as a thing to be spoken of as a dreadful and terrible matter, but she calmly spoke of being with Christ, which was far better than being with the dearest friends on earth!

This holy serenity has often convinced ungodly men of the Truth of the Gospeland though you and I cannot at present bear that witness, yet very likely we shall do so in due season and, already, so many thousands of saints have borne this witness to the power of faith in Christ that it ought to be regarded, and a deaf ear ought not to be turned to it. Look at the thousands of martyrs who have calmly stood at the stake and been burned to death for Christs sake, and yet have cried, None but Jesus! None but Jesus! And, faithful to the end, have gone up in a chariot of fire to be forever with the Lord. What but the Gospel of Christ could string them up to such wondrous courage and press their spirits into such a sacred equanimity that even death itself was despised by them, so that they cried, with the Apostle, O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory? In all these points, you also, who love the Lord, are to be witnesses for Christ.

I had many other things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. Therefore, let me sum up all by sayingbeloved Brothers and Sisters, members of this Church, and members of the one Church of Jesus Christ, be good witnesses for your Lord, remembering that you are standing up with the Holy Spirit to testify concerning Him. Oh, be such witnesses that none need be ashamed of you!

Remember that witness must be personal, not hearsay. A good woman in the witness box begins, She said, said she, but the judge stops her, and says, We do not want to know what she said, what did you yourself see? So, dear Friends, it is no use for you to try to bear testimony to the world about a thing you never saw and never felt. Personal godliness must be at the bottom of all evidence concerning the Gospel of Jesus Christ. If a man has no faith, let him not talk about faith. If he has never known the Lord, let him hold his tongue till he does know Him, for it must be personal witness that must be borne if it is to be of any value.

Further, it must be real, not fancied. The judge would at once stop a witness if he said, My lord, I thought, and he would say, We do not want your thoughts, my dear Sir. What did you see? In like manner, we want to know what you have felt about Christ, not what you have fancied concerning Him. What has been really true in your spiritual life? What has been proved to be true by your actions?

Next, good witness must be consistent, not contradictory, for, when a witness contradicts himself, his evidence is not regarded as of any value. So, if you say, The Gospel makes me holy, but you are caught in an act of cheating, or you lose your temper, or your talk is not clean, men will say, Out of the same mouth proceeds blessing and cursing, but which are we to believe?

And, once more, good testimony must be persistent, not variable, for, if a man says one thing now, and another thing another time, you naturally say, We never know where to find that fellow. That is the case with far too many professorswe do not know where to find them. On a Sunday, they are careful to carry a Bible and a hymn-book, but I have heard that, on a week day, they are more likely to have a pack of cards in their hand. On Sunday, it is, Sing a hymn to Jesus. But on Monday, it is, Sing to anybody you like. On Sunday, it is, Fear God. But on Monday, if it were not for the fear of the policeman, nobody knows what they might attempt! This will not do. If you are not consistent throughout your whole livesif you are not all of one pieceI almost wish that you were all the bad piece, because this mixture, this mingle-mangle, this Baal and Jehovah, this partly for God and partly for Mammonthis is the great mischief-making thing in the professing Church today! Oh, that God would give us the Grace to bear persistent, consistent, unvarying witness to the power of the Gospel on our souls and in our lives!

To anyone who does not believe the Gospel, I have this word to say. My Friend, you have come in here tonight and yet you are not a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. Is the Gospel true? Probably you reply, Yes, I believe it is true. Well, then, if it is true, why do you not believe it? If Jesus Christ is true, why do you not believe Him? The Gospel tells you about your souls, about eternity, about Heaven, about Hell, about the only way of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. Then, if it is true, why do you not believe it? Why do you not see to it that your soul is right with God through believing in Jesus Christ? I would like to bring you to a point so that you would say of the Gospel, I believe it, or, I reject it.

Suppose you should reject it? Then you practically say that the Apostles were liarsthat they bore testimony to a set of lies! More than that, you are prepared to say that all the myriads of martyrs who died for the Truth of God were fools, for they died in the defense of a fictionthat they went to prison and lost all things, and suffered every kind of ill treatment and torture for the sake of this Gospelyet you say that they were fools, all of them, and that you are the one wise man who knows more than all of them! Well, we have only your word for that, and we are not as sure about it as you seem to be. Further, you are prepared to say that all of us who declare that belief in Christ gave us peace of conscience, changed our lives, comforts our hearts and supports us in sicknessyou say that we are all under a delusion! And your mother, when she died sweetly rejoicing in Christwas she deluded, too? And the little child who died singing of Jesus, and who bade her father follow her to Heaven, was she also deceived? Were these wrong? Were all these mistaken? And those of whom I have spoken, whom I have myself seen within this last week, of whose calmness and serenity on their deathbeds I have testified to youwas that all a delusion? I should like you to say that to the little boy at the Orphanage, only I do not think that you would have the heart to do it. But if you did, it would not make any difference to him because he knows better!

If you were to tell me, when I eat my dinner, that I am not nourished by it, and that I do not enjoy itthat it is only just an idea and a fancy well, you know, I would not argue with youI would laugh at you! And I often feel inclined to laugh at unbelieversonly I remember how much they are losing, and in what danger they standso my laughter turns to tears. Oh, that you would believe the Gospel! It makes me happy. It makes me blessed. I cannot live without it and I dare not die without it! And, blessed be God, I will not try either experiment, to live without it, or to die without it. No, I can still say

*Ever since by faith I saw the stream   
His flowing wounds supply,   
Redeeming love has been my theme,   
And shall be till I die*

for I know that it is true! I have been with Jesus and, therefore, I bear witness to Him! Go and do likewise, only do it much better than I have done it, all you who have been with Him, and God bless you, for Christs sake! Amen and Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 15:12-27.**

Verse 12. This is My commandment, that you love one another, as I have loved you. O Beloved, do keep this commandment! Overlook each others infirmities. Bear with each others faults. Love one another as Christ has loved us!

13-15. Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down ones life for his friends. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knows not what his lord does: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you. I have explained Myself to you in such a way that I have proved that you are My friends. A master sets his servant to work without explaining what his objective is in that work, but I have explained to you what My Fathers design is. Therefore, you are My friends.

16-21. You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatever you shall ask of the Father in My name, He may give it to you. These things I command you, that you love one another. If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own: but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said unto you, A servant is not greater than his master. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept My saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for My names sake, because they know not Him that sent Me. We cannot expect, therefore, to receive honor and to wear a crown of gold where Jesus wore a crown of thorns!

22-24. If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin. He that hates Me, hates My Father also. If I had not done among them the works which no other man did, they had not had sin. They would have been comparatively free from sin.

24-26. But now have they both seen and hated both Me and My Father. But this happened that the Word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated Me without a cause. But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, who proceeds from the Father, He shall testify of Me. Notice that blessed Truth of Godthat even that Divine Person, the Holy Spirit, when He comes to visit us, has nothing better to speak of than our Lord Jesus Christ! He shall testify of Me. Even the Holy Spirit, when He exercises the function of the Comforter, testifies of Christ! Is He not the consolation of Israel? Well did the poet write

**You dear Redeemer, dying Lamb,   
We love to hear of Thee!   
No musics like Your charming name,   
Nor half so sweet can be.**

**27.** And you also shall bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning.  
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**THE SUPERLATIVE EXCELLENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT   
NO. 574**

**DELIVERED ON SUNDAY MORNING, JUNE 12, 1864, BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you.   
John 16:7.**

THE saints of God may very justly reckon their losses among their greatest gains. The adversities of Believers minister much to their prosperity. Although we know this, through the infirmity of the flesh we tremble at soul-enriching afflictions and dread to see those black ships which bring us such freights of golden treasure. When the Holy Spirit sanctifies the furnace, the flame refines our gold and consumes our dross, yet the dull ore of our nature likes not the glowing coals and had rather lie quiet in the dark mines of earth. As silly children cry because they are called to drink the medicine which will heal their sicknesses, even so do we.

Our gracious Savior, however, loves us too wisely to spare us the trouble because of our childish fears. He foresees the advantage which will spring from our griefs and therefore thrusts us into them out of wisdom and true affection. It was a very great trouble to these first Apostles to lose their Teacher and Friend. Sorrow had filled their hearts at the thought that He should depart, but yet His departure was to give them the greater blessing of the Holy Spirit. And therefore their entreaties and tears cannot avert the dreaded separation. Christ will not gratify their wishes at so vast an expense as the withholding of the Spirit. Mourn as they may under the severe trial, Jesus will not remain with them because His departure is in the highest degree expedient.

Beloved, let us expect to be subject to the same loving discipline. Let us reckon upon losing happy frames and choice enjoyments when Jesus knows that the loss will be better for us than the enjoyment. God has given two great gifts to His peoplethe first is His Son for us. The second is His Spirit to us. After He had given His Son for us, to become Incarnate, to work righteousness, and to offer an Atonementafter that gift had been fully bestowed there remained no more to be conferred in that respect. It is finished! proclaimed the completion of Atonement and His Resurrection showed the perfection of Justification. It was not, therefore, necessary that Christ should remain any longer upon earth since His work below is forever finished.

Now is the season for the second gift, the descent of the Holy Spirit. This could not be bestowed until Christ had ascended, because this choice favor was reserved to grace, with highest honor, the triumphant ascension of the great Redeemer. When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men. This was, as Peter tells us, the

great promise which Jesus received of His Father. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has shed forth this, which you now see and hear. That His triumphal entrance into Heaven might be stamped with signal Glory, the gifts of the Spirit of God could not be scattered among the sons of men until the Lord had gone up with a shout, even the Lord with the sound of trumpet.

The first gift being completed, it became necessary that He, whose Person and work make up that priceless gift, should withdraw Himself that He might have power to distribute the second benefit by which alone the first gift becomes of any service to us. Christ Crucified is of no practical value to us without the work of the Holy Spirit. And the Atonement which Jesus worked can never save a single soul unless the blessed Spirit of God shall apply it to the heart and conscience. Jesus is never seen until the Holy Spirit opens the eyesthe water from the Well of Life is never received until the Holy Spirit has drawn it from the depths.

As medicine unused for want of the physicians word. As sweets untasted because out of reach. As treasure unvalued because hidden in the earthsuch is Jesus the Savioruntil the Holy Spirit teaches us to know Him and applies His blood to our souls. It is to the honor of the Holy Spirit that I desire to speak this morning and O, may the same hallowed flame which of old sat upon the Apostles now rest upon the preacher and may the Word come with power to our hearts!

I. We shall commence our discourse by the remark that THE BODILY PRESENCE OF CHRIST MUST HAVE BEEN EXCEEDINGLY PRECIOUS. How precious those alone can tell who much love Christ. Love always desires to be in the company of the thing beloved and absence causes grief. What is fully meant by the expression, Sorrow has filled your heart, those only can know who anticipate a like painful bereavement. Jesus had become the Joy of their eyes, the Sun of their days, the Star of their nightslike the spouse, as she came up from the wildernessthey leaned upon their Beloved. They were as little children and now that their Lord and Master was going, they felt they should be left orphans.

Well might they have great sorrow of heart! So much love, so much sorrow, when the object of love is withdrawn. Judge, my Brethren, the joy which the bodily Presence of Christ would give to us this morning, and then you can tell how precious it must be. Have we not, some of us, been looking for years for the personal advent of Christ? We have lifted up our eyes in the morning and we have said, Perhaps He will come this day. And when the day has closed we have continued our watching in our sleepless hours and renewed our hopes with the rising of the sun. We longingly expect Him according to His promise. And like men who watch for their Lord, we stand with loins girt about waiting for His appearing.

We are looking for and hastening unto the Day of the Lord. This is the bright hope which cheers the Christian, the hope that the Savior shall descend to reign among His people gloriously. Suppose Him to appear suddenly on this platform nowhow would you clap your hands! Why, the lame among you would, at the joy of His appearance, leap like a hart and even the dumb might sing for joy! The Presence of the Master! What rapture! Come quickly! Come quickly, Lord Jesus!

It must be, indeed, a precious thing to enjoy the corporeal Presence of Christ. Think of the advantage it would be in the instruction of His people. No mystery need puzzle us if we could refer all to Him. The disputes of the Christian Church would soon be ended for He would tell us what His Word meant beyond dispute. There would be no discouragement to the Church in her work of faith and labor of love, for the Presence of Christ would be the end of all difficulties and insure conquest over all enemies. We should not have to mourn as we now do over our forgetfulness of Jesus, for we should sometimes catch a look at Him. And a sight of Him would give us a store of joy so that like the Prophet of Horeb we could go forty days in the strength of that meat!

It were a delightful thing to know that Christ was somewhere upon earth, for then He would take the personal supervision of His universal Church. He could warn us of apostates. He could reject the hypocrites. He would comfort the feeble-minded and rebuke the erring. How delightful would it be to see Him walking among the golden candlesticks, holding the stars in His right hand! Churches need not, then, be subdivided and rent with evil passions. Christ would create unity. Schism would cease to be and heresy would be rooted out. The Presence of Jesus, whose countenance is as the sun shining in his strength, would ripen all the fruits of our garden, consume all the weeds, and quicken every plant!

The two-edged sword of His mouth would slay His foes and His eyes of fire would kindle the holy passions of His friends. But I shall not enlarge upon that point because it is one in which fancy exercises itself at the expense of judgment. I question whether the pleasure, which the thought of Christs being here in the flesh has given us just now, may not have had a leaven of carnality in it. I question whether the Church is yet prepared to enjoy the corporeal Presence of her Savior without falling into the error of knowing Him after the flesh. It may be it shall need centuries of education before the Church is fit to see her Savior in the flesh on earth again, because I see in my own selfand I suppose it is so in youthat much of the delight which I expect from the company of Christ is according to the sight of the eyes and the judgment of the mind. And sight is ever the mark and symbol of the flesh.

II. However, leaving that point, we come to the second, which is THAT THE PRESENCE OF THE COMFORTER, AS WE HAVE IT UPON EARTH, IS VERY MUCH BETTER THAN THE BODILY PRESENCE OF CHRIST. We have fancied that the bodily Presence of Christ would make us blessed and confer innumerable benefits. But according to our text the Presence of the Holy Spirit working in the Church is more expedient for the Church. I think this will be clear to you, if you think for a moment, that the bodily Presence of Christ on earth, however good it might be for the Church, would in our present condition involve many inconveniences which are avoided by His Presence through the Holy Spirit.

Christ, being most truly Man, must as to His Manhood inhabit a certain place and in order to get to Christ, it would be necessary for us to travel to His place of residence. Conceive all men compelled to travel from the ends of the earth to visit the Lord Jesus Christ, dwelling upon Mount

Zion, or in the city of Jerusalem. What a lengthened voyage would that be for those who live in the far-off ends of the world!

Doubtless they would joyfully undertake it and as pence would be universal and poverty be banished, men might not be restrained from taking such a journey, but might all be able to accomplish it? As they could not all live where they could every morning see Christ, they must be content with every now and then getting a glimpse of Him. But see, my Brethren, the Holy Spirit, the vicar of Christ, dwells everywhere! And if we wish to apply to the Holy Spirit, we have no need to move an inch. In the closet we can find Him, or in the streets we can talk with Him. Jesus Christ could not be present in this congregation after the flesh and yet present in a neighboring Church, much less present in America and in Australia and in Europe and in Africa, at the same time.

But the Holy Spirit is everywhere! And through that Holy Spirit Christ keeps His promise, Where two or three are met together in My name, there am I in the midst of them. He could not keep that promise according to the fleshat least we are quite unable to conceive of His so doing. But through the Holy Spirit we sweetly enjoy His Presence and hope to do so to the worlds end. Think againaccess to Christif He were here in His corporeal Personality, would not be very easy to all Believers. There are only twenty-four hours in the day and if our Lord never slept, if, as a Man, He could still live and, like the saints above, rest not day nor night, yet there are only the twenty-four hours. And what were twenty-four hours for the supervision of a Church which we trust will cover the whole earth?

How could a thousand millions of Believers all receive immediate personal comfort either from His lips or the smiles of His face? Even at the present moment there are some millions of true saints upon earthwhat could one man do by his personal presenceeven though that one man were Incarnate Deity? What could He do in one day for the comfort of all of these? Why, we could not possibly expect each one of us to see Him every dayno, we could scarcely expect to have our turn once in the year!

But, Beloved, we can now see Jesus every hour and every moment of every hour! So often as you bow the knee, His Spirit, who represents Him, can commune with you and bless you. No matter whether it is in the dead of night that your cry goes up, or under the blaze of burning noonthere is the Spirit waiting to be gracious and your sighs and cries climb up to Christ in Heaven and return with answers of peace. These difficulties did not occur to you, perhaps, in your first thoughts. But if you meditate awhile you will see that the Presence of the Spirit, avoiding that difficulty, makes Christ accessible to every saint at all times. Not to a few choice favorites, but to every believing man and woman the Holy Spirit is accessible and thus the whole body of the faithful can enjoy present and perpetual communion with Christ.

We ought to consider yet once more that Christs Presence in the flesh upon earth, for any other purpose than that of ending the present dispensation, would involve another difficulty. Of course every Word which Christ had spoken from the time of the Apostles until now would have been Inspired. Being Inspired it would have been a thousand pities that it should fall to the ground. Busy scribes would therefore be always taking down Christs Words. And, my Brethren, if in the short course of three years our Savior managed to do and to say so much that one of the Evangelists informs us that if all had been written the world itself could not have contained the books which would have been writtenI ask you to imagine what a mass of literature the Christian Church would have acquired if she had preserved the Words of Christ throughout these one thousand eight hundred and sixty-four years!

Certainly we should not have had the Word of God in the simple compact form of a pocket Bibleit would have consisted of innumerable volumes of the sayings and deeds of the Lord Jesus Christ! Only the studious, no, not even the studious could have read all the Lords teachings! And the poor and the illiterate must ever have been at a great disadvantage. But now we have a Book which is finished within a narrow compass with not another line to be added to it. The canon of Revelation is sealed up forever and the poorest man in England, believing in Christ, going with a humble soul to that Book and looking up to Jesus Christ who is present through His Spirit, though not after the flesh, may, in a short time comprehend the Doctrines of Grace and understand with all saints what are the heights and depths and know the love of Christ which passes knowledge.

So then, on the score of inconvenience, precious as the corporeal Presence of Christ might be, it is infinitely better for the Churchs good that, until the day of her Millennial Glory, Christ should be present by His Spirit and not in the flesh. Yet more, my Brethren! If Jesus Christ were still present with His Church in the flesh, the life of faith would not have such room for its display as it now has. The more there is visible to the eyes, the less room for faiththe least faith, the most show. The Romish Church, which has little enough of true faith, provides everything to work upon the sensesyour nostrils are regaled with incense and your ears are delighted with sweet sounds. The more faith grows, the less it needs outward helps. And when faith shows her true character and is clean divorced from sense and sight, then she wants absolutely nothing to rest upon but the invisible power of God!

She then has learned to hang as the world hangsupon no seen support! Just as the eternal arch of yon blue sky springs right up without props, so faith rests upon the invisible pillars of Gods Truth and faithfulness, needing nothing to shore or buttress her. The Presence of Christ Jesus here in bodily flesh and the knowing of Him according to the flesh, would be the bringing back of the saints to a life of sight and in a measure spoil the simplicity of naked trust. You remember the Apostle Paul says, We now know no man after the flesh. Yes, says he, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now after the flesh know we Him no more. To the skeptic, who should ask us, Why do you believe in Christ? if Jesus had remained upon the earth, we could always give an easy answerThere He isthere is the Man. Behold Him as He continues still to work miracles.   
There would be very little room for faiths holy adherence to the bare

Word of God and no opportunity for her to glorify God, trusting where she cannot trace. But now, Beloved, the fact that we have nothing visible to point to which carnal minds can understandthis very fact makes the path of faith more truly congenial with its noble character

*Faith, mighty faith, the promise sees,*

*And looks to that alone,*   
which she could hardly do, if she could look upon the visible Person of a present Savior. Happy day will it be for us when faith enjoys the full fruition of her hopes in the triumphant advent of her Lord! But His absence, alone, can train and educate her to the needed point of spiritual refinement.

Furthermore, the Presence of Jesus Christ on earth would materially affect the character of Gods great battle against error and sin. Suppose that Christ were to destroy the preachers of error by miracle. Suppose that persecuting monarchs had their arms dried up, or that all men who would oppose Christ were suddenly devoured by fire. Why then it would be more a battle between physical greatness and moral evil, than a warfare in which only spiritual force is employed on the side of right. But now that Christ has gone, the fight is all between Spirit and spiritbetween God the Holy Spirit and Satanbetween Truth and error. It is between the earnestness of believing men and the infatuation of unbelieving men. Now the fight is fair.

We have no miracles on our sidewe do not want themthe Holy Spirit is enough! We call no fire from Heavenno earthquake shakes the ground beneath our foemens feet. Korah is not swallowed up. Dathan does not go down alive into the pit. Physical force is left to our enemies we do not ask for it. Why? Because by the Divine working we can vanquish error without it. In the name of the Holy One of Israel, in whose cause we have been enlistedby His might we are enoughno need for miracles and signs and wonders. If Christ were here still working miracles, the battle were not so spiritual as it now is. But the absence of the corporeal Savior makes it a spiritual conflict of Spirit of the noblest and most sublime order.

Again, dear Friends, the Holy Spirit is more valuable to the Church in her present militant state than the Presence of Christ could be conceived to be, because Christ must be here in one of two wayseither He must be here suffering, or not suffering. If Christ were here suffering, then how could we conclude that His Atonement was finished? Is it not much better for our faith that our blessed Lord, having once and for all made expiation for sin, should sit at the right hand of the Father? Is it not much better, I ask, than to see Him still struggling and suffering here below? Oh, but, you say, perhaps He would not suffer! Then I pray you, do not wish to have Him here till our warfare is accomplished, for to see an unsuffering Christ in the midst of His suffering peopleto see His face calm and clear when yours and mine are wrinkled with griefto see Him smiling when we are weeping, this were intolerable! No, it could not be! Brethren, if He is a suffering Christ in our sight, then we should suspect that He had not finished His work.

And, on the other hand, if He is an unsuffering Christ, then it would look as if He were not a faithful High Priest made like unto His Brethren. These two difficulties throw us back into a state of thankfulness to God that we have not the dilemma to answer, but that the Spirit of God, who is Christ present on earth, relieves us from these difficulties and gives us all the advantage we could expect from Christs Presence in a tenfold degree. Only this one further remark, that the personal Presence of Christ, much as we think of it, did not produce very great results in His disciples until the Spirit was poured forth from on high.

Christ was their Teacherhow much did they learn? Why, there is PhilipChrist has to say to him, Have I been so long time with you and yet have you not known Me, Philip? They were puzzled by questions which little children can now answer! You can see that at the end of their three years course of training with Christ, they had made but slender progress. Christ is not only their Teacher, but their Comforteryet how frequently Christ failed to console them because of their unbelief. After He had uttered that delightful discourse which we have been reading, He found them sleeping for sorrow. In this very chapter, when He is trying to comfort them, He adds, But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow has filled your heart.

Christs object was to foster the Graces of His disciplesbut where were their Graces? Here is Peterhe has not even the Grace of courage and consistency, but denies his Master while the rest of them forsake Him and flee. There was not even the Spirit of Christ infused into them! Their zeal was not tempered with love, for they wanted fire from Heaven to consume His adversaries and Peter drew a sword to cut off the High Priests servants ear. They scarcely knew the Truths which their Master taught and they were far enough from imbibing His heavenly Spirit. Even their endowments were slender. It is true they once worked miracles and preached, but with what success?

Do you ever hear of Peter winning three thousand sinners under a sermon till the Holy Spirit came? Do you find any of them able to edify others and build up the Church of Christ? No, the ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ, considered only as to its immediate fruits, was not to be compared with ministries after the descent of the Spirit. He came unto His own and His own received Him not. His great work as a Redeemer was a complete triumph from beginning to end. But as a Teacher, since the Spirit of God was only upon Him and not upon the people, His words were rejected, His entreaties were despised and His warnings unheeded by the great multitude of the people.

The mighty blessing came when the words of Joel were fulfilled, And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh. And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out My Spirit. That was the blessing and a blessing which, we venture to say again, was so rich and so rare that it was, indeed, expedient that Jesus Christ should go, that the Holy Spirit might descend.

III. I now pass on to the third point of the subject with brevity. We have come thus farthe Presence of Christ admitted to be precious, but the Presence of the Holy Spirit most clearly shown to be of more practical value to the Church of God than the corporeal Presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. Advance, then, to the third point, THE PRESENCE OF THE COMFORTER IS SUPERLATIVELY VALUABLE. We may gather this, first, from the effects which were seen upon the day of Pentecost. On the day of Pentecost the heavenly Wind sounded the alarm of war. The soldiers were ill prepared for it. They were a slender band, having only this virtuethey were content to wait until power was given to them.

They sat still in the upper room. That mighty sound was heard across Jerusalem. The forceful Whirlwind travels on until it reaches the chosen spot. It fills the place where they are sitting. Here was an omen of what the Spirit of God is to be to the Church! It is to come mysteriously upon the Church according to the Sovereign will of God. But when He comes like the Wind, it is to purge the moral atmosphere and to quicken the pulse of all who spiritually breathe. This is a blessing, indeed! A gift which the Church greatly wantsI would that this rushing mighty Wind would come upon this Church with an irresistible force which should carry everything before itthe force of Truth, but of more than Truththe force of God driving His Truth home upon the heart and conscience of men!

I would that you and I could breathe this Wind and receive its invigorating influence that we might be made champions of God and of His Truth. O that it would drive away our mists of doubt and clouds of error! Come, Sacred Wind, England needs Youthe whole earth requires You! The foul gases which brood in this deadly calm would fly if Your Divine lightning enlightened the world and set the moral atmosphere in commotion. Come, Holy Spirit, come. We can do nothing without You! If we have Your Wind, we spread our sails and speed onward towards Glory!

Then the Spirit came as fire. A fire-shower accompanied the rushing mighty Wind. What a blessing is this to the Church! The Church wants fire to quicken her ministers, to give zeal and energy to all her members. Having this fire, she burns her way to success! The world meets her with the fire of firewood, but she confronts the world with the fire of kindling spirits and of souls aglow with the love of Jesus Christ. She trusts not to the wit and eloquence and wisdom of her preachers, but to the Divine Fire which clothes them with energy. She knows that men are irresistible when they are filled with hallowed enthusiasm sent from God. She trusts, therefore, in this and her cry is, Come, Holy Fire, abide upon our pastors and teachers! Rest upon every one of us! This Fire is a blessing Christ did not bring us in Person, but which He now gives through His Spirit to the Church.

Then there came from the fire-shower a descent of tongues. This, too, is the privilege of the Church. When the Lord gave the Apostles different tongues, He did, as it were, give them the keys of the various kingdoms. Go, says He, Judea is not My only dominion. Go and unlock the gates of every empire. Here are the keys, you can speak every language. Dear Friends, though we can no longer speak with every man in his own tongue, yet we have the keys of the whole world swinging at our girdle if we have the Spirit of God with us. You have the keys of human hearts if the Spirit of God speaks through you. I have this day the keys of the hearts of the multitudes here if the Holy Spirit wills to use them!

There is an efficacy about the Gospel, when the Spirit is with us, little dreamed of by those who call it the foolishness of men. I am persuaded that the results which have followed ministry in our lifetime are trivial and insignificant compared with what they would be if the Spirit of God were more mightily at work in our midst. There is no reason in the nature of the Gospel or the power of the Spirit why a whole congregation should not be converted under one sermon! There is no reason in Gods Nature why a nation should not be born in a day and why, within a single twelve months, a dozen ministers preaching throughout the world might not be the means of converting every elect son and daughter of Adam to a knowledge of the Truth of God. The Spirit of God is perfectly Irresistible when He puts forth His full power!

His power is so Divinely Omnipotent that the moment He goes forth the work is achieved, The great prophetic event, we see, occurred on the day of Pentecost. The success given was only the first fruitsPentecost is not the harvest. We have been accustomed to look on Pentecost as a great and wonderful display of Divine power not at all to be equaled in modern times. Brethren, it is to be exceeded! I stand not upon Pentecost as upon a towering mountain, wondering at my height, but I look at Pentecost as a little rising knoll from which I am to look up to mountains far loftier! I look not to Pentecost as the shouting of our harvest home and the bringing in of the sheaves into the garner. No! But as an offering of the first wave sheaf before the altar of God!

You must expect greater things, pray for greater things, long for greater things! Here is this England of ours, sunk in stolid ignorance of the Gospel. Weighing like a nightmare upon her bosom we have baptismal regeneration supported by a horde of priests who either believe that dogma, or hold their benefices by subscribing to a lie. How is this incubus to be shaken off from the living bosom of England? Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the Lord. There is France cursed with infidelity, fickle, gay, given up to pleasurehow is she to be made sober and sanctified unto God? Not by might, but by My Spirit, says the Lord. Yonder is Germany, with her metaphysical skepticism, her half-Romanism, that is to say, Lutheranismand her abounding Popery! How is she to arise? Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the Lord. Away there in Italy sits old Rome, the harlot of the seven hills, still reigning queen triumphant over the great part of the earth! How is she to die? Where is the sword which shall find out her heart? Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the Lord.

The one thing, then, which we need, is the Spirit of God! Do not say that we need moneywe shall have it soon enough when the Spirit touches mens hearts. Do not say that we need buildings, Churches, edificesall these may be very well in subserviencebut the main need of the Church is the Spirit and men into whom the Spirit may be poured! If there were only one prayer which I might pray before I died, it should be this: Lord, send to Your Church men filled with the Holy Spirit and with fire. Give to any denomination such men and its progress must be

mightykeep back such men, send them college gentlemen of great refinement and profound learning, but of little fire and Gracedumb dogs which cannot barkand straightway that denomination must decline. Let the Spirit come and the preacher may be rustic, simple, rough, unmanneredbut the Holy Spirit being upon himnone of his adversaries shall stand against him! His word shall be with power to the shaking of the gates of Hell!

Beloved, did I not say well when I said that the Spirit of God is of superlative importance to the Church and that the day of Pentecost seems to tell us this? Remember, Brethren, and here is another thought which should make the Spirit very dear to youwithout the Holy Spirit no good thing ever did or ever can come into any of your heartsno sigh of penitence! No cry of faith! No glance of love! No tear of hallowed sorrow! Your heart can never palpitate with Divine life except through the Spirit! You are not capable of the smallest degree of spiritual emotion, much less spiritual action, apart from the Holy Spirit! Dead you lie, living only for evil, and absolutely dead for God until the Holy Spirit comes and raises you from the grave!

There is nothing good in you today, my Brothers and Sisters, which was not put there. The flowers of Christ are all exoticsIn me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing. Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? No one! Everything must come from Christ and Christ gives nothing to men except through the Spirit of all Grace. Prize, then, the Spirit as the channel of all good which comes into you. And further, no good thing can come

out of you apart from the Spirit. Let it be in you, yet it lies dormant except God works in you to will and to do of His own good pleasure. Do you desire to preach? How can you unless the Holy Spirit touches your tongue? Do you desire to pray? Alas, what dull work it is unless the Spirit makes intercession for you! Do you desire to subdue sin? Would you be holy? Would you imitate your Master? Do you desire to rise to superlative heights of spirituality? Are you wanting to be made like the angels of God, full of zeal and ardor for the Masters cause? You cannot without the SpiritWithout Me you can do nothing.

O branch of the vine, you can have no fruit without the sap! O child of God, you have no life within you apart from the life which God gives you through His Spirit! Said I not well, then, that the Holy Spirit is superlatively precious, so that even the Presence of Christ after the flesh is not to be compared to His Presence for glory and for power?

IV. This brings us to the conclusion, which is a practical point. Brethren, if these things are so, let us, who are believers in Christ, view the mysterious Spirit with deep awe and reverence. Let us so reverence Him as not to grieve Him or provoke Him to anger by our sins. Let us not quench Him in one of His faintest motions in our soul. Let us foster every suggestion and be ready to obey every prompting. If the Holy Spirit is, indeed, so mighty, let us do nothing without Him. Let us begin no project and carry on no enterprise and conclude no transaction without imploring His blessing. Let us pay Him the due homage of feeling our entire weakness apart from Him, and then depending alone upon Him, having this for our prayer, Open my heart and my whole being to Your incoming and uphold me with Your free Spirit when I shall have received that Spirit in my inward parts.

You who are unconverted, let me beseech you, whatever you do, never despise the Spirit of God. Remember, there is a special honor put upon Him in ScriptureAll manner of sin and of blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, but the sin against the Holy Spirit shall never be forgiven, neither in this world nor in that which is to come. Remember, If a man speaks a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him. But if he speaks a word against the Holy Spirit, it shall never be forgiven him. This is the sin which is unto death, of which even the loving John saysI do not say that you shall pray for it. Tremble, therefore, in His Presence! Take your shoes off, for when His name is mentioned, the place where you stand is holy ground. Let the Spirit be treated with reverence.

In the next place, as a practical remark, let us, viewing the might of the Spirit, take courage today. We know, Brethren, that we, as a body of people seeking to adhere closely to Scripture and to practice the ordinances and hold the doctrines as we have received them from the Lord Himself, are but poor and despised. And when we look at the great ones of the earth, we see them on the side of the false and not of the true. Where are the kings and the nobles? Where are the princes, and where are the mighty men?

Are they not against the Lord of Hosts. Where is the gold? Where is the silver? Where is the architecture? Where is the wisdom? Where is the eloquence? Is it not banded against the Lord of Hosts? What? Shall we, then, be discouraged? Our fathers were not! They bore their testimony in the stocks and in the prison, but they feared not for the good old cause! As John Bunyan, they learned to rot in dungeons, but they learned not to play the coward. They suffered and they testified that they were not discouraged. Why? Because they knew (not that Truth is mighty and will prevail, for Truth is not mighty and will not prevail in this world until men are different from what they are), but they knew that the Spirit of God is mighty and will prevail!

Better to have a small Church of poor men and the Spirit of God with them, than to have a hierarchy of nobles, to have an army of titled princes and prelates without the Holy Spirit! For this is not merely the sinew of strength, but it is strength itself! Where the Spirit of God isthere is liberty and power! Courage then, Brethren! We have only to seek for that which God has promised to give and we can do wonders. He will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him. Wake up, members of this Church, to earnest prayer. And all Believers throughout the world, cry aloud unto God to let His bare arm be seen. Wake, children of God, for you know the power of prayer!

Give the Covenant angel no rest till he speaks the word and the Spirit works mightily among the sons of men. Prayer is work adapted to each of you who are in Christ. You cannot preach, you cannot teach, but you can pray! And your private prayer, unknown by men, shall be registered in Heaven, Those silent but earnest cries of yours shall bring down a blessing. The other morning, when we were holding special prayer, there were some Brethren present who kept saying during the prayer to themselves,

scarcely loud enough to be heard, Do Lord! Do! Grant it! Hear it! That is a kind of praying which I love in Prayer Meetings!

I would not care for the loud shouts of some of our Methodist Brethren, though if they like they are welcome to it. But I do like to hear friends praying with the groaning which cannot be uttered, Lord, send the Spirit! Send the Spirit, Lord! Work! Work! Work! During sermon time it is what numbers of Churches should be doing, crying out to God in their hearts. As you walk the streets when you see sin you should pray, Lord, put it down by Your Spirit! And when you mark a struggling Brother striving to do good, you should cry, Lord, help him! Help him by Your Spirit. I am persuaded we only need more prayer and there is no limit to the blessing! You may evangelize England, you may evangelize Europe, you may Christianize the worldif you do but know how to pray.

Prayer can get anything of God, prayer can get everythingGod denies nothing to the man who knows how to ask. The Lord never shuts His storehouse till you shut your mouth! God will never stop His arm till you stop your tongue. Cry aloud and spare not! Give Him no rest till He sends forth His Spirit once again to stir the waters and to brood over this dark world till light and life shall come! Cry day and night, O you elect of God, for He will avenge you speedily. The time of battle draws near! Rome sharpens her sword for the fight! The men of error gnash their teeth in rage! Now for the sword of the Lord and of Gideon! Now for the old might and majesty of the ancient days! Now for the shaking of the walls of Jericho, even though we have no better weapons than rams horns! Now for the driving out of the heathen, and for the establishment of Gods Israel in the land! Now for the coming of the Holy Spirit with such might and power that as Noahs flood covered the mountaintops, Jehovahs flood of Glory shall cover the highest summits of sin and iniquity and the whole world over, the Lord God Omnipotent shall reign!

You who have not the Spirit pray for it. May He prompt you to pray this morning! Unconverted Sinners, may the Spirit give you faith! Remember that the Holy Spirit tells you to trust Christ. If you honor the Holy Spirit, trust Christ. I know you must be regenerate, for the man who trusts Christ is regenerate. You must repent, you must be holy, but the man who trusts Christ shall repent and shall be made holy. The germs of repentance and holiness are in him already. Trust Christ, Sinner! It is the Holy Spirits mandate to you this morning. May He constrain you to trust Him and He shall have the Glory, world without end. Amen.

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THE HOLY SPIRITS THREEFOLD CONVICTION OF MEN   
NO. 1708

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**And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on Me; of righteousness, because I go to My Father, and you see Me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.**

**John 16:8-11.**

THE Apostles had a stern task before them. They were to go into all nations and proclaim the Gospel to every creature, beginning at Jerusalem. Remember, only two or three years before they were simple fishermen engaged upon the Galilean Lakemen of little or no education, men of no rank or standing. At best they were but Jews and that nation was despised everywhere, while these peasants were not even men of repute among their own nation! Yet these men were to turn the world upside down! They were told by their Lord that they would be brought before rulers and kings for His sake and that they would be persecuted wherever they went. They were to proclaim the Gospel in the teeth of the imperial power of Rome, the ancient wisdom of Greece and the fierce cruelties of barbaric lands. And they were to set up the kingdom of peace and righteousness.

At the very time when they were about to receive their commission, they were also to lose the bodily Presence of their great Leader. While He was with them, they had felt no fear. If they were puzzled at any time by the Scribes and Pharisees, they resorted to Jesus, and they were rescued from bewilderment. Never man spoke like that Man! Never did such wisdom and prudence dwell in any mind as dwelt in the mind of Christ! His Presence was their protection, the broad shield behind which they securely stood, whatever shafts might be shot at them by their adversaries. But now that He was to depart out of the world unto the Father, they would be deprived of their fortress and high towerthey would be as children bereft of their father, or, at best, as soldiers without a general. Here was a sad case. Work given and power withdrawna battle beginning and the conquering Captain leaving.

How happy it was for these disciples that our blessed Lord could tell them that His going away would be for their gain rather than for their loss! For when He was gone, the Spirit of God would come to be an Advocate for them and with them, and by His power they would be able to silence all their enemies and achieve their mission! The Holy Spirit was to be their Comforter, that they might not be afraid, and their Advocate, that they might not be baffled. When they spoke, there would be a power within them suggesting their words, a power with those words convincing their hearers, and a power in their hearers causing the word spoken to abide in their memoriesthat power would be Divine, the power of the Holy Spirit, who is One God with the Father and the Son.

It is one thing for men to speak, and quite another thing for God to speak through men. The work of proclaiming the Gospel to the world was far too great for the 12, but it was by no means too great for the Spirit of God! Who can limit His power? Is anything too hard for the Lord? The Holy Spirit being their Helper, these feeble men were equal to the task which God had committed to their trust. The Presence of the Holy Spirit was better for them than the bodily Presence of the Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus could only have been in one place as to His corporeal Presence, but the Holy Spirit could be everywhere! The sight of Jesus would but appeal to the senses, but the power of the Holy Spirit touched the heart and worked spiritual life and saving faith! Thus, by His own withdrawal and the sending of the Spirit, our Lord furnished His servants for the conflict.

We will, at this time, observe what the Holy Spirit did as an Advocate. The passage cannot be fully understood unless we give it three renderings. But I do not pretend that even then, we shall have pressed from this choice cluster, all the generous wine of its meaning! To my mind, it is a compendium of all the work of the Spirit of God. By our three readings we shall see muchfirst, the Spirit of God goes with the preaching of the Gospel to reprove men of sinand so to embarrass them in the presence of the preacher of righteousness. Secondly (and this is a much more blessed result), to convict men of sin and so to lead them to repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. And, thirdly, the ultimate result of the Holy Spirits work will be to convict men before all intelligent beings of having been guilty of the grossest sinhaving opposed the most perfect righteousness and of having defied the most glorious judgment. We shall try to see the meaning of the passage through these three windows.

I. First, we believe that a promise is here made to the servants of Christ that when they go forth to preach the Gospel the Holy Spirit will be with them TO REPROVE MEN. By this is meant, not so much to save them as to silence them. When the minister of Christ stands up to plead his Masters cause, another Advocate appears in court, whose pleadings would make it hard for men to resist the Truth of God. Observe how this reproof was given with regard to sin. On the day of Pentecost the disciples spoke with many different tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. Men from all countries under Heaven heard themselves addressed in their native tongues! This was a great marvel and all Jerusalem rang with it!

And when Peter stood up to preach to the assembled multitude and told the Jews that they had crucified the Holy One and the Just, the signs and wonders worked by the Spirit in the name of Jesus were a witness which they could not refute. The very fact that the Spirit of God had given to these unlettered men the gift of tongues was evidence that Jesus of Nazareth, of whom they spoke, was no impostor! It was laid down in the old Jewish Law that if a man prophesied and his prophecies did not come to pass, he was to be condemned as a false prophet. But if that which he said came to pass, then he was a true Prophet. Now, the Lord Jesus Christ had promised the outpouring of the Spirit, which had also been foretold in reference to the Messiah by the Prophet Joel. When, therefore, that mark of the true Messiah was set upon Jesus of Nazareth by the coming of the Holy Spirit and the working of miracles, men were reproved for having refused to believe in Jesus.

The evidence was brought home to them that they had, with wicked hands, crucified the Lord of Gloryand so they stood reproved. All the subsequent miracles went to prove the same thing, for when the Apostles worked miracles, the world was reproved of sin because it believed not on Christ. It was not that a few disciples testified to the sin of the race, but the Holy Spirit, Himself, made men tremble, as by His deeds of power, He bore witness to the Lord Jesus and exhibited the fact that in crucifying Jesus, the world had put to death the Incarnate Son of God! Do you not see the terrible power with which the first disciples were thus armed? It was more to them than the rod in the hand of Moses with which he smote Pharaoh with so many plagues. It needed all the willfulness of that stiffnecked generation to resist the Holy Spirit and refuse to bow before Him whom they had piercedthey were full of malice and obstinacybut in their secret hearts they were sore put to it and felt that they were fighting against God.

Do you not see, too, dear Friends, how the working of the Holy Spirit with the Apostles and their immediate followers was a wonderful rebuke to the world concerning the matter of righteousness? Jesus was gone and His Divine example no longer stood out like clear light reproving their darknessbut the Holy Spirit attested that righteousness and compelled them to feel that Jesus was the Holy One and that His cause was righteous. The teaching of the Apostles, sealed by the Holy Spirit, made the world see what righteousness was as they had never seen it before! A fresh standard of morals was set up in the world and it has never been taken downit stands in its place to rebuke, if not to improve! The world was then sunk in the uttermost depths of viceeven its good men were loathsome! But now another kind of righteousness was exhibited in the teachings of the Lord Jesus and the Spirit came to set the seal of Divine approval to it so that if men continued in sin, it might be against light and knowledge, for they now knew what was righteousness and could no longer be mistaken upon that point. God was with the preachers of a new righteousness and by many different signs and wonders He attested the cause of the Gospel.

Now, Brothers, we also rejoice in this, seeing that the witness of the Truth of God is for all time and we know of a surety that the Kingdom which our Lord Jesus has set up among men is Divinely sanctioned as the Kingdom of Righteousness which, in the end, shall grind to powder the powers of evil! We are the covenanted servants of a Lord whose righteousness was declared among men by the personal witness of God the Holy Spirit. Are you not glad to be enlisted in such a service? Oh, world, are you not embarrassed for resisting such a kingdom? These 12 fishermen could not, of themselves, have exhibited a new standard of righteousness among men! They could not, on their own, have set before all nations a higher ideal of moral excellence! But when the eternal power and majesty of the Godhead vouched for the righteousness of the Lord Jesus, the course of the Apostolic Church became like that of the sun in the heavens!

Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. None could stand against them, for, as when the morning breaks, the darkness flies and the bats and the night birds hasten away, so when the messengers of mercy proclaimed the Righteousness of God, mans hypocrisy and self-glorying fled away! Then, too, they were made to feel that a judgment had come; that somehow the life and the death of Jesus of Nazareth had made a crisis in the worlds history and condemned the way and manner of the ungodly. All historians must confess that the turning point of the race is the Cross of Christ. From that moment the power of evil received its mortal wound! It dies hard, but from that hour it was doomed. At the death of our Lord, the heathen oracles were struck dumb. There had been oracles all over the world, either the product of evil spirits or of crafty priests, but after the Christian era the world ceased to believe in these voices and they were no more heard.

Systems of false worship, so firmly rooted in prejudice and custom that it seemed impossible that they should ever be overthrown, were torn up by their roots by the breath of the Lord. The Apostles might have said to all the systems of falsehood, as a bowing wall shall you be, and as a tottering fence. Men could not help perceiving that the Prince of Darkness had been cast down from his undivided power and that he spoke, from then on, with bated breath. The Seed of the woman had met the old serpent and, in the duel between them, He had gained such a victory that the cause of evil was henceforth hopeless. Moreover, the thought flashed upon humanity more clearly than everthere would be a Day of Judgment! Men heard and felt the truth of the warning that God would judge the world, at the last, by the Man, Christ Jesus!

The dim forms of Rhadamanthus on a cloudy judgment seat and of the assembly before his throne, and of the crowds divided according to their lives, now began to assume another and far more definite shape. It was written on the heart of mankind that there is a judgment to come! Men will rise again! They shall stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ to give an account of the things done in the body, whether good or evil. The world heard this and the tidings have never been forgotten! The Holy Spirit has reproved men by the prospect of judgment! The Holy Spirit attested the life of Christ, the teaching of the Apostles and all the grand Truths of God that were contained therein, by what He did in the way of miracles and by what He did in the way of enlightening, impressing and subduing human hearts. Henceforth man is accused and rebuked by the great Advocate! And all who remain in opposition to the Lord Jesus, remain so in defiance of the clearest proofs of His mission. He who rejects human testimony when it is true is foolish, but he who despises the witness of the Holy Spirit is profane, for he calls the Spirit of Truth a liar! Let him beware lest he so sin against the Holy Spirit as to come under the most terrible of cursesfor it is written of him that speaks against the Holy Spirithe has no forgiveness.

Brothers and Sisters, does not that put the Apostles in quite a different position from that in which they appeared to be? If we judge according to sense and carnal reason, their adventure was Quixotic, their success was impossible! Everybody would have said to them, Go back to your nets and to your boats. What can you do against the established system of Judaism in your own country? And if that is too hard for you, what will you be able to do in other lands? There are nations that have been tutored in their own learning for thousands of years and have become adept in all the arts and sciences! They have brought all the charms of poetry, music and statuary to support their idolatrous systemsyou are fools to think that you unlearned and ignorant men can ever overturn all this!

Would not prudence agree with this? Yes, but if God is in these menif He that dwelt in the bush at Horeb and made it burn, though it was not consumedwill dwell in them and each one of them shall be gifted with a tongue of fire, this is a different business altogether! Surely, He that made the world, could make it new! He that said, Let there be light, and there was light, could command light to shine upon the moral and spiritual night. Thus much upon the first reading of the text. Let us advance to that which will more interest you.

II. The Holy Spirit was to go with the preaching of the Word of God TO CONVINCE MEN of three great prominent Truths of God. This was to be a saving Wordthey are to be so convinced as to repent of sin, to accept of righteousness and yield themselves to the judgment of the Lord. Here we see as in a map, the work of the Spirit upon the hearts of those who are ordained unto eternal life! Those three effects are all necessary and each one is, in the highest degree, important to true conversion. First, the Holy Spirit is come to convince men of sin. It is absolutely necessary that men should be convinced of sin.

The fashionable theology of the day isConvince men of the goodness of God! Show them the universal fatherhood and assure them of unlimited mercy. Win them by Gods love, but never mention His wrath against sin, or the need of an Atonement, or the possibility of there being a place of punishment! Do not censure poor creatures for their failings. Do not judge and condemn. Do not search the heart or lead men to be low-spirited and sorrowful. Comfort and encourage, but never accuse and threaten! Yes, that is the way of manbut the way of the Spirit of God is very different! He comes on purpose to convince men of sin, to make them feel that they are guilty, greatly guiltyso guilty that they are lost, ruined and undone! He comes to remind them not only of Gods loveliness, but of their own unlovelinessof their own enmity and hatred to this God of Love and, consequently, of their terrible sin in thus ill-using One so infinitely kind.

The Holy Spirit does not come to make sinners comfortable in their sins, but to cause them to grieve over their sins! He does not help them to forget their sin, or think little of it, but He comes to convince them of the horrible enormity of their iniquity! It is no work of the Spirit to pipe to mens dancingHe does not bring forth flute, harp, dulcimer and all kinds of music to charm the unbelieving into a good opinion of themselvesHe comes to make sin appear sin and to let us see its fearful consequences! He comes to wound so that no human balm can heal! He comes to kill so that no earthly power can make us live! The flowers bedeck the meadows when the grass is green, but lo, a burning wind comes from the desert and the grass withers and the flowers fall away. What is it that makes the beauty and excellence of human righteousness to wither as the green herb? Isaiah says it is because the Spirit of the Lord blows upon it.

There is a withering work of the Spirit of God which we must experience or we shall never know His quickening and restoring power. This withering is a most necessary experience and, just now, needs much to be insisted on. Today we have so many built up who were never pulled down; so many filled who were never emptied; so many exalted who were never humbled that I, the more earnestly, remind you that the Holy Spirit must convince us of sin or we cannot be saved! This work is most necessary because without it there is no leading men to receive the Gospel of the Grace of God. We cannot make headway with certain people because they profess faith very readily, but they are not convinced of anything. Oh, yes, we are sinners, no doubt, and Christ died for sinnersthat is the freeand-easy way with which they handle heavenly mysteriesas if they were the nonsense verses of a boys exercise, or the stories of Mother Goose!

This is all mockery and we are weary of it. But get near a real sinner and you have found a man you can deal withI mean the man who is a sinner and there is no mistake about ithe mourns in his inmost soul that he is so. In such a man you find one who will welcome the Gospel, welcome Grace and welcome a Savior. To him the news of pardon will be as cold water to a thirsty souland the Doctrines of Grace will be as honey dropping from the comb! A sinner, says one of our songsters, is a sacred thingthe Holy Spirit has made Him so. Your sham sinner is a horrid creature, but a man truly convinced of sin by the Spirit of God is a being to be sought after as a jewel that will adorn the crown of the Redeemer!

Note here, that the Spirit of God comes to convince men of sin because they never will be convinced of sin apart from His Divine advocacy. A natural conscience touched by the Spirit of God may do a good deal in the way of showing a man his faults. It may thus make him uneasy and may bring about a reformation of life. But it is only the Spirit of God that, to the full extent, convinces a man of sin so as to bring forth repentance, self-despair and faith in Jesus. For what is the sin that you and I are guilty of? Ah, Brothers and Sisters, it is not easy to tell, but this I know, that the extent of sin is never known till the Spirit of God reveals the secret chambers of the hearts abominations. We do a thousand things that we do not know to be sin till the Spirit of God enlightens us and pleads the cause of holiness in us.

What natural man, for instance, ever laments over evil thoughts or desires, or the imaginations which flit across his mind? Yet all these are sins and sins which cause a gracious heart the deepest distress! If we were never actually to commit evil, yet if we desire to do so, we have already sinned! And if we feel pleasure in thinking of evil, we have already sinned. This poison is in our nature and shows itself in a thousand ways. The fact that we not only sin, but are, by nature, sinful, is one which our pride kicks againstand we will not learn it till the Spirit of God teaches it to us. Neither does any man know the exceeding sinfulness of sin till the Light of God falls upon the black mass from the Holy Spirit. Every sin is, as it were, an assault upon Gods Throne, Glory and life. Sin would dethrone the Most High and destroy Him if it couldbut men do not see this. They talk of sin most lightly and know not that it scatters firebrands and death.

I tell you, when the Spirit of God makes a man see sin in its naked deformity, he is horrified! When I saw, or thought I saw, the heinousness of sin, it was intolerable and I had no rest in my spirit. Some such sight we must all have, or we shall never look to the Lord Jesus to take away our sin. None but those whose wounds smart are likely to apply for the heavenly balm. The Holy Spirit dwells upon one point in particularof sin, because they believe not on Me. None see the sin of unbelief except by His light. A man thinks, Well, if I have not believed in Christ, that is a pity, perhaps, but still, I was never a thief, or a liar, or a drunk, or unchaste. Unbelief is a matter of very little consequence. I can set that right at any time. But the Holy Spirit makes a man see that not to believe in Christ is a crowning, damning sin, since, he that believes not has made God a liarand what can be more atrocious than that?

He who believes not on Christ has rejected Gods mercy and has done despite to the grandest display of Gods love! He has despised Gods unspeakable Gift and trampled on the blood of Christ! In this he has dishonored God on a very tender point. He has insulted Him concerning His only-begotten Son! How I wish that the Spirit of God would come upon unbelievers, here, and make them see what they are and where they are with regard to the one and only Savior! How shall they escape, who neglect so great a salvation? It will not matter how feebly I speak this morning if the Spirit of God will only work by the Truth of God on youyou will perceive the greatness of your crime and you will never rest until you have believed on the Lord Jesusand found forgiveness for your high offense against the bleeding Lamb!

So far, then, upon the first operation of the Holy Spirit. The next work of the Spirit is to convince men of righteousness, that is to say, in Gospel terms, to show them that they have no righteousness of their own and no means of working righteousnessand that apart from Grace they are condemned! Thus He leads them to value the righteousness of God which is, upon all them that believe, a righteousness which covers sin and renders them acceptable with God. Lend me your ears a moment while I call your attention to a great wonder! Among men, if a person is convicted of wrong-doing, the next step is judgment. A young man, for instance, has been in the service of an employer and he has embezzled moneyhe is convicted of the theft by process of law and found guilty. What follows next?

Why, judgment is pronounced and he must suffer the penalty! But observe how our gracious God interpolates another process. Truly, His ways are not our ways! He shall convince of sin. The next step would be judgment, but no, the Lord inserts an up to now unknown middle term and convinces of righteousness. Be amazed at this! The Lord takes a man, even when he is sinful and conscious of that sin, and makes him righteous on the spot by putting away his sin and justifying him by the righteousness of faith, a righteousness which comes to him by the worthiness of Another who has worked out a righteousness for him! Can that be? Brothers and Sisters, this seems to be unthinkableso impossible that it needs the Spirit of God to convince men of it!

I may now set forth the great plan whereby the Lord Jesus is made of God unto us righteousness! I may show how the Son of God became Man that He might fully keep the Law of God for us and, having done so, and having added His passive obedience to His active service, He presented to His Father a complete vindication of His injured Law so that every man that believes on Him shall be delivered from condemnation and accepted in the Beloved! I might also tell how Christs righteousness is set to our account so that faith is reckoned unto us for righteousness, even as was the case with faithful Abraham. Yet all my labor will be in vain till the Spirit shall make it plain! Many hear the gladsome tidings, but they do not receive the Truth of God, for they are not convinced of it. They need to be persuaded of it before they will embrace itand that persuasion is not in my power.

Did I hear one remark, I cannot see this way of righteousness? I answer, No, and you never will until the Spirit of God convinces you of it! Note well the great point of the Spirits argumentOf righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more. Our Lord was sent into the world to work out a righteousness and here, He says, I go. But He would not go till He had done His work. He says, also, I go to My Father. But He would not go back to His Father till He had fulfilled His Covenant engagements. I go to My Father, that is, I go to receive a reward and to sit upon My Fathers Throne. But He could not have received this Glory if He had not finished His appointed work! Behold, then, Christ has finished a righteousness which is freely given to all them that believe! And all those who trust in Christ are, for His sake, rewarded as righteous before God and are, in fact, righteous, so that Paul says, Who is he that condemns?

His ground for asking that question is the same as that which the Spirit uses in my text. Paul says, It is Christ that died, yes, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. He quotes, as the Holy Spirit does, the resurrection, ascension and enthronement of the great Intercessor as the proof positive that there is a perfect righteousness for all believing sinners! I know that many will say, This is making people righteous who are not righteous and, therefore, they will raise many objections. Just so! This is the Glory of God, that He justifies the ungodly and saves sinners by Christ. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputes not iniquity.

I do not see it, cries one. And our answer is, We know you do not! We are not in the least surprised that you reject our testimonywe never expected you to receive it unless the arm of the Lord should be revealed and the Holy Spirit should convince you of righteousness. No man comes to Christ who is not drawn of the Father and enlightened by the Spirit! But if the Spirit convinces you, we shall soon hear you sing

*Jesus, Your blood and righteousness*

***My beauty are, my glorious dress!   
Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,   
With joy shall I lift up my head.***

Dear people of God, pray hard that the Spirit of God may, even now, convince unbelievers that the only true righteousness for mortal men is that which comes not by the works of the Law, but by the hearing of faith!

But then comes a third point, the Spirit of God is to convince men of judgment. To whom is this judgment committed? The Father has committed all judgment unto the Son. The true penitent feels that if he had all his sins forgiven him, yet it will not serve his turn so long as he lies wallowing in sin. He feels that the great enemy of his soul must be dethroned, or else forgiveness, itself, will afford him no rest of heart. He must be rescued from the power as well as from the guilt of sin, or else he abides in bondage. He must see the power of evil hewn in pieces before the Lord, as Samuel hewed Agag of old. Listen, O troubled one! You shall be set free, for, the prince of this world is judged. Jesus came to destroy the works of the deviland on the Cross, our Redeemer judged Satan, overcame him and cast him down!

Satan is now a condemned criminal, a vanquished rebel. His reigning power over all Believers is broken. He has great wrath, knowing that his time is short, but that wrath is held in check by his Conqueror! In His passion, our Lord fought Satan foot to foot and overcame him, spoiling principalities and powers and making a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Do you believe this? May the Spirit of God convince you of it! O tried Believer, the Lord Jesus overthrew the devil for you! He crushed the powers of darkness for you! Believing in Him, you shall find evil dethroned in you and all the forces of sin hurled from their high places! You shall overcome through the blood of the Lamb! Again, I ask, do you believe this? Christ is made of God unto us sanctificationHe saves His people from their sinsHe makes them holy and so breaks in pieces their enemy.

Though it will cost you many a conflict and the beaded sweat may, in the hour of temptation, stand upon your brow as you fear that you will fall from holiness, yet the Lord shall bruise Satan under your feet, shortly, for He has already bruised him under His own feet on your behalf! The Spirit of God is needed to convince our unbelieving hearts that it is so. Most men dream that they must overcome sin by their own strength. Alas, the strong armed man still keeps the house against our feebleness. You have a pretty piece of work before you if, in your own strength, you venture on this conflict. I can hear the devil laughing at you even now! This leviathan is not to be tamed by you. Job would say, Will you play with him as with a bird? Do you think the devil is as easily managed as a woman carries her pet bird on her finger and puts it to her lip to peck a seed?

Can you draw out leviathan with a hook? Will he speak soft words unto you? Will you take him to be a servant forever? Your arrows cannot come at him, nor your sword wound him! Lay your hand upon him, remember the battle, do no more. A Divine power is needed and that power is ready to display itself if it is humbly sought! Many who are convinced of the righteousness of Christ are not yet fully convinced that evil is judged, condemned and cast down. They are haunted with the dread that they may yet perish by the hand of the enemy. Oh, my Brothers and Sisters, see the need of the Holy Spirit to advocate in your heart the cause of and Truth of Godand make you believe that the Lord Jesus has supreme power over every enemy!

I sometimes meet with a Christian who tells me the world is all going to the bad, the Gospel is being utterly defeated, Christ is routed, the devil is waving the black flag and shouting victory. I know how terrible is the conflict, but I believe that my Lord Jesus has judged the whole kingdom of evil and, in that fact I see Satan fall like lightning from Heaven! Our Lord must reign! His enemies must lick the dust! We shall judge the fallen angels at the Last Great Day and, meanwhile, a believing life is a life of triumph over the arch enemy! In the power of the Spirit it shall be proven that truth is mightier than error, love is stronger than hate and holiness is higher than sin, for the Lords right hand and His holy arm have gotten Him the victory! Behold how the ascended Savior leads captivity captive! See how He comes from Edom with dyed garments from Bozrah, for He has trodden sin and Hell in the winepress and now He travels in the greatness of His strength, speaking in righteousness, mighty to save!

Let me run again over this ground, that we may not overlook anything. Dear Friends, those of us who are saved still need the Holy Spirit with us every day to convince us of sin! Good men do, at this hour, most complacently, things which, in clearer light, they would never think of doing! May the Holy Spirit continually show us layer after layer of sin, that we may remove it. May He reveal to us rank after rank of sin, that we may conquer all its forces. May He especially make known to us the sin of not believing in Christ, for even we have our doubts and fears. After a sermon concerning sin, the poor child of God cries out, I dare not believe! I am afraid I shall be lost, after all. This unbelief is another sin. Strange way of escaping from sin by plunging into it!

To doubt the Lord is to add sin to sin! No sin is more pernicious than the sin of not believing. Whenever our heart distrusts the Lord, we grieve His Spirittherefore we always need the Holy Spirit to convince us of this evil and bitter thingand to lead us to trust after a child-like fashion. Any mistrust of Gods promise; any fear of failure on Gods part; any thought of His unfaithfulness is a crime against the honor of the Divine majesty! Oh, convincing Spirit, dwell with me from day to day convincing me of sin and especially making me to feel that the worst of all evils is to question my faithful Friend. So, also, may you always have the Spirit of God dwelling with you, convincing you of righteousness.

May those of you who are, indeed, Believers, never question but what you are righteous before God. We who believe are made the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus! Are we assured of this? If so, do not think and talk as if you were still under the curse of the Law, for you are no longer in any such condition. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. Oh, may the Spirit of God convince you of that every dayand convince you of it on the ground that Jesus is reigning yonder at the Fathers right hand!. The interest of each Believer in His Lord is clear and sure. If Jesus is there, I am there. If the Father has accepted Him, He has accepted me!

Do you catch the logic of it? You are in Christ, you are one with Him as He is, so are you in Him! Hold fast to the fact that you are not condemned. How can you be? You are at the right hand of God in Christ. You, condemned? Why, you are accepted in the Beloved, for your Representative is accepted by God and made to sit upon His Throne! Jesus is exalted, not for Himself, alone, but for

all those who believe in Him! May the blessed Spirit fully convince you of this grand Truth of God!

And, next, may He convince you of judgmentnamely, that you have been judged and your enemy has been judged and condemned. The Day of Judgment is not a thing to be dreaded by a Believer. We have stood our trial, and have been acquitted. Our Representative has borne the penalty of our sin. Our chastisement is passed, for Jesus has borne itHe was numbered with transgressors. There is, now, no curse for us! There can be noneHeaven, earth, Hell cannot find a curse for those whom God has blessedsince the Lord Jesus was made a curse for us. May the Spirit of God come on you afresh, my dearly Beloved, and make you confident and joyful in Him who is the Lord our righteousness, by whom evil has been judged, once and for all!

II. Last of all, let us read our text by rendering it, convictThe Spirit of God will CONVICT the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. There is the world. It stands a prisoner at the bar and the charge is that it is and has been full of sin. In courts of law you are often surprised with what comes out. You look at the prisoner and he seems to be a quiet, respectable person. And you say, I should not think he is guilty. But the advocate who has engaged to plead the cause of righteousness stands up and gives an outline of the caseand you speedily change your mind, until, as the evidence proceeds, you say to yourself, That is a villain if ever there was one.

Now hear the Spirit of God! The Spirit came into the world to make all men know that Jesus is the Christ. And He attested to that fact by miracles that could not be questioned, miracles without number! He has, moreover, attested the truth of the Gospel by the conversion of myriads, whose happy and holy lives have been a proof that Jesus Christ was, indeed, sent forth from God. But what did this wicked world do with Christ? They gave Him a felons death! They nailed Him to a cross! By this, the world is condemned! We need no further evidence. The world is convictedself-condemned by the slaughter of Him who was Incarnate Goodness and unbounded Love! The world is base enough to desire to slay its God even when He comes on an errand of love!

Take the accused away! The worlds guilt is proven beyond question. The wrath of God abides on it. What follows upon this? The trial is viewed from another point. The world has declared that the Gospel is not righteous, that the system which our Lord has come to establish is not true. Up to this day the world is continually raising objections, trying to confuse Believers and, if possible, to defeat our most holy cause. But the Spirit of God, by His teaching, proves that the Gospel is full of righteousness and, by all His operations through the Word of God, He proves that the Gospel is holy, just, good and tends to make men pure, godly, peaceable and holy. By sanctifying men through the Gospel so that they lead gracious lives, the Holy Spirit proves that the Gospel is righteous!

This process grows more and more complete as time rolls on. Were not the world unrighteous, it would, long ago, have yielded to the holy message and its holy Messenger. But it will be forced to acknowledge the Truth one day. The Holy Spirit makes the world know that Christ is righteous by flashing into its face the fact that Christ has gonegone up to Glory, at the right hand of Godand this could not have been had He not been the Righteous One. When the world shall see Jesus enthroned, at the last, and all mankind shall behold the Son of Man on the clouds of Heaven, what conviction will seize on every mind! There will be no agnostics, then! Not a skeptic will be found in that day! Christ seen at the Fathers right hand will end all unbelief!

And then the Spirit of God shall make men see the judgment. Before the day actually comes, they shall perceive that since Christ has judged the devil; since Christ has cast him down from his high places and his power over the world is already broken, assuredly He will smite all that are in the dominion of Satan and will not allow one of them to escape. The cause of evil is judged and its case is desperate. Oh, how the Spirit of God will convict men at that last day when they hear the Judge say, Come, you blessed of My Father, or, Depart, you cursed, into everlasting fire. Brothers and Sisters, will you be convinced by the Holy Spirit, now, or will you wait till then? Shall it be the convincement of Grace or the conviction of wrath? The Spirit still bears witness with us who preach the Gospel will you yield to that Gospel and believe it, now? Or will you wait until the blaze of the last tremendous day? Which shall it be?

I think I hear you say, The Gospel is true. Why, then, do you not believe it? If you confess sin, why are you not washed from it? If there is righteousness, why do you not seek it? If there is judgment, why do you not ask to be so cleansed that you need not be afraid of it? Oh, Sirs, the most of men act as if they were born fools! If they were sick and we had a sure medicine for them, they would rush to us for it! If they were poor and we brought them gold, they would trample us down in their vehemence to snatch at wealth!

But when there is Christ to be had, the Divine remedy for sinChrist to be had as a perfect Righteousness, Christ to make them stand securely at the last dread daythey turn their backs upon the heavenly Gift! Oh, Spirit of God, win these madmen! Bring back these fools and make them sane and wise, for Christ Jesus sake! Amen.

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THE HOLY SPIRITTHE GREAT TEACHER   
NO. 50

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON SABBATH MORNING, NOVEMBER 18, 1855, BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT NEW PARK STREET CHAPEL, SOUTHWARK.

**Howbeit when He, the Spirit of Truth, has come, He will guide you into all Truth: for He will not speak of Himself; but whatever He hears, that will He speak: and He will show you things to come.**

THIS generation has gradually and almost imperceptibly, become, to a great extent, a godless generation. One of the diseases of the present generation of mankind is their secret but deep-seated godlessness by which they have so far departed from the knowledge of God. Science has discovered to us second causes. And therefore, many have too much forgotten the first Great Cause, the Author of Allthey have so far been able to pry into secrets that the great axiom of the existence of a God has been too much neglected. Even among professing Christians, while there is a great amount of religion, there is too little godlinessthere is much external formalism, but too little inward acknowledgment of Godtoo little living on God, living with God and relying upon God! Hence arises the sad fact that when you enter many of our places of worship, you will certainly hear the name of God mentionedbut except in the benediction, you would scarcely know there was a Trinity! In many places dedicated to Jehovah, the name of Jesus is too often kept in the background. The Holy Spirit is almost entirely neglected. And very little is said concerning His sacred influence. Even religious men in this age have become, to a large degree, godless. We sadly require more preaching regarding God more preaching of those things which look not so much at the creature to be saved, as at God, the Great One, to be praised! My firm conviction is that in proportion as we have more regard for the sacred Godhead the wondrous Trinity in Unityshall we see a greater display of Gods power and a more glorious manifestation of His might in our Churches. May God send us a Christ-exalting, Spirit-loving ministrymen who shall proclaim God, the Holy Spirit, in all His offices and shall extol God, the Savior, as the Author and Finisher of our faith! Men who shall not neglect that Great God, the Father of His people, who, before all worlds, elected us in Christ, His Son, justified us through His righteousness and will inevitably preserve us and gather us together in onein the consummation of all things at the Last Great Day.

Our text has regard to God, the Holy Spirit. Of Him we shall speak and Him, only, if His sweet influence shall rest upon us.   
The disciples had been instructed by Christ concerning certain elementary Doctrines, but Jesus did not teach His disciples more than what we should call the A B Cs of religion. He gives His reasons for this in the 12th verseI have yet many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now. His disciples were not possessors of the Spirit. They had the Spirit as far as the work of conversion was concerned, but not as to the matters of bright illumination, profound instruction, prophecy and Inspiration. Jesus says, I am now about to depart and when I go from you, I will send the Comforter unto you. You cannot bear these things, now. Howbeit, when He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all Truth. The same promise that He made to His Apostles, stands good to all His children! And in reviewing it, we shall take it as our portion and heritageand shall not consider ourselves intruders upon the manor of the Apostles, or upon their exclusive rights and prerogativesfor we conceive that Jesus says, even to us, When He, the Spirit of Truth is come, He will guide you into all Truth.   
Dwelling exclusively upon our text, we have five things to say. First of all, here is an attainment mentioneda knowledge of all Truth. Secondly, here is a difficulty suggestedwhich is that we need guidance into all Truth. Thirdly, here is a Person providedWhen He, the Spirit, shall come, He shall guide you into all Truth. Fourthly, here is a manner hinted atHe shall guide you into all Truth. Fifthly, here is a sign given as to the working of the Spiritwe may know whether He works by His guiding us into all Truthinto all of one thing. Not truths, but Truth.   
I. Here is AN ATTAINMENT MENTIONED, which is a knowledge of all Truth. We know that some conceive Doctrinal knowledge to be of very little importance and of no practical use. We do not think so. We believe the science of Christ Crucified and a judgment of the teachings of Scripture to be exceedingly valuable. We think it is right that the Christian ministry should not only be awakening, but instructing. Not merely awakening, but enlighteningthat it should appeal not only to the passions but to the understanding! We are far from thinking Doctrinal knowledge to be of secondary importance. We believe it to be one of the first things in the Christian lifeto know the Truth and then to practice it. We scarcely need, this morning, to tell you how desirable it is for us to be well taught in things of the Kingdom of God!

First of all, Nature itself, (when it has been sanctified by Divine Grace), gives us a strong desire to know all Truth. The natural man separates himself and intermeddles with all knowledge. God has put an instinct in him by which he is rendered unsatisfied if he cannot probe a mystery to its bottom. He can never be content until he can solve secrets. What we call, curiosity, is something given us of God impelling us to search into the knowledge of natural things. That curiosity, sanctified by the Spirit, is also brought to bear in matters of heavenly science and celestial wisdom. Bless the Lord, said David, O my Soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name! If there is a curiosity within us, it ought to be employed and developed in a search after the Truth of God. All that is within me, sanctified by the Spirit, should be developed, And, verily, the Christian feels an intense longing to bury his ignorance and receive wisdom. If he, when in his natural estate, panted for terrestrial knowledge, how much more ardent is the wish to unravel, if possible, the sacred mysteries of Gods Word? A true Christian is always intently reading and searching the Scripture that he may be able to certify himself as to its main and cardinal Truths. I do not think much of that man who does not wish to understand Doctrines. I cannot conceive him to be in a right position when he thinks it does not matter whether he believes a lie or the Truth of God, whether he is heretic or orthodox, whether he received the Word of God as it is written, or as it is diluted and misconstrued by man! Gods Word will always be, to a Christian, a source of great anxiety. A sacred instinct within will lead him to pry into it. He will seek to understand it. Oh, there are some who forget thismen who purposely abstain from mentioning what are called, High Doctrines, because they think if they should mention them, they would be dangerous! So they keep them back. Foolish men! They do not know anything of human naturefor if they did understand a grains worth of humanity, they would know that the hiding of these things compels men to search them out! From the fact that they do not mention them, they drive men to places where these and these, only, are preached. They say, If I preach election and predestination and these dark things, people will all go straight away and become Antinomians. I am not so sure if they were to be called Antinomians, it would hurt them muchbut hear me, oh, you ministers that conceal these Truths of Godthat is the way to make them Antinomians, by silencing these Doctrines! Curiosity is strongif you tell them they must not pluck the Truth, they will be sure to do it! But if you give it to them as you find it in Gods Word, they will not seek to wrest it. Enlightened men will have the Truth and if they see election in Scripture, they will say, it is there and I will find it out. If I cannot get it in one place, I will get it in another. The true Christian has an inward longing and anxiety after it. He is hungry and thirsty after the Word of Righteousness and he must and will feed on this Bread of Heaven, or at all hazards he will leave the husks which unsound Divines would offer him.   
Not only is this attainment to be desired because Nature teaches us so, but a knowledge of all Truth is very essential for our comfort. I believe that many persons have been distressed half their lives from the fact that they had not clear views of Truth. Many poor souls, for instance, under conviction, abide three or four times as long in sorrow of mind as they would require to do if they had someone to instruct them in the great matter of Justification. So there are Believers who are often troubling themselves about falling away. But if they knew in their soul the great consolation, that we are kept by the Grace of God, through faith, unto salvation, they would be no more troubled about it! So have I found some distressed about the unpardonable sin. But God instructs us in that Doctrine and shows us that no conscience that is really awakened can ever commit that sin! He shows us that we need never fear or tremble all that distress is for nothing! Depend on this, the more you know of Gods Truthall things else being equalthe more comfortable you will be as a Christian! Nothing can give a greater light on your path than a clear understanding of Divine things! It is a mingle-mangled Gospel too commonly preached which causes the downcast faces of Christians! Give me the congregation whose faces are bright with joy, let their eyes glisten at the sound of the Gospel, then will I believe that it is Gods own Words they are receiving! Instead thereof, you will often see melancholy congregations whose visages are not much different from the bitter countenance of poor creatures swallowing medicine because the Word spoken terrifies them by its legality, instead of comforting them by its Grace! We love a cheerful Gospel and we think all the Truth will tend to comfort the Christian!   
Comfort again? says another, always comfort! Ah, but there is another reason why we prize the Truth of Godbecause we believe that a true knowledge of all the Truth will keep us very much out of danger. No Doctrine is so calculated to preserve a man from sin as the Doctrine of the Grace of God! Those who have called it a licentious Doctrine did not know anything at all about it! Poor ignorant things, they little knew that their own vile stuff was the most licentious doctrine under Heaven. If they knew the Grace of God in Truth, they would soon see that there was no preservative from lying like a knowledge that we are elect of God from the foundation of the world! There is nothing like a belief in my eternal perseverance and the Immutability of my Fathers affection which can keep me near to Him from a motive of simple gratitude! Nothing makes a man so virtuous as the belief of the Truth of God. A lying doctrine will soon beget a lying practice. A man cannot have an erroneous belief without, by-and-by, having an erroneous life. I believe the one thing naturally begets the other. Keep near Gods Truth. Keep near His Wordkeep the head right and especially keep your heart right with regard to Truthand your feet will not go far astray!   
AgainI also hold that this attainment to the knowledge of all Truth is very desirable for the usefulness which it will give us in the world at large. We would not be selfishwe would always consider whether a thing will be beneficial to others. A knowledge of all Truth will make us very serviceable in this world. We shall be skillful physicians who know how to take the poor distressed soul aside, to put a finger on his eye and take the scale off for himthat Heavens light may comfort him! There will be no character, however perplexing may be its peculiar phase, but we shall be able to speak to it and comfort it. He who holds the Truth is usually the most useful man. As a good Presbyterian Brother said to me the other dayI know God has blessed you exceedingly in gathering in souls, but it is an extraordinary fact that nearly all the men I knowwith scarcely an exceptionwho have been made useful in gathering in souls, have held the great Doctrines of the Grace of God. Almost every man whom God has blessed to the building up of the Church in prosperity and around whom the people have ralliedhas been a man who has held firmly to Free Grace from first to last, through the finished salvation of Christ! Do you really think you need have errors in your Doctrine to make you useful? We have some who preach Calvinism during the first part of the sermon, but finish up with Arminianism because they think that will make them useful! Useful? Nonsense! That is all it is. A man, if he cannot be useful with the Truth, cannot be useful with an error! There is enough in the pure Doctrine of God without introducing heresies to preach to sinners. As far as I know, I never felt hampered or cramped in addressing the ungodly in my life. I can speak with as much fervency and yet not in the same style as those who hold the contrary views of Gods Truth. Those who hold Gods Word, never need add something untrue in speaking to men. The sturdy Truth of God touches every chord in every mans heart. If we can, by Gods Grace, put our hand inside a mans heart, we need nothing but that whole Truth to move him thoroughly and to stir him up! There is nothing like the real Truth of God and the whole Truth of God, to make a man useful.   
II. Now, againhere is a DIFFICULTY SUGGESTED, and that is that we require a Guide to conduct us into all Truth. The difficulty is that Truth is not so easy to discover. There is no man born in this world by nature who has the Truth in his heart. There is no creature that ever was fashioned, since the Fall, who has a knowledge of Truth innate and natural. It has been disputed by many philosophers whether there are such things as innate ideas at all. But it is of no use disputing as to whether there are any innate ideas of the Truth of God! There are none such. There are ideas of everything that is wrong and evil. But in usthat is, our fleshthere dwells no good thing. We are born in sin and shaped in iniquity. In sin did our mother conceive us. There is nothing good in us and no tendency to righteousness. Then, since we are not born with the Truth, we have the task of searching for it. If we are to be blest by being eminently useful as Christians, we must be well-instructed in matters of Revelation. But here is the difficultythat we cannot follow without a Guide the winding paths of Truth. Why is this?   
First, because of the very great intricacy of Truth, itselfthe Truth of God, itself, is no easy thing to discover. Those who fancy they know everything and constantly dogmatize with the spirit of, We are the men, and wisdom will die with us, of course see no difficulties whatever in the system they hold. But I believe the most earnest student of Scripture will find things in the Bible which puzzle him. However earnestly he reads it, he will see some mysteries too deep for him to understand. He will cry out, Truth! I cannot find you! I know not where you are, you are beyond me! I cannot fully view you. Truth is a path so narrow that two can scarcely walk together in it. We usually tread the narrow way in single filetwo men can seldom walk arm in arm in the Truth. We believe the same Truth in the main, but we cannot walk together in the pathit is too narrow. The way of Truth is very difficult. If you step an inch aside on the right, you are in a dangerous error. If you swerve a little to the left, you are equally in the mire. On the one hand, there is a huge precipice and on the other a deep morass. Unless you keep to the true line, to the breadth of a hair, you will go astray. Truth is a narrow path, indeed! It is a path the eagles eye has not seen and a depth the diver has not visited. It is like the veins of metal in a mineit is often of excessive thinness and, moreover, it runs not in one continued layer. Lose it once and you may dig for miles and not discover it again! The eye must perpetually watch the direction of the lode. Grains of Truth are like the grains of gold in the rivers of Australiathey must be shaken by the hand of patience and washed in the stream of honesty, or the fine gold will be mingled with sand! Truth is often mingled with error and it is hard to distinguish it. But we bless God, He is said, When the Spirit of Truth is come, He will guide you into all Truth

Another reason why we need a Guide is the jealousness of error. It busily steals upon us and if I may so describe our position, we are often like we were on Thursday night in that tremendous fog. Most of us were feeling for ourselves and wondering where on earth we were! We could scarcely see an inch before us. We came to a place where there were three turns. We thought we knew the old spot. There was the lamppost and now we must take a sharp turn to the left. But not so. We ought to have gone a little to the right! We have been so often to the same place that we think we know every flagstone and theres our friends shop over the way. It is dark, but we think we must be quite right and all the while we are quite wrong and find ourselves half-a-mile out of the way! So it is with matters of Truth. We think, surely this is the right path. And the voice of the Evil One whispers, That is the way, walk in it. You do so and you find, to your great dismay, that instead of the path of Truth, you have been walking in the paths of unrighteousness and erroneous doctrines. The way of life is a labyrinth. The grassiest paths and the most bewitching are the farthest away from right! The most enticing are those which are garnished with wrested Truths. I believe there is not a counterfeit coin in the world so much like a genuine one, as some errors are like the Truth. One is base metal, the other is true gold. Still, in externals they differ very little.   
We also need a Guide, because we are so prone to go astray. Why, if the path of Heaven were as straight as Bunyan pictures it, with no turning to the right hand or leftand no doubt it isstill, we are so prone to go astray that we should go to the right to the Mountains of Destruction, or to the left in the dark Wood of Desolation. David says, I have gone astray like a lost sheep. That means very oftenfor if a sheep is put into a field 20 times, if it does not get out 21 times, it will be because it cannot find a hole in the hedge! If Grace did not guide us, we would go astray though there were signposts all the way to Heaven! Let it be written, Miklat, Miklat, the way to refuge, we would turn aside and the avenger of blood would overtake us! If some guide did not, like the angels in Sodom, put his hand on our shoulders and cry, Escape! Escape for your life! Look not behind you! Stay not in all the plain, we would surely perish! These, then, are the reasons why we need a Guide.  
III. In the third place, here is A PERSON PROVIDED. This is none other than Godand this God is none other than a Person. This Person is, He, the Spirit, the Spirit of Truth. Not an influence or an emanation but actually a Person! When the Spirit of Truth is come, He shall guide you into all Truth. Now, we wish you to look at this Guide to consider how adapted He is to us.   
In the first place, He is Infallible. He knows everything and cannot lead us astray. If I pin my sleeve to another mans coat, he may lead me part of the way, rightly, but, by-and-by, he will go wrong, himself, and I shall be led astray with him. But if I give myself to the Holy Spirit and ask His guidance, there is no fear of my wandering!  
Again, we rejoice in this Spirit because He is ever-present. We fall into a difficulty sometimes. We say, Oh, if I could take this to my minister, he would explain it! But I live so far off and am not able to see him. That perplexes us and we turn the text round and round and cannot make anything out of it. We look at the commentators. We take down pious Thomas Scott and, as usual, he says nothing about it if it is a dark passage. Then we go to holy Matthew Henry and if it is an easy Scripture, he is sure to explain it. But if it is a text hard to be understood, it is likely enough, of course, left in its own gloom. And even Dr. Gill, himself, the most consistent of commentatorswhen he comes to a hard passagehe manifestly avoids it in some degree. But when we have no commentator or minister, we have still the Holy Spirit! And let me tell you a little secretwhenever you cannot understand a text, open your Bible, bend your knees and pray over that text. And if it does not split into atoms and open itself, try again! If prayer does not explain it, it is one of the things God did not intend you to know and you may be content to be ignorant of it! Prayer is the key that opens the cabinets of mystery! Prayer and faith are sacred picklocks that can open secrets and obtain great treasures! There is no college for holy education like that of the blessed Spirit, for He is an ever-present Tutor to whom we have only to bend the knees and He is at our sidethe great Expositor of Truth!   
But there is one thing about the suitability of this Guide which is remarkable. I do not know whether it has struck youthe Holy Spirit can guide us into a Truth. Now, man can guide us to a Truth, but it is only the Holy Spirit who can guide us into a Truth. When He, the Spirit of Truth, shall come, He shall guide you intomark that wordall Truth. Now, for instance, it is a long while before you can lead some people to the Doctrine of Election. But when you have made them see its correctness, you have not led them into it. You may show them that it is plainly stated in Scripture, but they will turn away and hate it. You take them to another great Truth but they have been brought up in a different fashion and though they cannot answer your arguments, they say, The man is right, perhaps, and they whisperbut so low that Conscience, itself, cannot hearbut it is so contrary to my prejudices that I cannot receive it. After you have led them to the Truth and they see it is true, how hard it is to lead them into it! There are many of my hearers who are brought to the Truth of their depravity but they are not brought into it and made to feel it! Some of you are brought to know the Truth that God keeps us from day to day. But you rarely get into it, so as to live in continual dependence upon God, the Holy Spirit, and draw fresh supplies from Him! The thing is to get inside it! A Christian should do with Truth as a snail does with his shelllive inside it, as well as carry it on his back and bear it perpetually about with him! The Holy Spirit, it is said, shall lead us into all Truth. You may be brought to a chamber where there is an abundance of gold and silver, but you will be no richer unless you effect an entrance. It is the Spirits work to unbar the two-leaved gates and bring us into a Truth, so that we may get inside it and, as dear old Rowland Hill said, Not only hold the Truth, but have the Truth hold us.  
IV. Fourthly, here is A METHOD SUGGESTEDHe shall guide you into all Truth. Now I must have an illustration. I must compare Truth to some cave or grotto that you have heard of, with wondrous stalactites hanging from the roof and others starting from the floor. A cavern, glittering with spar and abounding in marvels! Before entering the cavern, you inquire for a guide, who comes with his lighted flambeau. He conducts you down to a considerable depth and you find yourself in the midst of the cave. He leads you through different chambers. Here he points to a little stream rushing from amid the rocks and indicates its rise and progress. There he points to some peculiar rock and tells you its name. Then he takes you into a large natural hall, tells you how many persons once feasted in it, and so on. Truth is a grand series of caverns! It is our glory to have so great and wise a Conductor. Imagine that we are coming to the darkness of it. He is a Light of God shining in the midst of us to guide us. And by the Light, He shows us wondrous things. In three ways the Holy Spirit teaches usby suggestion, direction and illumination.   
First, he guides us into all Truth by suggesting it. There are thoughts that dwell in our minds that were not born there but which were exotics brought from Heaven and put there by the Spirit. It is not a fancy that angels whisper into our ears and that devils do the sameboth good and evil spirits hold converse with men. And some of us have known it. We have had strange thoughts which were not the offspring of our souls, but which came from angelic visitors. And direct temptations and evil insinuations have we had which were not brewed in our own souls, but which came from the poisonous cauldron of Hell! So the Spirit speaks in mens ears, sometimes in the darkness of the night. In ages gone by, He spoke in dreams and visions, but now He speaks by His Word. Have you not, at times, had unaccountably in the middle of your business, a thought concerning God and heavenly things and could not tell from where it came? Have you not been reading or studying the Scripture but a text came across your mind and you could not help it? Though you even put it down, it was like cork in water and would swim up again to the top of your mind! Well, that good thought was put there by the Spirit. He often guides His people into all Truth by suggesting, just as the guide in the grotto does with his flambeau. He does not say a word, perhaps, but He walks into a passage, Himself, and you follow Him. So the Spirit suggests a thought and your heart follows it up. Well can I remember the manner in which I learned the Doctrines of Grace in a single instant. Born, as all of us are, by nature, an Arminian, I still believed the old things I had heard continually from the pulpit and did not see the Grace of God. I remember sitting one day in the House of God and hearing a sermon as dry as possible and as worthless as all such sermons are, when a thought struck my mindhow came I to be converted? I prayed, thought I. Then I thought how came I to pray? I was induced to pray by reading the Scriptures. How came I to read the Scriptures? Why did I read them and what led me to them? And then, in a moment, I saw that God was at the bottom of all and that He was the Author of faith! And then the whole Doctrine opened up to me, from which, by Gods Grace, I have not departed.

But sometimes He leads us by direction. The guide points and says There, gentlemen, go along that particular path, that is the way. So the Spirit gives a direction and tendency to our thoughts. Not suggesting a new one, but letting a particular thought, when it starts, take such-andsuch a direction. Not so much putting a boat on the stream as steering it when it is there! When our thoughts are considering sacred things, He leads us into a more excellent channel from that in which we started. Time after time have you commenced a meditation on a certain Doctrine and, unaccountably, you were gradually led away into another. And then you saw how one Doctrine leaned on another, as is the case with the stones in the arch of a bridgeall hanging on the keystone of Jesus Christ, Crucified! You were brought to see these things, not by a new idea suggested, but by direction given to your thoughts!   
But perhaps the best way in which the Holy Spirit leads us into all Truth is by illumination. He illuminates the Bible. Now, have any of you an illuminated Bible at home? No, says one, I have a Morocco Bible. I have a Polyglot Bible. I have a Marginal Reference Bible. Ah, that is all very wellbut have you an illuminated Bible? Yes, I have a large family Bible with pictures in it. There is a picture of John the Baptist baptizing Christ by pouring water on His head and many other nonsensical things. But that is not what I meanhave you an illuminated Bible? Yes, I have a Bible with splendid engravings in it. Yes. I know you may have. But have you an illuminated Bible? I dont understand what you mean by an, illuminated Bible. Well, it is the Christian who has an illuminated Bible. He does not buy it originally illuminated, but when he reads it   
*A glory gilds the sacred page,   
Majestic like the sun!   
Which gives a light to every age,   
It gives, but borrows none.*   
There is nothing like reading an illuminated Bible! Beloved, you may read to all eternity and never learn anything by it unless it is illuminated by the Holy Spirit! And then the words shine forth like stars! The book seems made of gold leaf. Every single letter glitters like a diamond! Oh, it is a blessed thing to read an illuminated Bible lit up by the radiance of the Holy Spirit! Have you read the Bible and studied it, my Brothers and Sisters, and yet have your eyes been unenlightened? Go and say, O Lord, gild the Bible for me. I need an expounded Bible. Illuminate it! Shine upon it, for I cannot read it to profit unless You enlighten me. Blind men may read the Bible with their fingers, but blind souls cannot. We need a light to read the Bible by, there is no reading it in the dark. Thus the Holy Spirit leads us into all Truth, by suggesting ideas, by directing our thoughts and by illuminating the Scriptures when we read them!   
V. The last thing is AN EVIDENCE. The question arises, How may I know whether I am enlightened by the Spirits influence and led into all Truth? First, you may know the Spirits influence by its unityHe guides us into all Truth. Secondly, by its universalityHe guides us into all Truth.  
First, if you are judging a minister, whether he has the Holy Spirit in him or not, you may know him, in the first place, by the constant unity of his testimony. A man cannot be enlightened by the Holy Spirit who preaches yes and no. The Spirit never says one thing, at one time, and another thing at another time! There are, indeed, many good men who say both yes and no, but still their contrary testimonies are not both from God the Spirit, for God the Spirit cannot witness to black and white, to a lie and to the Truth of God! It has been always held as a first principle that Truth is one thing. But some persons say, I find one thing in one part of the Bible and another thing in another, and though it contradicts itself, must I believe it? All quite right, Brother, if it did contradict itself. But the fault is not in the wood, but in the carpenter! Many carpenters do not understand dove-tailing, so there are many preachers who do not understand dove-tailing. It is very nice work and it is not easily learnedit takes some apprenticeship to make all Doctrines square together. Some preachers preach very good Calvinism for half-an-hour and the next quarter-of-an hour Arminianism. If they are Calvinists, let them stick to Calvinism! If they are Arminians, let them stick to thatlet their preaching be all of one piece! Dont let them pile up things only to kick them all down again. Let us have one thing woven from the top, throughout, and let us not tear it! How did Solomon know the true mother of the child? Cut it in halves, he said. The woman who was not the mother did not care, as long as the other did not get the whole, and she consented. Ah, said the true mother, give her the living child. Let her have it, rather than cut it in halves. So the true child of God would say, I give it up, let my opponent conquer. I do not want to have the Truth cut in halves. I would rather be all wrong than have the Word altered to my taste! We do not want to have a divided Bible. No, we claim the whole living child or none at all! We may rest assured of this, that until we get rid of our linsey-woolsey doctrine and cease to sow mingled seed, we shall not have a blessing! An enlightened mind cannot believe a Gospel which denies itself. It must be one thing or the other. One thing cannot contradict another and yet it and its opposite be equally true! You may know the Spirits influence, then, by the unity of its testimony!   
And you may know it by its universality. The true child of God will not be led into some Truth but into all Truth. When first he starts, he will not know half the Truth. He will believe it, but not understand it. He will have the germ of it, but not the sum total in all its breadth and length. There is nothing like learning by experience. A man cannot set up for a theologian in a week. Certain Doctrines take years to develop themselves. Like the aloe that takes a hundred years to be dressed, there are some Truths that must lie long in the heart before they really come out and make themselves appear so that we can speak of them as that we know, and testify of that which we have seen. The Spirit will gradually lead us into all Truth. For instance, if it is true that Jesus Christ is to personally reign upon the earth for a thousand years, as I am inclined to believe it is, if I am under the Spirit, that will be more and more opened to me until I, with confidence, declare it. Some men begin very timidly. A man says, at first, I know we are justified by faith and have peace with God. But so many have cried out against Eternal Justification that I am afraid of it. But he is gradually enlightened and led to see that in the same hour when all his debts were paid, a full discharge was giventhat in the moment when his sin was cancelled, every elect soul was justified in Gods mindthough they were not justified in their own minds till afterwards. The Spirit shall lead you into all Truth.   
Now, what are the practical inferences from this great Doctrine? The first is with reference to the Christian who is afraid of his own ignorance. How many are there who are just enlightened and have tasted of heavenly things, who are afraid they are too ignorant to be saved? Beloved, God the Holy Spirit can teach anyone, however illiterate, however uninstructed! I have known some men who were almost idiots before conversion, but they afterwards had their faculties wonderfully developed! Some time ago there was a man who was so ignorant that he could not read and he never spoke anything like grammar in his life, unless by mistake. And moreover, he was considered to be what the people in his neighborhood called, daft. But when he was converted, the first thing he did was to pray. He stammered out a few words and in a little time his powers of speaking began to develop themselves! Then he thought he would like to read the Scriptures and, after long, long months of labor, he learned to read! And what was the next thing? He thought he could preachand he did preach a little in his own homely way, in his house. Then he thought, I must read a few more books. And so his mind expanded, until, I believe, he is at the present day a useful minister, settled in a country village, laboring for God! It needs but little intellect to be taught of God. If you feel your ignorance, do not despair! Go to the Spiritthe great Teacherand ask His sacred influence, and it shall come to pass that He shall guide you into all Truth.   
Another inference is thiswhenever any of our Brethren do not understand the Truth, let us take a hint as to the best way of dealing with them. Do not let us argue with them! I have heard many controversies, but never heard of any good from one of them! We have had controversies with certain men called Secularists and very strong arguments have been brought against them. But I believe that the Day of Judgment shall declare that a very small amount of good was ever done by contending with these men. Better leave them alonewhere there is no fuel, the fire goes out. And he that debates with them puts wood upon the fire. So with regard to Baptism. It is of no use to quarrel with our Paedo-Baptist friends! If we simply pray for them, that the God of Truth may lead them to see the true Doctrine, they will come to it far more easily than by discussions! Few men are taught by controversy, for   
*A man convinced against his will, is of the same opinion still.* Pray for them that the Spirit of Truth may lead them into all Truth. Do not be angry with your brother, but pray for him. Cry, Lord! open his eyes that he may behold wondrous things out of Your Law.   
Lastly, we speak to some of you who know nothing about the Spirit of Truth, nor about the Truth of God, itself. It may be that some of you are saying, We care not much which of you are right, we are happily indifferent to it. Ah, but, poor Sinner, if you knew the gift of God and who it was that spoke the Truth, you would not say, I care not for it! If you knew how essential the Truth is to your salvation, you would not talk so! If you knew that the Truth of God is that you are a worthless sinnerbut if you believe, then God, from all eternity, apart from all your merits, loved you! If you knew that He bought you with the Redeemers blood and justified you in the forum of Heavenand will, by-and-by, justify you in the forum of your conscience through the Holy Spirit by faith. If you knew that there is a Heaven for you beyond the chance of a failure, a crown for you, the luster of which can never be dimmed

then you would say, Indeed the Truth is precious to my soul! Why, my ungodly Hearers, these men of error want to take away the Truth which alone can save youthe only Gospel that can deliver you from Hell! They deny the great Truths of Free Grace, those fundamental Doctrines which alone can snatch a sinner from Hell! And even though you do not feel interest in them, now, I still would say you ought to desire to see them promoted.   
May God give you Grace to know the Truth in your hearts! May the Spirit guide you into all Truth! For if you do not know the Truth, here, remember there will be a sorrowful learning of it in the dark chambers of the pit of Hell where the only light shall be the flames of Hell! May you here know the Truth! And the Truth shall make you freeand if the Son shall make you free, you shall be free, indeed, for He says, I am the Way, the Truth, the Life. Believe on Jesus, you chief of sinners! Trust His love and mercy and you are saved, for God the Spirit gives faith and eternal life!

Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software.   
PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #2907 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE HOLY SPIRIT GLORIFYING CHRIST   
NO. 2907

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1904.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, APRIL 12, 1891.

**He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. John 16:14.**

THE needs of spiritual men are very great, but they cannot be greater than the power of the Divine Trinity is able to meet. We have one God Father, Son and Holy SpiritOne in Three and Three in One. And that blessed Trinity in Unity gives Himself to sinners that they may be saved. In the first place, every good thing that a sinner needs is in the Father. The prodigal son was wise when he said, I will arise and go to my father. Every good and perfect gift comes from God the Father, the first Person in the blessed Trinity, because every good gift and every perfect gift can only be found in Him. But the needy soul says, How shall I get to the Father? He is infinitely above me. How shall I reach up to Him? In order that you might obtain the blessings of Grace, God was in Christ Jesus, the second ever-blessed Person of the Sacred Trinity. Let me read you part of the verse that follows my textAll things that the Father has are Mine. So you see, everything is in the Father, first, and the Father puts all things into Christ. It pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell. Now you can get to Christ because He is Man as well as God. He is over all, God blessed forever, but He came into this world, was born of the Virgin Mary, lived a life of poverty, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried. He is the conduit conveying to us all blessings from the Father. In the Gospel of John we read, Of His fullness have we all received and grace for grace. Thus you see the Father with every good thing in Himself putting all fullness into the Mediator, the Man Christ Jesus who is also the Son of God.

Now I hear a poor soul say, But I cannot get to Christ. I am blind and lame. If I could get to Him, He would open my eyes, but I am so lame that I cannot run or even walk to Him. If I could get to Him, He would give me strength, but I lie as one dead. I cannot see Christ or tell where to find Him. Here comes in the work of the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the blessed Unity! It is His office to take of the things of Christ and show them unto saints and sinners, too. We cannot see them, but we shall see them quickly enough when He shows them to us! Our sin puts a veil between us and Christ. The Holy Spirit comes and takes the veil away from our heart and then we see Christ. It is the Holy Spirits office to come between us and Christ, to lead us to Christ, even as the Son of God comes between us and the Father, to lead us to the Father so that we have the whole Trinity uniting to save a sinnerthe Triune God bowing down out of Heaven for the salvation of rebellious men! Every time we dismiss you from this House of Prayer, we pronounce upon you the blessing of the Sacred TrinityMay the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you! And you need all that to make a sinner into a saint and to keep a saint from going back to being a sinner again! The whole blessed GodheadFather, Son and Holy Spiritmust work upon every soul that is to be saved!

See how Divinely they work togetherhow the Father glorifies the Son, how the Holy Spirit glorifies Jesus, how both the Holy Spirit and the Lord Jesus glorify the Father! These Three are One, sweetly uniting in the salvation of the chosen seed.

Tonight our work is to speak of the Holy Spirit. Oh, what a blessed Person He is! He is not merely a sacred influence, but a Divine Person very God of very God. He is the Spirit of holiness to be reverenced, to be spoken of with delight, yet with trembling, for, remember, there is a sin against the Holy Spirit. A word spoken against the Son of Man may be forgiven, but blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (whatever that may be, I know not) is put down as a sin beyond the line of Divine Forgiveness! Therefore reverence, honor and worship God the Holy Spirit, in whom lies the only hope that any of us can ever have of seeing Jesus and so of seeing God the Father!

First, tonight, I shall try to speak of what the Holy Spirit does. He will receive of Mine and show it to you*.* Secondly I shall seek to set forth what the Holy Spirit aims at. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. And, thirdly, I shall explain how in both these things He acts as the Comforter, for we read in the seventh verse, our Savior say, If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you, and it is of the Comforter that He says, He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.

I. First we are to consider WHAT THE HOLY SPIRIT DOES. Jesus says, He will receive of Mine and show it to you.   
The Holy Spirit, then, deals with the things of Christ. How I wish that all Christs ministers would imitate the Holy Spirit in this respect! When you are dealing with the things of Christ, you are on Holy Spirit ground you are following the track of the Holy Spirit. Does the Holy Spirit deal with science? What is science? Another name for the ignorance of men. Does the Holy Spirit deal with politics? What are politics? Another name for every man getting as much as he can out of the nation. Does the Holy Spirit deal with these things? No, my Brothers, He will receive of Mine. O my Brother, the Holy Spirit will leave you if you go gadding about after these insignificant trifles! He will leave you if you aim at magnifying yourself, your wisdom and your plans, for the Holy Spirit is taken up with the things of Christ! He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. I like what Mr. Wesley said to his preachers. Leave other things alone, he said, you are called to win souls. So I believe it is with all true preachers. We may leave other things alone. The Holy Spirit, who is our Teacher, will acknowledge and bless us if we keep to His line of things. O preacher of the Gospel, what can you receive like the things of Christ? And what can you talk of so precious to the souls of men as the things of Christ? Therefore follow the Holy Spirit in dealing with the things of Christ.   
Next, the Holy Spirit deals with feeble men. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. To you. He is not above dealing with simple minds. He comes to those who have no training, no education and He takes the things of Christ and shows them to such minds. The greatest mind of man that was ever created was a poor puny thing compared with the infinite mind of God! We may boast about the great capacity of the human intellect, but what a narrow and contracted thing it is at its utmost width! So, for the Holy Spirit to come and teach the little mind of man is a great condescension. But we see the great condescension of the Holy Spirit even more when we read, Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called. And when we hear the Savior say, I thank You, O Father, Lord of Heaven and earth, because You have hid these things from the wise and prudent, and has revealed them unto babes. The Holy Spirit takes of the things of Christ and shows them to those who are babes compared with the wise men of this world! The Lord Jesus might have selected princes to be His Apostles. He might have gathered together 12 of the greatest kings of the earth, or at least 12 senators from Romebut he did not He took fishermen and men belonging to that class to be the pioneers of His Kingdom! And God the Holy Spirit takes of the things of Christ, high and sublime as they are, and shows them to men like these Apostles weremen ready to follow where the Lord led them and to learn what the Lord taught them.   
If you think of the condescension of the Holy Spirit in taking of the things of Christ and showing them to us, you will not talk any more about coming down to the level of children when you talk to them. I remember a young man who was a great fool, but did not know it and, therefore, was all the greater fool. Once, speaking to children, he said, My dear children, it takes a great deal to bring a great mind down to your capacities. You cannot show me a word of Christ of that kind! Where does the Holy Spirit ever talk about its being a great come-down for Him to teach children, or to teach us? No, no! He glorifies Christ by taking of His things and showing them to us, even such poor ignorant scholars as we are.   
If I understand what is meant here, I think that it means, first, that the Holy Spirit helps us to understand the words of Christ. If we will study the teaching of the Savior, it must be with the Holy Spirit as the Light of God to guide us. He will show us what Christ meant by the words He uttered. We shall not lose ourselves in the Saviors verbiage, but we shall get at the inner meaning of Christs mind and be instructed therein, for the Lord Jesus says, He will receive of Mine and show it to you. A sermon of Christeven a single word of Christset in the Light of the Holy Spirit shines like a diamond! No, like a fixed star, with light that is never dim! Happy men and happy women who read the words of Christ in the Light shed upon them by the Holy Spirit! But I do not think that this is all that the text means.

It means thisNot only shall He reveal My words, but My things, for Christ says, All things that the Father has are Mine: therefore said I that He shall take of Mine, and shall show it to you.   
The Holy Spirit takes the Nature of Christ and shows it to us. It is easy to say, I believe Him to be God and Man, but the point is to apprehend that He is God and, therefore, able to save and even to work impossibilities. And to believe that He is Man and, therefore, feels for you, sympathizes with you and, therefore, is a Brother born to help you in your adversities. May the Holy Spirit make you see the God-Man tonight! May He show you the Humanity and the Deity of Christ as they are most blessedly united in His adorable Personand you will be greatly comforted thereby.   
The Holy Spirit shows to us the offices of Christ. He is Prophet, Priest, King. Especially to you, Sinner, Christ is a Savior. Now, if you know that He takes up the work of saving sinners and that it is His business to save men, why then, dear Friend, surely you will have confidence in Him and not be afraid to come to Him! If I wanted my shoes mended, I would not take my hat off when I went into a cobblers shop and say, Please excuse me. May I beg you to be so good as to mend my shoes? No, it is his trade! It is his business. He is glad to see me. What do you need, Sir? he asks and he is glad for the work. And when Christ puts over His door, Savior, I, needing to be saved, go to Him, for I believe that He knows His calling and that He can carry it out and that He will be glad to see meand that I shall not be more glad to be saved than He will be to save me! I want you to catch that idea. If the Holy Spirit will show you that, it will bring you very near to joy and peace this very night!   
May the Holy Spirit also show you Christs engagements! He has come into the world engaged to save sinners. He pledged Himself to the Father to bring many sons and daughters to Glory and He must do it. He has bound Himself to His Father, as the Surety of the Covenant, that He will bring sinners into reconciliation with God. May the Holy Spirit show that fact to youand right gladly you will leap into the Saviors arms!   
It is very sweet when the Holy Spirit shows us the love of Christhow intensely He loves men! How He loved them of old, for His delights were with the sons of mennot because He had redeemed them, but He redeemed them because He loved them and delighted in them! Christ has had an eternal love to His people   
*His heart is made of tenderness,   
His heart melts with love.*   
It is His Heaven to bring men to Heaven! It is His Glory to bring sons and daughters to Glory! He is never so happy as when He is receiving sinners. And if the Holy Spirit will show you the depth and the height, the length and the breadth of the love of Christ to sinners, it will go a long way towards bringing all who are in this house, tonight, to accept the Savior.   
And when the Holy Spirit shows you the mercy of Christhow willingly He forgives, how He passes by iniquity, transgression and sinhow He casts your sins into the sea, throws them behind Gods back, puts them away foreverah, when you see this, then your hearts will be won to Him!   
Specially I would desire the Holy Spirit to show you the blood of Christ. A Spirit-taught view of the blood of Christ is the most wonderful sight that ever weeping eyes beheld! There is your sin, your wicked, horrible, damnable sinbut Christ comes into the world and takes the sin and suffers in your place! And the blood of such an One as He, perfect Man and Infinite Godsuch blood as was poured out on Calvarys treemust take away sin! Oh, for a sight of it! If any of you are now despairing and the Holy Spirit will take of the blood of Christ and show it to you, despair will have no place in you any longer! It will be gone, for the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin, and He that believes in Him is forgiven all His iniquities!   
And if the Holy Spirit will also take of the prayers of Christ and show them to you, what a sight you will have! Christ on earth, praying till He gets into a bloody sweat! Christ in Heaven, praying with all His glorious vestments on, accepted by the Father, glorified at the Fathers right hand and making intercession for transgressorpraying for you, praying for all who come to God by Him and able, therefore, to save them to the uttermost! This is the sight you will have! A knowledge of the intercession of Christ for guilty men is enough to make despair flee away once and for all! I can only tell you these things, but if the Holy Spirit will take of them and show them to you, oh, Beloved, you will have joy and peace tonight through believing!   
One thing I must add, however, and then I will leave this point upon which we could dilate for six months. I want you to remember that whatever the Holy Spirit shows you, you may have. Do you see that? He takes of the things of Christ and shows them to us. But why? Not as a boy at school does to one of his companions when he is teasing him. I remember often seeing it done. He pulls out of his pocket a beautiful apple and shows it to his schoolmate. There, he says, do you see that apple? Is he going to say, Now I am going to give you a piece of it? No, not he! He only shows him the apple to tantalize him. Now, it would be blasphemy to imagine that the Holy Spirit would show you the things of Christ and then say, You cannot have them. No, whatever He shows you, you may have! Whatever you see in Christ, you may have! Whatever the Holy Spirit makes you to see in the Person and work of the Lord Jesus, you may have it! And He shows it to you on purpose that you may have it, for He is no Tantalus to mock us with the sight of a blessing beyond our reach. He waits to bless us. Lay that thought up in your heartit may help you some day, if not now. You remember what God said to Jacob, The land where you lie, to you will I give it. If you find any promise in this Book and you dare to lie down upon it, it is yours! If you can just lie down and rest on it, it is yoursfor it was not put there for you to rest on it without its being fulfilled to you! Only stretch yourself on any Covenant blessing and it is yours forever. God help us to do so!   
II. But now, secondly, and very briefly, let us consider WHAT THE HOLY SPIRIT AIMS AT. Well, He aims at thisJesus says, He shall glorify Me. When He shows us the things of Christ, His objective is to glorify Christ. The Holy Spirits objective is to make Christ appear to be great and glorious to you and to me. The Lord Jesus Christ is infinitely glorious and even the Holy Spirit cannot make Him glorious except to our apprehensionbut His desire is that we may see and know more of Christthat we may honor Him more and glorify Him more.   
Well, how does the Holy Spirit go about this work? In this simple way, by showing us the things of Christ. Is not this a blessedly simple fact that when even the Holy Spirit intends to glorify Christ, all that He does is to show us Christ? Well, but does He not put fine words together and weave a spell of eloquence? No. He simply shows us Christ. Now, if you wanted to praise Jesus Christ tonight, what would you have to do? Why, you would only have to speak of Him as He isholy, blessed, glorious! You would show Him, as it were, in order to praise Him, for there is no glorifying Christ except by making Him to be seen. Then He has the Glory that rightly belongs to Him. No words are needed, no descriptions are needed. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.   
And is it not strange that Christ should be glorified by His being shown to you? To you, my dear Friend! Perhaps you are saying, I am a nobody. Yes, but Christ is glorified by being shown to you! Oh, but I am very poor, very illiterate and besides, very wicked! Yes, but Christ is glorified by being shown to you! Now a great king or a great queen would not be rendered much more illustrious by being shown to a little Sunday school girl, or exhibited to a crossing-sweeper boy. At least they would not think sobut Christ does not act as an earthly monarch might. He reckons it to be His Glory for the poorest pair of eyes that ever wept to look by faith upon Him. He reckons it to be His greatest honor for the poorest man, the poorest woman, or the poorest child that ever lived to see Him in the Light in which the Holy Spirit sets Him! Is not this a blessed Truth of God?   
I put it very simply and briefly. The Holy Spirit, you see, glorifies Christ by showing Him to sinners. Therefore, if you want to glorify Christ, do the same! Do not go and write a ponderous book and put fine words together. Tell sinners, in simple language, what Christ is. I cannot praise Him, says one. You do not need to praise Him. Say what He is. If a man says to me, Show me the sun, do I say, Well, you must wait till I strike a match and light a candleand then I will show you the sun? That would be ridiculous, would it not? And for our candles to be held up to show Christ is absurd. Tell what He is. Tell what He is to you. Tell what He did for you. Tell what He did for sinners. That is all. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.   
I will not say more on this point except that if any of us are to glorify Christ, we must talk much of Him. We must tell what the Holy Spirit has told us and we must pray the Holy Spirit to bless to the minds of men the Truths of God we speak by enabling them to see Christ as the Spirit reveals Him.   
III. But now, thirdly, in both of these thingsshowing to us the things of Christ and glorifying ChristTHE HOLY SPIRIT IS A COMFORTER. Gracious Spirit, be a Comforter now to some poor struggling ones in the Tabernacle by showing them the things of Christ and by glorifying Him in their salvation!   
First, in showing to men the things of Christ, the Holy Spirit is a Comforter. There is no comfort like a sight of Christ. Sinner, your only comfort must lie in your Savior, in His precious blood and in His Resurrection from the dead. Look that way, man! If you look inside, you will never find any comfort there. Look where the Holy Spirit looks. He will receive of Mine and show it to you. When a thing is shown to you, it is meant for you to look at it. If you want real comfort, I will tell you where to look, namely, to the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Oh, you say, but I am a wretched sinner! I know you are. You are a great deal worse than you think you are. Oh, but I think myself the worst that ever lived. No, you are worse than that! You do not know half your depravity. You are worse than you ever dreamed you were! But that is not where to look for comfort. I am brutish, one says. I am proud. I am self-righteous. I am envious. I have everything in me that is bad, Sir, and if I have a little bit that is good, sometimes, it is gone before I can see it. I am just lost, ruined and undone! That is quite truebut I never told you to look there. Your comfort lies in this, He will receive of Minethat is, of Christsand shall show it to you. Your hope of transformation, of gaining a new character altogether, of eternal life, lies in Christ who quickens the dead and makes all things new! Look away from self and look to Christ, for He alone can save you!

A sight of Christ is the destruction of despair. Oh, but the devil tells me that I shall be cast into Hell! There is no hope for me. What does it matter what the devil tells you? He was a liar from the beginning. Let him say what he likes, but if you will look away to Christ, that will be the end of the devils power over you! If the Holy Spirit shows you what Christ came to do on the Cross and what He is doing on His throne in Heaven, that will be the end of these troublous thoughts from Satan and you will be comforted.   
Dear child of God, are you in sorrow tonight? May the Holy Spirit take of the things of Christ and show them to you! That is the end to sorrow when you see Jesus, for sorrow, itself, is so sweetly sanctified by the companionship of Christ which it brings you that you will be glad to drink of His cup and to be baptized with His Baptism!   
Are you in need tonight, without even a place to lay your head? So, too, was He! The Son of Man has not where to lay His head. Go to Him with your troubles. He will help you to bear your poverty. He will help you to get out of it for He is able to help you in temporal trials as well as in spiritual ones. Therefore go to Christ! All power is given unto Him in Heaven and in earth. Nothing is too hard for the Lord. Go your way to Himand a sight of Him will give you comfort.   
Are you persecuted? Well, a sight of the thorn-crowned brow will take the thorn out of persecution. Are you very, very low? I think that you have all heard the story I am about to tell you, but some of you have, perhaps, forgotten it. Many years ago when this great congregation first met in the Surrey Music Hall and the terrible tragedy occurredwhen many persons were either killed or wounded in the panicI did my best to hold the people together till I heard that some were dead. And then I broke down like a man stunned and for a fortnight or so I had little reason left. I felt so broken in heart that I thought that I would never be able to face a congregation again. And I went down to a friends house, a few miles away, to be very quiet and still. I was walking round his garden and I well remember the spot and even the time when this passage came to me, Him has God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Savior. And this thought came into my mind at once, You are only a soldier in the great Kings army and you may die in a ditch. But it does not matter what becomes of you as long as your King is exalted. HeHE is glorious! God has highly exalted Him. You have heard of the old French soldiers when they lay dying. If the emperor came by when they were ready to expire, they would raise themselves up and give one more cheer for their beloved leader. Viva lEmpereur! would be their dying words. And so I thought, He is exalted. What does it matters about me?  
And in a moment my reason was perfectly restored! I was as clear as possible. I went into the house, had family prayer and came back to preach to my congregation on the following Sabbathrestored only by having looked to Jesus and having seen that He was glorious! If He is to the front, what does it matter what happens to us? Rank on rank we will die in the battle if He wins the victory! Only let the Man on the White Horse winLet the King who died for us and washed us in His precious blood be glorifiedand it is enough for us!   
But now, lastly, when Christ is glorified in the heart, He acts as a Comforter, too. I believe, Brothers and Sisters, that we would not have half the trouble that we have if we thought more of Christ. The fact is that we think so much of ourselves that we get troubled. But someone says, But I have so many troubles. Why should you not have a great many troubles? Who are you that you should not have troubles? Oh, but I have had loss after loss which you do not know of! Very likely, dear Friend, I do not know of your losses, but is it any wonder that you should have them? Oh, says one, I seem to be kicked about like a football. Why should you not be? What are you? Oh, said one poor penitent to me the other night, for me to come to Christ, Sir, after my past life, seems so mean. I said, Yes, so it is. But then, you are mean. It was a mean business of the prodigal son to come home and eat his fathers bread and the fatted calf after he had spent his substance in riotous living. It was a mean thing, was it not? But then, the father did not think it mean! He clasped him to his bosom and welcomed him home. Come along, you mean sinners, you that have served the devil and now want to run away from him! Steal away from Satan at once, for my Lord is ready to receive you! You have no idea how willing He is to welcome you! He is so ready to forgive that you have not yet guessed how much sin He can forgive! All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men. Up to your necks in filth, in your very hearts saturated with the foulest iniquityyet, if you come to Christ He will wash you whiter than snow! Come now, and let us reason together, says the Lord: though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool. Come along and try my Lord!   
Have exalted ideas of Christ! Oh, if a man will but have great thoughts of Christ, he shall then find his troubles lessening and his sins disappearing! I see you have been putting Christ on a wrong scale altogether! Perhaps even you people of God have not thought of Christ as you ought to do. I have heard of a certain commander who had led his troops into a rather difficult position. He knew what he was doing, but the soldiers did not all knowand there would be a battle in the morning. So he thought that he would go round from tent to tent and listen to what the soldiers said. He listened and there was one of them saying to his fellows, See what a mess we are in now! Do you see, we have only so many cavalry, and so many infantry, and we have only a small quantity of artillery. And on the other side there are so many thousands against us! So strong, so mighty, that we shall be cut to pieces in the morning. And the general drew aside the canvas, and there they saw him standing and he said, How many do you count me for? He had won every battle that he had ever engaged in! He was the conqueror of conquerors. How many do you count me for?   
O Souls, you have never counted Christ for what He is! You have put down your sins, but you have never counted what kind of a Christ He is who has come to save you! Rather do like Luther, who said that when the devil came to him, he brought him a long sheet containing a list of his sins, or of a great number of them and Luther said to him, Is that all? No, said the devil. Well go and fetch some more, then. Away went Satan to bring him another long list, as long as your arm. Said Luther, Is that all? Oh, no, said the devil, I have yet more. Well go and bring them all, said Luther. Fetch them all out, the whole list of them. Then it was a very long black list. I think that I have heard that it would have gone round the world twice. I know that mine would. Well, what did Luther say when he saw them all? He said, Write at the bottom of them, The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanses us from all sin! It does not matter how long the list is when you write those blessed words at the end of it! Then the sins are all gone!   
Did you ever take up from your table a bill for a large sum? You felt a kind of flush coming over your face. You looked down the list. It was a rather long list of items, perhaps from a lawyer or a builder. But when you looked at it, you saw that there was a penny stamp at the bottom and that the account was receipted. Oh, you said, I do not care how long it is, for it is all paid. So, though your sins are many, if you have a receipt at the bottomif you have trusted Jesusyour sins are all gone, drowned in the Red Sea of your Saviors blood and Christ is glorified in Your salvation! May God the Holy Spirit bring every unsaved one here tonight to repentance and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord bless every one of you, for His names sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 16.**

Verse 1 *.* These things have I spoken unto you, that you should not be offended. The temptation is when Christ is despised and rejected for our hearts to begin to sink and our faith to fail. Therefore did Christ warn His disciples that they should not be offended.

2. They shall put you out of the synagogues: yes, the time comes that whoever kills you will think that he does God service. The best of men are but men at the best and they are very apt to fail when they find persecution hot against themespecially when even religious men of a certain kind count it to be a religious duty to persecute the people of God.

3. And these things will they do unto you because they have not known the Father, nor Me. This verse reminds us of our Lords prayer on the Cross, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. Persecution of Gods people usually arises from ignorance of God the Father and God the Son.

4. But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, you may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning because I was with you. I was your Protector. By My Presence I so sustained your hearts that it did not matter what trouble you fell into. But now I am going away and, therefore, I give you this warning.

5, 6. But now I go My way to Him that sent Me and none of you asks Me, Where are You going? But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow has filled your hearts. We sometimes endure a needless sorrow for which the asking of a single question might remove it. Our Lord says to His disciples, If you knew where I was going and understood My motive in going, your sorrow at My departure would be relieved.

7. Nevertheless I tell you the truth It is expedient for you that I go away. It is for your profit to lose My Presence, precious as that has been to you.

7. For if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you. The word, Comforter, might just as well have been translated, Advocate. The Holy Spirit is that Divine Advocate who pleads the cause of God in us and for usand so comforts us. He it is who is now with us. If Jesus Christ were still upon earth in the flesh, He could only be in one place at one time. If He were in this assembly, He could not also be in Jerusalem or in New York. But the Comforter can be in all the gatherings of the Lords people and with each individual Believer, the whole world over.

8-12. And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment of sin, because they believe not on Me; of righteousness, because I go to My Father, and you see Me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. I have yet many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now. Teachers, learn wisdom from Christ! He did not try to teach His disciples everything at once, but, by teaching them one Truth of God, He prepared them for another Truth. Let us do the same with those whom we try to teach. Let us dispense to them the simpler Truths of God, first, and afterwards those that are deeper and more mysterious.

13, 14. However when He the Spirit of Truth is come, He will guide you into all Truth: for He shall not speak of Himself, but whatever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. That spirit which does not glorify Christ is not the Spirit of God! Hereby shall you discern between the spirit of error and the Spirit of Truth!

15, 16. All things that the Father has are Mine: therefore said I, that He shall take of Mine, and shall show it to you. A little while, and you shall not see Me: and again a little while, and you shall see Me, because I go to the Father. This is what our whole life isa little while. But in that little while there are little whiles of sadness and little whiles of gladnesslittle whiles in which we have Christ with us and little whiles in which we see Him, but find Him not. Blessed be God, we are going away from the land of these changing little whiles up to the Place where the sun shines in its strength forever and ever!

17, 18. Then said some of His disciples among themselves, What is this that He says unto us, A little while, and you shall not see Me: and, again, a little while, and you shall see Me: and, Because I go to the Father? They said therefore, What is this that He says, A little while? We cannot tell what He says. Sometimes, when you are reading the Bible, you will come across a text of which you will say to yourselves, What is this? We cannot tell what He says. But do not give up reading the Bible because you cannot understand it! There is a great deal that a father says which his child cannot comprehend, yet it is a part of the childs education to be with his father and to hear some things that he does not, at first, understand but, by-and-by, it all becomes clear. So, Believer, what you know not now you shall know hereafter.

19. Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask Him. They did not ask Him, but they desired to do soand a desire is a prayer. Where our blessed Master is present, the very desires of His people are prayers, even though their lips remain closed.

19, 20. And said unto them, Do you enquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and you shall not see Me: and again, a little while, and you shall see Me? Verily, verily, I say unto you, That you shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and you shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. Oh, what a blessed promise!

21-24. A woman when she is in travail has sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembers no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. And you now, therefore, have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man takes from you. And in that day you shall ask Me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatever you shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it to you. Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may be full. They had asked very little and they had never asked even that little in Christs nameand there are but few Christians who do so even now. They ask for Christs sake, which is a good plea, but to ask in Christs name is still better! When you feel conscious that you have Christs authority to use His name, you can put the Kings own signature at the bottom of your petitions! There are some prayers to which a man dares not set Christs seal, but when the prayer is such that Christ Himself might have offered it, then we may present it in His name and we may be certain that we shall receive what we have asked.

25-28. These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time comes when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall show you plainly of the Father. At that day you shall ask in My name. And I say not unto you that I will pray the Father for you, for the Father Himself loves you because you have loved Me and have believed that I came from God. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father. Here are four unfathomable depthsI came forth from the Fatherthere is Christs eternal PreExistence. And am come into the worldthere is His Incarnation. Again, I leave the world,there is His death, Resurrection and Ascension into the Glory of God. And go to the Fatherthere is His exaltation to the Fathers right hand.

29. His disciples said unto Him, Lo, now You speak plainly, and speak no proverb. Did you ever, when reading the Bible, come across a text that was opened up to you so sweetly that you cried out just as these disciples did Lo, now You speak plainly, and speak no proverb?

30, 31. Now are we sure that You know all things, and need not that any man should ask You: by this we believe that You came forth from God. Jesus answered them, Do you now believe? Listen you who imagine that you are so strong in faith and every Grace, that you think you are almost perfectDo you now believe?

32. Behold, the hour comes, yes, is now come, that you shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone. Ah, me! These were the men who said they believed in Him, yet, in His time of trial they fled like cowardly unbelievers! God help us and sustain us, or we shall do as they did!

32, 33. And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. These things I have spoken unto you that in Me you might have peace. In the world you shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

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THE SPIRITS OFFICE TOWARDS DISCIPLES   
NO. 3062

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 1907.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, APRIL 23, 1865.

*He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you. John 16:14.*

[Other Sermons by Mr. Spurgeon upon this passage are as follows#465, Volume 8 THE HOLY SPIRIT GLORIFYING CHRIST; #2213, Volume 37HONEY IN THE MOUTH; #2382, Volume 40THE HOLY SPIRITS CHIEF OFFICE.  
An Exposition of John 16:1-22, was published with #3052, Volume 53 CHRISTS LONELINESS AND OURS   
Read/download the entire sermons, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.]

MANY persons are anxiously asking the question, Are we partakers of the Holy Spirit? With enlarged anxiety, they reason thus, We have felt certain inward emotions. There has been in us, we trust, a change of life. Eager are our desires for God and His Grace. Do these come of the Spirit of God? When we find a suggestion which appears to be holy in our soul, does it come from Him? When we are at any time filled with earnestness and pray, or our soul has peculiar delight in considering Divine things, may we say with truth that we are under the operation of the Holy Spirit? I do not intend to go thoroughly into the resolution of these scruplesthat would be too wide a subject for a short evenings discoursebut there is one point which may often relieve your perplexities. It appears from the text that it is the work and office and custom of the Holy Spirit to glorify Christ. If, therefore, with much strength and fervor in your soul, you glorify Him, you may trust that it comes from the Spirit of God. But if there is anything in you which is derogatory to the Character or Person or Glory of the Lord Jesus, it may either come from Satan or from your own corrupt mind. But from the Spirit of God it never came and it would be blasphemy to impute it to Him. Whatever you feel which lifts Christ on high in your soul comes of the Spiritbut whatever there may be which exalts self or anything else in the place of Christno matter from where it comesthe Holy Spirit has nothing to do with it!

Let us then just handle this point. The Holy Spirit glorifies Christ in His people. How does He do it and how far may I judge that He is at work in me?

One way in which the Holy Spirit glorifies Christ is thisHe gives us more and more debasing views of ourselves. There are two Gods, as it were. One the true, the other the false. Self first mounts the throne in our heart and the higher the throne of self is exalted, the lower must Christ go. Much of self, little of the Savior. Exalted views of self, selfpower, or self-righteousness, and then there are sure to be low views of Christ. But when self goes down, then Christ at once rises. It may be said of self, as John the Baptist once said of Christ and himself, He must increase, but I must decrease. If you have had shallow views of your own natural depravity, then you have had very shallow thoughts of Christ. If you think sin to be delightful, if Gethsemane, Golgotha and Calvary seem to you to be names without weight or meaning. If you have never groaned under sin, I do not wonder that you think little of Christs groans, griefs and bloody sweat. But when you come to know yourself as verily lost and undone, then you will prize your Deliverer! When the dread word, lost, has seemed to fall like a death knell upon your ears, then the tidings that the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost will be as sweet to you as the Christmas carol of the angels, when they sang, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. If you feel the disease, you will value the Physician. If you know your own emptiness, you will prize Christs fullness. But if you reject the teaching of the Holy Spirit which shows you your utter helplessness and worthlessness, in so doing you have rejected Christ and put far from you that Savior who alone came to save sinners! It is, then, a most precious thing when we begin to sink lower and lower in our own estimation. At the commencement of spiritual life we believe that we are nothing. As we advance, we find that we are less than nothing. May the Holy Spirit so work in you! Some of you are, perhaps, depending and thinking that you are not children of God, or else you would not be so cast down as you are. I pray you to understand this matter aright. Instead of having any reason for despondency, you will find a subject for joy, for I am sure that the Spirit is honoring Christ when He is lowering you in your own estimation.

Still more to the point, when the Holy Spirit really works in the heart of man, He honors Christ in every respect. He honors the Person of Christ. Those who think but little of His Deity are not taught of the Spirit of God. No man is taught by the Holy Spirit to regard the only-begotten Son of the Father as a secondary God, for the Holy Spirit teaches us upon this wise, When He brings in the First-Begotten into the world, He says, And let all the angels of God worship Him. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The Spirit always teaches concerning Christ that He is God over all, blessed forever. Some have had lowering views of His Humanity. Every now and then we hear dark hints about the Human Nature of our Lord Jesus Christ, His peccability and so on. But this never comes from the Spirit of God. Both the Deity and the Humanity of Christ receive honor in the Christians soul when the Spirit comes there with the Light of God

*Jesus is worthy to receive   
Honor and power Divine.*

That very Man who did hang upon Calvary we now adore. He is exalted far above all principalities and powers. All teaching which honors Christ in His Person is of the Spirit. And that which dishonors Him should be branded with its evil authorship.

The Spirit also glorifies Christ in His work. Have you ever seen the finished work of Christ? He came into the world to save men and He did save them. He did not make a bridge over which they might possibly get across, but He carried them across the bridge. He did not so far accomplish the work of redemption that, by their own exertions, some persons might climb to Heaven, but He, Himself, entered into the heavenly places and took possession, representatively, of the Throne of God for all His people who were in Him. The salvation of the elect, so far as Christ is concerned, is finished. He took upon His shoulders all their guilt. He was punished for that guilt and they were then and there justified. He rose again, having shaken off alike the punishment and the iniquities that incurred it. He entered into Glory and they were then and there virtually made possessors of an inheritance which nothing will ever be able to take from them! Let the Christian feel that the teaching which lowers the work of Christ or makes it dependent upon the will of man as to its effect, puts the Cross on the ground and says, That blood is shed, but it may be shed in vain, shed in vain for youlet us all feel that such teaching comes not from the Spirit of God! That teaching which, pointing to the Cross, says, He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied. That teaching which makes the Atonement a true atonement which forever put away the vindictive Justice of God from every soul for whom that Atonement was offered, exalts Christ and, therefore, it is a teaching which comes from the Spirit of God! When your heart is brought to rest upon what Christ has done. When, laying aside all confidence in your own works, knowledge, prayers, doing, or believing, you come to rest upon what Christ has done in its simplicitythen is Jesus Christ exalted in your heart and it must have been the work of the Spirit of Divine Grace! The Person, then, and the work of Christ are exalted.

The Holy Spirit also exalts Christ in all His offices. That teaching which calls a man a priest and bids me take my child to receive some grace at his priestly hands and which puts another man into lawn sleeves and bids me kneel before him to receive a confirmation of my grace from his pretentious fingers. That system of religion which lifts up any one man above his fellow men, as if there were any priests other than the common and general priesthood which belongs to every child of Godsuch teaching as that lowers Christ by lifting up human priests info Christs place! The Spirit bears witness that Christ is the Great High Priest of His Church. It is from His hands we receive the blessing! Through His blood we receive the washing! And nowhere else will we look for the Divine Grace that comes alone from Him!

Christ, too, is exalted by the Spirit in His prophetic as well as in His priestly office. Shall I call any man master so as to take him for my teacher? All teaching which lifts up Wesley, or Calvin, or any man, living or dead, in the place of the authorized Teacher and which says that their teachings are to be taken as though they were the Infallible Revelations of Christ is not of the Spirit of God! But that teaching which says, One is your Master, even Christ, and all you are brethren, and which tells us of the holy equality of all saints and that the true Teacher and the only Teacher who can speak with authority is Jesus Christ, the Son of God such teaching you may accept as coming from God the Holy Spirit.

Then Christ occupies a third office. He is Prophet and Priestand He is also King. And any teaching which takes Christ off the Throne of God and puts someone else on it, is not according to the Spirit of God. The Headship of Christ in His Church is the Doctrine which, perhaps, beyond all others, needs to be taught at this time. It was for this that Scotlands sons suffered misery and death. Cast out, they wandered in the morasses and among the mountains. I stood, the other day, near the place where the monument is raised to thousands of men who had shed their blood for Christand I felt it no small privilege to stand where Guthrie and others had poured out their blood for the defense of the Headship of the Church when Charles the Second would be the head of the Church, or James, or some other man of like character. But would this be tolerated by true-hearted saints of Gods own true Church? No! None but rogues and cowards will ever admit the authority of men or women over the Church of Christ, or permit them to usurp the Divine rights of the Lord Jesus! When that day comes, when the King of kings shall sit upon His throne, He will take summary vengeance upon the traitors who have dared to give up His high prerogatives! Christian, make Christ your Priest who absolves you! Take Him as your only Leader and Prophet, who is the truth and the life for you! And then take Him as your King and bow your knees become Him! Take Christ in all His offices to be exalted, for so the Spirit teaches.

Then Christ is also exalted by the Holy Spirit in His Word. There are some who think and say that they can do without the Bible. But certainly such think and speak not by the Spirit of God! This is always an Infallible test of the work of the Spiritthat He honors Gods own Word. I could think no man true who, first of all, professed to write out his own mind and then afterwards contradicted it. Then how can that spirit be true that contradicts the writing of the Spirit of the living God? Bring whatever you have of revelation to the test of Scriptureif it is not in accordance with itthrow it away! I wish this rule were learned by all men, for every now and then we read of or meet with persons who think that the Spirit has revealed to them something over and above what is in Scripture. Now this is never the case! Any man who says that he has had more revealed to him than is in the Holy Scriptures, incurs the curse of the last chapter of Revelation! He must take care lest, since he adds to the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this Book. It is finished, must be said concerning this Book as we close it. Not a single verse or Revelation shall henceforth come of the Spirit. Until Christ comes, this Book is sealed, so far as any addition to it is concerned!

Indeed, there is nothing which concerns Christ which the Spirit of God does not magnify. Consider any of His offices or His relationships and you will find that the Spirit magnifies them and glorifies themand so presents them to the Believers soul that he may rejoice therein.

Now, I advance a little further. The Holy Spirits work is to glorify Christ and this He will do by filling you with Christ. If you are subject to the work of the Spirit, then ought you to have much of the spirit of Christ within you. But if you can live days and weeks without thinking of Christ, set yourself down as being a hypocrite, if you will, for you are not a true Christian! The very mark of the blessed man is that he lives upon Gods Word. In His Law does he meditate day and night. We feed upon Christ and as our bodies could not live without food, so neither can our souls live without Jesus. The Spirit of God will also fill your heart with Christ so that the more you have of that Spirit, the more intense will be your love of the Savior until, at last, you will be able to say

*Jesus, the very thought of You*

*With sweetness fills my breast.*   
When the Spirit of God is with you, you will indeed feel that it is so. No joy can be compared with that of the love of Christ shed abroad in your heart. When the Spirit has thus filled your thoughts and heart, He will be sure to occupy your tongues. They who love the Savior must speak of Him! In choice company they will tell some of the secrets of His love, and in any company they will not be ashamed to acknowledge that they are His servants. Occupying their tongue, He will also be sure to engage it in prayer for them and they will not cease to offer such prayers as these Your Kingdom come, Jesus. Be You exalted. Oh, when will You come in Your chariot of salvation to ride over the whole earth? Come quickly, O come quickly, Lord Jesus! And then, too, your tongue will be employed in songs concerning Him. It is always a token of a revival of religion, it is said, when there is a revival of Psalmody. When Luthers preaching began to tell upon men, you could hear plowmen at the plow-tail singing Luthers Psalms. Whitefield and Wesley would never have done the great work they did if it had not been for Charles Wesleys poetry and for the singing of such men as Toplady, Scott, Newton and many others of the same class. And even now we mark that since there has been somewhat of a religious revival in our various denominations, there are more hymnbooks than there ever were before and far more attention is paid to Christian Psalmody than ever before. When your heart is full of Christ you will want to sing! It is a blessed thing to sing at your labor and work, if you are in a place where you can do so. And if the world should laugh at you, you must tell them that you have as good a right to sing the songs that delight your heart as they have to sing any of the songs in which their hearts delight. Praise His name, Christians! Be not dumb! Sing aloud to Jesus, the Lamb! And if we, as Englishmen, can sometimes sing our national air, let us as Believers have our national hymn and sing

Crown **Him, crown Him,   
Crown Him Lord of all!**

And surely when the Spirit of God thus honors Christ in the tongue, it will not stop there! It comes to the acts of daily life. The Spirit shall glorify Christ by helping you to glorify Him in your own actions. I spoke, this

morning [See Sermon #626, Volume 11THE WATERER WATEREDRead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] of some who set themselves

apart for extraordinary service. I did not, however, intend to imply that that was at all necessary, for you may serve Christ as good housewives. You may serve Him as merchants, shopkeepers and, in short, in every condition of life. Our religion is for the market-place, for the shop, for the streets and for the field. And as Gods Being is not confined to temples made by the hands of men, but is present everywhereon heath, and city, and moor, and fieldin the sunbeams that light the peasants cot as well as the monarchs palacepresent in the minute as well as in the magnificentdown there in the glades where the red deer wander and the child loves to play. And up there where the storms gather upon the mountains hoary browas visible in a blade of grass as in the cedar and the tall waving pineto be seen as well in the dewdrop as in the avalancheas certainly in the falling of a leaf as in the tremendous roar of the thundereverywhere presentso is true religion everywherein the cottage as well as in the temple, in business as well as in devotions. Abroad in the streets as well as in the silence of retirement! Up yonder where men wrestle with God and down there where they come to contend with men and for His Truth! You have never received the Spirit so as to know that Christ is the Glorified One unless in your life as well as with your lips you show forth His praise!

If the Spirit has thus far instructed you, He will conduct you a little further and you may accept His teaching because it glorifies Christ. There are some Doctrines which are not often preached in certain pulpits. They are supposed to be rather dangerous. Speaking of a certain hymnbook, I remarked to a minister in whose pulpit I preached, that I did not like the hymnbook, as I could never find a hymn that sang of the Covenant of Grace or the Doctrine of Election. Oh, well, he said, that is no disadvantage to me, for I never say anything about those Doctrines! And I can quite believe what he said. There are certain higher Truths of God which only belong to those who have passed through the rudiments and have done with the grammar-school books and can enter into the university! One of the things which glorify Christ is where the Spirit makes us understand the eternal love of Christ to His people and His Covenant engagements for them.

Christian, I would have you know that Christ never did begin to love you! Before the mountains were piled, or the clouds had gathered about them, Christ had set His heart upon you! No, when this great world, the sun, moon and stars slept in the mind of God like forests in an acorncup, thenthen had Jehovah-Jesus love for you! And when the proper time came, He offered Himself up as a Surety for your souls, to pay your debts, to stand as your Representative, to keep you in this world and to present you at the last to the Father as a priceless jewel. Oh, how you will glorify Christ if you have faith enough to take in this Divine mystery! Stagger not at electing loveit is one of the highest notes of heavenly music! Be not afraid of such a verse as thisI have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn you. Here is marrow and fatness such as saints fed upon in days long since gone!

Take another Truth of God, the precious Truth of the finished work of Christ for His people. How often do you hear Christs work preached as if it were only begun and many hold Him up as though He had commenced a fitting garment but had left off somewhere so that by adding our rags we might complete the work! I was in one of the vaults of the British Museum some time since, when the sculptures came from Nineveh and one of them was unfinished. There was evidently the last mark which the mason had made before he was destroyed or, it may be, called away from his work to which he never returned. But Jesus Christ has left no sculpture of this kindHe has finished all His work. It is finished, were words that gladdened earth and made Heaven more glorious! There is now nothing for souls to do to save themselves. For where Jesus died, that soul is saved and all that that soul has to do is, being saved, to show its gratitude and love as one that is brought to life from the dead

*Loved of my God, for Him again   
With love intense I burn.   
Chosen of Him before time began,   
I chose Him in return.*

You may know that perfection in Christ by a firm reliance upon the Scriptures. How can you perish? You are saved! There is, therefore, now no condemnation recorded against you. Who shall lay anything to your charge? Who shall separate you from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, your Lord?

If there is one Doctrine, however, more sweet and yet more deep than another, it is the Divine Doctrine of that Eternal Union which exists between Christ and His people. It is the Spirits work to take the golden key and let us into this secret cabinet. Believers are one with Christ! By vital personal union they are one with Him! They are members of His body, or as He, Himself, says, they are the branches and He is the Vine. They are the members and He is the Head. I know of nothing that can be more delightful than this unionthis eternal unionwith Christ

*One in the tomb, one when He rose,   
One when He triumphed over His foes!   
One when in Heaven He took His seat,   
While seraphs sang all Hells defeat!   
This sacred tie forbids our fears   
For all He is or has is ours.   
With Him, our Head, we stand or fall   
Our Life, our Surety and our All.*

It used to be said by an excellent theologian that any man who understood the two Covenants of Works and Grace was a master in theology. Yet, oh how few Christians there seem to be who really understand the Covenant of Grace! As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. We fell, not by our own fault, but by Adams fault. And we rise not by our own virtue, but by virtue of our union with Christ! If you are in Christ, Believer, you are safe while Christ stands. You cannot drown the body until you drown the Head. My foot may be deep in the streams, but until the billows roll over my brow, my foot is not drownedand until Christ shall perish, no soul that is one with Christ can be destroyed, for He said to His disciples, Because I live, you shall also live. Did time permit, I might enter into some more of those sublime mysteries which make the core and pith of the comfort of the Christian, but I forbear. May the Spirit of God glorify Christ by taking these things of Christ and revealing them to you and making them personally yours!

And to closethe Holy Spirit will continue all your life, if you are a Believer in Christ, to further His work in you by writing all that concerns Christ upon your experience and your life. I long to see in the Church more men and women who have Christ so glorified in them that their faith never staggerswho have neither doubts nor fears, who know whom they have believed, who are persuaded that He is able to keep that which they have committed unto Him, who leave all things to the Fathers wisdomand find everything in a perfect Savior! I long to see some of you, Brothers and Sisters, made partakers of our overflowing joy! I long to see your eyes flash with the joyous radiance of your Saviors Presence. I pray that you may be so full of joy that when you speak, you may cheer the downcast and lift up the countenances of the sad. I want you to have added to this an intense and fervent lovelove which shall perform impossibilities, which shall dare anything for Christ, which, instinct with zeal, shall thresh the mountains and beat them small, and shall winnow the wheat from the chaff upon the threshing floor. I pray that you may have that mighty consecration of spirit which shall make you altogether unearthly, that as you have borne the image of the earthy, you may also bear the image of the heavenly and that as you have been conformed to the first Adam in the curse, and in all the infirmities and griefs of this mortal life, you may be conformed to the Second Adam in His pure unselfish love for man, His noble, all-daring, all-consuming love for His Father and for His cause.

I am persuaded that the Spirit does not glorify Christ in us so much as He would if we gave ourselves up more fully to the Savior. As one said on a certain occasion, there is a fleet lying in the river, richly-laden, but it cannot come up because the river is blocked up with ice. So I think I see my Masters love lying out far down the river and it would gladly come to my poor soul to enrich me and make me holy and heavenly, but alas, the coldness of my heart, like ice, blocks up the channel and I get not what I might obtain! Come, heavenly love, and melt the ice! Flow, streams of Grace, and dissolve every barrier! Come, Jesus, come into my heart and let Your treasures be mine forevermore! Oh that I could stir some Believers here to seek more than is generally enjoyed by Christians! May God give you the seraphic earnestness of a Whitefield, the deep piety of a Martyn and the lovely spirit of a Newton or a Cowper! May He fill you to the brim with Himself till you shall be like a city set upon a hill that cannot be hidand like unto candles in the house that enlightens all around!

[Sermons by Mr. Spurgeon on various aspects of the Covenant of Grace are as follows#19, Volume 1DAVIDS DYING SONG; # 93, Volume 3GOD IN THE COVENANT; #103, Volume 2 CHRIST IN THE COVENANT; #212, Volume 4THE NEW HEART; #233, Volume 5FREE GRACE; #251, Volume 5THE NECESSITY OF THE SPIRITS WORK; #277, Volume 5THE BLOOD OF THE EVERLASTING COVENANT; #456, Volume 8THE STONY HEART REMOVED; #517, Volume 8THE RAINBOW; #714, Volume 12A SAVIOR SUCH AS YOU NEED; #1046, Volume 18COVENANT BLESSINGS; #1129, Volume 19THE HEART OF FLESH; #1186, Volume 20THE BLOOD OF THE COVENANT; #1289, Volume 22THE HEART FULL AND THE MOUTH CLOSED; #1451, Volume 25 THE COVENANT PLEADED; #1840, Volume 31THE BOND OF THE COVENANT; #1886, Volume 32GODS REMEMBRANCE OF HIS COVENANT; #1921, Volume 32CLEANSINGA COVENANT BLESSING; #1942, Volume 33SALT FOR SACRIFICE; #2092, Volume 35GODS OWN GOSPEL CALL; #2108, Volume 35PERSEVERANCE IN HOLINESS; #2200, Volume 37THE COVENANT PROMISE OF THE SPIRIT; #2316, Volume 39TWELVE COVENANT MERCIES; #2427, Volume 41 THE ARK OF THE COVENANT; #2438, Volume 41TWO IMMUTABLE THINGS; No. 2506, Volume 43GODS LAW IN MANS HEART and No. 3048, Volume 53THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE COVENANTRead/download the entire sermons, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.]

But, alas, there are some here who know not my Master at all, who are strangers to His love! There is Christ looking down upon you with tearful eyes and He bids you come to Him. That blood which you have hitherto despised will wash away your every sin. Only cast yourself upon Him. Look up into those languid eyes, for they are full of pity. That streaming blood flows to every soul that trusts in Jesus. Read the mystery of that pierced heartthere is love alone written there. Study the anguish of that poor martyred body, for in every pang you can learn the story of His compassion. And as you see Him bowing His head and hear Him saying, Father, into Your hands I commend my spirit. He asks you, every one, to commend your spirit to Him. Do it, do it now, God helping youand Christ will thus be glorified!

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **GALATIANS 2:15-21; 3.**

Galatians 2:15-21. We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the Law: for by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified. But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid! For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For I through the Law am dead to the Law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me. I do not frustrate the Grace of God: for if righteousness comes by the Law, then Christ is dead in vain. Paul is arguing against the idea of salvation by works, or salvation by ceremonies. And he shows, beyond all question, that salvation is by the Grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ. Mark the strength of the Apostles argument in the 21st verseIf righteousness comes by the Law, then Christ is dead in sin. That is to say, there was no need for Christ to diethe Crucifixion was a superfluity if men can save themselves by their own good works. Paul is very emphatic about the matter. He puts it as plainly as possible: If righteousness comes by the Law, then Christ is dead in vain.

Galatians 3:1, 2. O foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ has been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, Received you the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of faith? When the Spirit of God came upon you, and renewed youwhen He endued some of you with miraculous giftsdid this power come by the works of the Law, or through your believing the Gospel? Received you the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of faith?

3. Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now made perfect by the flesh? Is this work to be partly Gods and partly your own? And if He has begun it with a basis of gold, are you to perfect it with your poor dust and clay? Are you so foolish as to attempt to do this? [See

Sermon #1534, Volume 26Salvation by Works, a Criminal DoctrineRead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.]

4, 5. Have you suffered so many things in vain? If it is yet in vain. He therefore that ministers to you the Spirit, and works miracles among you, does He it by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of faith? They knew very well that the miracles came as the result of faith and were an attestation and seal of the Gospel of Faith, and not of the works of the Law.

6, 7. Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know you therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. He was the father of the faithfulthat is of the believingnot of those who trust in their own works. These are only like Ishmael, who must be cast out of the chosen familybut the true children, the real Isaacs, are those who are born according to the

promise of Grace. [See Sermon #1705, Volume 29THE HEARING OF FAITHRead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.]

8. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, In you shall all nations be blessed. That is, in you, because you are the father of Believers. You are a sort of head and prototype of men who believe in Me and so, in you shall all nations be blessed and in your Seed, too, as you shall be the father of the Christ, shall all nations be blessed.

9-11. So then they which are of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. For as many as are of the works of the Law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continues not in all things which are written in the book of the Law to do them. But that no man is justified by the Law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. If then, even those who are just live by faith, how can any expect that

they shall live by their works? [See Sermons #814, Volume 14LIFE BY FAITH and #2809, Volume 48FAITHLIFERead/download the entire sermons, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.]

12. And the Law is not of faith: but The man that does them shall live in them. The Law says nothing about faith. It speaks only about doing You shall do My judgments, and keep My ordinances, to walk therein: I am the Lord your God. You shall therefore keep My statutes, and My judgments: which if a man does, he shall live in them: I am the Lord.

13. Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangs on a tree. There is the key of the mystery! Christ is our Substitute. He fulfilled the Laws demands by His perfect obedience and He suffered the Laws utmost penalty by His death upon the Cross. And now, all those who believe in Him are forever justified because of what He did for them. [See

Sermon #873, Volume 15CHRIST MADE A CURSE FOR US; and #2093, Volume 35THE CURSE AND THE CURSE FOR USRead/download the entire sermons, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.]

14, 15. That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. Brethren, I speak after the manner of men. Though it is but a mans covenant, yet if it is confirmed. If it is legally drawn up, signed, sealed and witnessed.

15. No man disannuls, or adds thereto. There it stands and an appeal can be made to it in any court of Law where it may be produced.   
16, 17. Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He says not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to your Seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the Covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the Law which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of no effect. That is clear enough. The Covenant made with Abraham and his Seed cannot be affected by anything that was said or done on Sinai. Whatever the Covenant of Works may be, or say, or do, it comes in more than four centuries after this glorious Covenant of Grace had been signed, sealed and ratified! Therefore it cannot be affected, it must stand fast forever.   
18. For if the inheritance is of the Law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise. So, then, we know it is by promise and God must keep His promiseand we must believe it. It must be true and if we do believe it, we shall prove it to be true and it will be fulfilled in every jot and tittle to every believing soul.  
19-22. What purpose, then, does the Law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. Is the Law then against the promises of God? God forbid! For if there had been a Law given which could have given life, verily righteousness would have been by the Law. But the Scripture has concluded all are under sin. Or, shut us all up under sin. The Law has come and proved us all guilty, and shut us all up as in a great prison from which we cannot escape by any power of our

own. [See Sermons #1145, Volume 19THE GREAT JAILAND HOW TO GET OUT OF IT and #2402, Volume 41UNDER ARREST Read/download the entire sermons, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.]

22-24. That the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But before faith came, we were kept under the Law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Therefore the Law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ. [See Sermon 1196, Volume 20

THE STERN TEACHERRead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at  
http://www.spurgeongems.org.] It whipped us to Christ and taught us that we could not be saved except by Christ.

24-28. That we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For you are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for you are all one in Christ Jesus. Yet some foolish people still talk about our Jewish origin! What would that matter even if it were true? There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free. All these distinctions are done away with and Christ is Alland Believers, whether Jews or Gentilesare all one in Christ Jesus.

29. And if you are Christs, then are you Abrahams seed, and heirs according to the promise, So that all the blessings which God promised to Abraham belong to you who are Believers in Christ! And you may take them and rejoice in them! But if you are without faith in Christ, then are you without the one essential thing which gives you an interest in the Covenant of Grace!

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #3127 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

A PROMISE AND PRECEDENT   
NO. 3127

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, JANUARY 14, 1909.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,** AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, JANUARY 4, 1874.

*He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you. John 16:14.*

[Other Sermons by Mr. Spurgeon, upon this passage, are as follows Sermons #565, Volume 8THE HOLY SPIRIT GLORIFYING CHRIST; #2212, Volume 37HONEY IN THE MOUTH! and #3062, Volume 53THE SPIRITS OFFICE TOWARDS DISCIPLES  
Read/download the entire sermons, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.]

JESUS CHRIST, our gracious Lord and Master, is here speaking of the Holy Spirit and He says of Him, He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you. Our Lord Jesus Christ, in His own personal teaching, did not plainly declare all the Truths which He intended to reveal because the Holy Spirit was not then given to His disciples and they were not, at that time, able to receive all that He might have taught them. He Himself said to them, I have yet many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now. The germ of everything that would be revealed was in the teaching of Christ, but not the full development of it. That was left till after the Holy Spirit had been given on the day of Pentecost. In the Acts of the Apostles, in their various Epistles and in the Apocalypse given to John, we have the full Revelation of the Truth of Godthe Holy Spirit there taking of the things of Christ and revealing them to us and also, according to His promise, showing us, in the Book of the Revelation, things to come.

Note that our Savior did not go away from His disciples and leave the Spirit to come upon them without previously intimating to them the fact that He was coming. He prepared them for the change. While He was here upon earth, He was personally at the head of His people and as it was His purpose that the Holy Spirit should act as His Substitute during His absence, He informed His followers that it would be so. He told them that the Spirit of God would come, that He would more fully reveal the great Truths which He had Himself taught to His disciples and that He would apply the Truths already revealed to the hearts of His people so that they would be able to understand much that had, up to now, been beyond their comprehension. There was no separation of the dispensation of Christ from that of the Holy Spirit, but they were dovetailed and pieced into one another by these memorable words of the Lord Jesus just before He went to Gethsemane and CalvaryHe shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you.

In considering this declaration of our Savior with regard to the Holy Spirit, we shall view it in three aspects, praying that God will make it a blessing while we are meditating upon it. We shall, first, view the text doctrinally. Secondly, consider it as a promise. And, thirdly, look upon it as a precedent or model by which we should work.

I. First, then, WE WILL VIEW THE TEXT DOCTRINALLY. This declaration of Christ contains some most important Doctrines and the best is thisthat it is the office and aim of the Holy Spirit to glorify Jesus Christ. No study in Scripture is more interesting or profitable to the Christian than the Revelation which is given to us concerning the Sacred Trinity and the various parts which the Divine Persons take in the work of our salvation. John Bunyan wrote a notable work upon the Trinity and the Christianand nothing could be more appropriate, for there would be no Christian without the Trinity! It needs the Father, the Son and the Spirit to produce that noblest kind of man, a Believer in the Lord Jesus Christ! The various offices of the blessed Trinity in Unity are usually distinct and clearly defined, yet they sometimes intertwist and interchange, just as Jesus in our text bears witness to the Spirit and the Spirit continually bears witness to the Lord Jesus and glorifies Him. Brothers and Sisters, I pray you will remember that when the Spirit convicts the world of sin, it is in order that the convicted sinner may learn the preciousness of that Savior to whom the Spirit bears witness! When He convicts the world of judgment, it is not only that the Judge may be honored as He deserves to be, but also that the way by which judgment may be averted through the substitutionary Sacrifice of Christ may be made clear to the sinners mind. And when He convicts the world of righteousness, what righteousness is it but that which Jesus Christ has worked out and brought inthat righteousness alone in which saved sinners are able to appear before God without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing? The Holy Spirit always works with this aim and objectiveto lead sinners to admire, adore and trust in Jesus Christ! His Omnipotence bends itself to this endthat Jesus Christ may be glorified in the hearts and lives of sinners saved by His Grace!   
I gather from our text another Doctrine, namely, that, any teaching which does not glorify Jesus Christ is not the teaching of the Holy Spirit. By this simple test, the humblest among us may be able to judge even that form of teaching which is most pretentious. And if it cannot endure this test, it may be rejected without hesitation! The poorest man who enters any assembly, if he hears a Doctrine that glorifies Christ, can say, I may safely listen to this teaching, for the Spirit of God will set His seal to it. But if, on the other hand, amidst a blaze of intellectual splendor and a brilliant display of mere human knowledge, nothing is said that will glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, the true child of God says to himself, What business have I to be in this place? This is not the company that is congenial to me, nor the teaching to which I ought to give heed. Here is neither the food for my soul nor yet the opportunity of glorifying my dear Lord and Master! I will leave this assembly and seek to find some other place where the Spirit of God is at work in His chosen ministry of glorifying Christ. Thus the great Doctrine that it is the Spirits work to glorify Christ furnishes us with a spiritual detector by which we may discover what is true gold and what is counterfeitand by which we may judge whether the voices that we hear are voices of the night which cry out to us to follow them in the darkness, or the voices of the dawning which herald the coming of the day!   
There is this further Doctrine in the text, that the Holy Spirit, in glorifying Christ, acts in sacred concert with the other Persons of the blessed Trinity, for Jesus said, He shall receive of Mine. I am not going to explain this declaration of Christ. I cannot do so, for I do not, myself, fully understand it. All I can say is that the Holy Spirit is represented here as receiving the things of Christ. Now the Holy Spirit is continually spoken of in the Scriptures as Divine and He certainly is Divineyet Christ here says that He receives or takes from the Father the things of Christ that He may show them to us. They are not His own things things of His own devising or suggestingbut those which Christ calls His. So, just as Jesus said that He did not come in His own name, but in the name of the Father who had sent Him, so the Spirit of God does not come in His own name, nor come with His own messagebut He receives the things of Christ and shows them to us. I delight in this sharing of the great work by the glorious Trinity in Unity! I love to see the Father, Son and Spirit all taking part in the salvation of the elect! Just as in the Creation, God said, Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness, and there was a council held to decide as to that early work, so here it is not merely one of the Persons of the Trinity, but all Three who are concerned in the greater work of mans new creation! The Spirit receives from the Father the things of Christ and so it is as though God said, Let Us make man new in Our image, after Our likeness. Father, Son and Spirit work together in perfecting the new creationso let us always give undivided and equal honor to the Father, to the Son and to the Holy Spirit   
*Give to the Father praise,   
Give glory to the Son,   
And to the Spirit of His Grace   
Be equal honor done!*   
Further, I want you to notice that the Holy Spirit, being bent upon glorifying Christ, glorifies Him with His own things. Jesus says, He shall receive of Mine. The Holy Spirit does not go after something apart from Christ in order to bring glory to Christif Christ is to be glorified, the crown must be made out of His own jewelsand the jewels must be found in His own mine! So, Beloved, in order to honor Christ, you must go to Christyou must find Christs honors in Christ Himself. Even the Holy Spirit, who is Omniscient, does not look outside of Christ in order to find something with which to glorify Him. He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine. And none of us can ever honor Christ by bringing anything to Him. If we want to honor Him, we must honor Him with that which is already His own. If I want to honor the Lord Jesus Christ at this moment, how can I do it better than by preaching of His own Person, His own Manhood, His own Godhead, His own life, His own death, His own Resurrection, His own Ascension and His own coming again in the glory of His Father with the holy angels? It must be with the things of Christ that we honor Christ!   
If the Holy Spirit willed to do so, He could bring forth matchless novelties in honor of Christ, but He does not will to do so. He honors Christ with that which is Christsand if you and I, standing in the pulpit or anywhere else, want to honor Christ, we must not seek to excogitate some brilliant thought from our own brain, or come before our fellows to display the results of our own wonderful culturethe grand flowers which we have grown in the well-tilled garden of our own highly educated minds! Oh noChrist must have His own flowers to smell if He is to have a sweet and acceptable posy brought to Him! The ingredients of the incense put into His censer must be all His ownnothing else will be acceptable to Him. Even in the Song of Solomon, you remember that when Christ comes into His own garden, He says, I have gathered My myrrh with My spice; I have eaten My honeycomb with My honey; I have drunk My wine with My milk. Nothing will so glorify Christ as that which is already His own! The Spirit of God knows this and, therefore, in order to glorify Christ, He takes of Christs own things and of nothing else.

Continuing a little furtherthis view of the Doctrine in the textI would remind you that when the Holy Spirit wishes to glorify Christ with Christs own things, He presents them to the hearts of BelieversHe shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you. Without His Divine assistance, you cannot see itnot because it is not visible, but because your eyes are too dim to perceive it. The work of the Spirit of God is to shine upon the beauties of Christ so that we can see them. And when He does so illuminate them, it is a glorifying of Christ for us to see those beauties! It is not merely to Christs Glory for us to talk about themthat is another way of glorifying Himbut if you cannot talk, if you have no gifts of eloquence, notice this blessed Truth of God and be comforted by itChrist is glorified by your seeing His Glory! Suppose that you are so slow of speech that you cannot even tell your own wife or child what you have seen of the beauties of Christ, yet the Holy Spirit has glorified Christ when He has shown those beauties to you. Perhaps you are only a poor servant, or a humble working man living and laboring in obscurityor possibly a young child or a maiden scarcely known beyond your own family circle, yet believe mewhen you see the Lord Jesus Christ in His beauty, as He is revealed to you by the light of the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ is glorified! It is true that He is glorified when I proclaim His dear name to the thousands who gather in this House of Prayer, but He is also glorified in that little bedroom of yours where, perhaps in the dead of night when you lie awake, you say to yourself, Precious Christ, what a dear Savior You are to me! When you get a fresh view of Him. When you catch a new ray of light streaming upon His blessed Countenance and you perceive a few more of those lines of love that are written thereJesus Christ is glorified! I think this is part of what Christ meant when He said to His disciples concerning the Holy Spirit, He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you.   
Oh, what a wondrous view of Christ the Holy Spirit sometimes gives us! As yet, however, I am afraid that very few of us have had more than a partial view of Him. Have you not sometimes stood upon a hill when it has been a day of mingled cloud and sunshine and there has been a break in the cloudsand the sun has shone through and that hill over yonder has been all ablaze with the golden sunlightand that part of the landscape has been marvelously illuminated? All down the valley there was gloom. But presently the clouds shifted again and then the beams of light traveled down into the plains and the river flowing below flashed in the sunlight while the hill was once more enveloped in shade! As the clouds continued to move, the sunshine kept lighting up different parts of the landscape. It is just like that with regard to our view of Christ! The Spirit of God, who is the very perfection of light, shines upon Christ with a brilliance that the sun never possessed! Sometimes the Spirit shines upon Christs Priesthood and oh, what a wonderful sight it is, then, for us to see Christ offering up Himself as the one great Sacrifice for sin! Another time it may be that the Spirit shines especially upon the prophetic Character of Christ and we then admire Him as revealing God to us and teaching us the Truth! Perhaps the next day the Spirit shows us Christs royal Character and then we cry, or more probably we sing *All hail the power of Jesus name!   
Let angels prostrate fall!   
Bring forth the royal diadem,   
And crown Him Lord of All!   
Babes, men and sires who know His love, Who feel your sin and thrall,   
Now joy with all the hosts above   
And crown Him Lord of All!*

Sometimes a beam of light will shine upon Christs hands that were pierced by the nails and then we wonderingly ask, How could the hands of the Creator of the universe be thus nailed to the tree for us? And soon the Spirits bright light gleams upon the face of Jesus and we then

*See Divine compassion*

*Floating in His languid eyes*   
as He bows His head to death for us. But what will it be if the Holy Spirit shall be pleased to give us a full view of Christ upon the Cross? Then will our happy spirits indeed glorify Him and each redeemed one will softly sing

*Sweet the moments, rich in blessing,   
Which before the Cross I spend.   
Life, and health, and peace possessing   
From the sinners dying Friend.   
Here Ill sit forever viewing   
Mercys streams, in streams of blood.   
Precious drops! My soul bedewing   
Plead and claim my peace with God.   
Here it is I find my Heaven   
While upon the Cross I gaze   
Love I much? Ive more forgiven.   
Im a miracle of Grace.*

Oh, for such a sight of Christ as that, for thus Jesus is glorified and we are truly blessed!

II. Now secondly, I want to show you that THE TEXT MAY BE VIEWED AS A PROMISE. He shallthese are three of the blessed shalls and wills of ChristHe shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you.

Come, dear child of God, and lay hold of this precious promise of Christ! If you get the promise of a man and you believe that he is an honest man, you value his promise. But here you have the promise of your God and Savior, Jesus Christ, the faithful Promiser, so you may well prize that! Are you not sometimes the subject of grave doubts as to whether you really glorify Christ? If so, fall back upon His blessed promise. The Holy Spirit in you shall glorify Christ, for He shall take of the things of Christ and shall show them to you. Possibly you fear that in the days to come, you will bring no glory to Christ. You know your own feebleness, your lack of talent and your lack of opportunity for glorifying Christ. You have cried many a time

*Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing   
My great Redeemers praise!   
The glories of my God and King   
The triumphs of His Grace!*

Yet you grieve that you cannot glorify Him and you are afraid that you never will be able to do so. Listen to this precious promise againHe shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you, even to you, though you are His poorest, weakest, meanest child! Though you will not be able to say much about it to others, you will glorify Christ by looking at Him as He is revealed to you by the Holy Spirit! We honor the sun as we look at it, or bask in its beamsI do not know what else we can do to show our appreciation of the sun but lie in the sunlight and thank God for letting the sun shine upon us. I have often thought of the lilies and the roses in the garden and of how they praise the God who made them. Not by singing, as the birds do, nor by lowing, like the cattle, nor by clapping their hands in joy and exultation like the trees of the woods dothe lilies and the roses praise God by just receiving from Him everything that they possess, drinking in His dew and rain and sunshine and standing there in all their beauty pouring out the fragrance that He has poured into them! And that is how you must glorify Christ, my Brothers and Sisters who are in Him. See Christ as the Spirit shows Him to you! Receive of His fullness, pour out the Grace that He has poured into youand you shall in this way glorify Christ!

Now, Beloved, this promise is being daily fulfilled in all true Believers. God is being glorified in them by their sight of the Lord Jesus Christ as He is revealed to them by the Holy Spirit. As they walk to and from their daily work. As they sit down for a while to read their Bibles. As they kneel in prayer at their bedsides and are lost in wonder, love and praise at the Spirits revelation of the beauties of Christ, Christ is being glorified by the Holy Spirit in them! Do not talk to me of your fine altars studded with all manner of precious gems, with flowers, candles and images thereon. Do not tell me about your grand cathedrals with all the splendor of their architecture! The best altar in the world is a broken and a contrite heart and the truest cathedral is a soul that is rejoicing in the indwelling God! When the Holy Spirit comes and reveals Christ in the soul, there is the Altar, there is the Temple, there is the true worship for which God cares beyond all elseand that is really glorifying Christ!

As this promise is being thus constantly fulfilled, I am sure, Beloved, that it is most desirable that it should be more and more fulfilled and, therefore, I exhort you to plead it before God. Say, Lord, will You graciously bid the Holy Spirit to glorify Christ in me and to reveal Christ to me more than He has ever yet done? As you offer this prayer, if you really mean it, you will be more earnest than you have ever been in your meditation concerning Christ, in your searching of the Word to find out all that you can about Christ and in your fellowship with Christ. What a man truly prays for, he diligently seeks after until he obtains it if it really is in accordance with the will of God. If our minds are entirely occupied with the world, is it at all likely that the Spirit of God will show the things of Christ to us? We must give adequate space to the Spirit. We must give Him time and opportunitiesputting other things away from us and placing our souls before the Spirit in a waiting and expectant attitude! As sensitive plates are put before that object which they are intended to reproduce, so let us be placed before the view of Christ which the Spirit of God desires to reveal to usthen the image of Christ shall be imprinted upon us and thus He will first be glorified by our seeing Him in the light that the Spirit sheds upon Him, and then He will be further glorified by others seeing His likeness reproduced in us!

I think I have clearly shown you that our text is a promise made by Christ to His disciples. And I have also shown you that it is a promise which ought to be pleaded at the Throne of Grace, so may I entreat every Christian here to really plead it? A promise is just like a checkbut a check is of no real value unless it is taken to the bank and exchanged for cash. You know how we cash our checkswhy do we not take Gods promises to Him to have them fulfilled just as readily as we take mans promises to the bank to have them fulfilled? I think that a good many long prayers which some consider very fine things, are merely exhibitions of uncertainty and unbelief. If I have a check about the genuineness of which there is some doubtand I take it to the bankit is probable that I shall be delayed some little time while there is a conversation between the clerks concerning ita comparison of signatures, an examination of ledgers and ever so many other things. But if I have a genuine check about which there is no question whatever, what is the usual order of procedure? I go to the counter, put the check down, perhaps scarcely say a word except to indicate how I will take the change, pick up my sovereigns or bank notes and walk away! And that is how I like to prayI ask God for what He has promised to give me. I believe that He will fulfill His promise and I go my way feeling sure that I have received that for which I asked! As a sensible man, when he has received from the bank clerk the change for his check, puts the money in his pocket and goes about his business, so should you act towards your God when you pray to Him. Say, Lord, You have promised such-and-such a blessing to me. I come to You and plead Your own promise. And I believe that You will fulfill it to me. At all events, that is the way that I delight to pray.

You ask me, Would you not be longer in prayer than that? No, not on that one occasion. I shall probably be at the bank with another check, presently, so I cannot afford to take more time than is necessary with this one. You can do a great deal of business at this blessed bank if you do it quickly! But if you waste your time loitering at the counter and chatting with the clerk, that is not the way to honor the great Lord of the bank! Some people seem to think that in prayer, they must go through the Westminster Assemblys Confession of Faith, or some similar compendium of Doctrinebut that is not real praying. If, however, you will do your business with your God just as you would do your business with your banker, you will be sure to come back to Him again and again, for there is no man who does so much of this sacred business of pleading with God as the man who is most successful with Him! If you have succeeded once in prayer, I guarantee that you will pray again! And after a second time of successful pleading, you will pray a third time more easily and more confidently! And God will take care that you shall have plenty of reasons for praying! Only do make it real praying. Say, Lord Jesus, You have said that the Holy Spirit shall glorify You by taking of Your things and showing them to Your people. I believe it, Lord. Let me prove it to be true at the Communion Table tonight! Let me prove it to be true in my private devotions all through this week! Let me prove it to be true all through this year and all through my life. Pray thus, and then, according to your faith shall it be unto you!

III. Now we shall think of the text in the last way which I indicated, AS A PRECEDENT FOR GLORIFYING CHRIST.   
Brothers and Sisters in Christ, I know that a great number of you who are now present wish above all things that the Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in this world. And I also know that you who have tasted that the Lord is gracious have this for your highest ambition, that you may, by some means or other, by sickness or by health, by poverty or by wealth, by life or by death, bring glory to Him. Very well, then, that being the case, let this text be a guide to you in your efforts.   
In order to glorify Christ, it seems, first, that it will be wisdom on your part to rely upon the Holy Spirit. You say that you want to glorify Christ that is also what the Holy Spirit wants to do! That is what He has long been doing and is still doingtherefore cast in your lot with Himget Him to help you do the same work as He is doing. I have sometimes seen some young fellows rowing upstream, and it has been a heavy task to them. But there has come along a barge pulled quickly by horses, or better still, a steam launch, and the young men have called out to those on board, Throw us a rope, please! And then those who were before toiling in rowing have gone along easily enough. So, when I see the Spirit of God contending against all oppositionsteaming upstream, as it werein order to glorify Christ. As I need to go upstream, too, for the same purpose, I seek to act in connection with His Omnipotence, so that He may work with me and that I may be drawn onward and upward by His almighty power! My Sister, do not go to that Sunday school class of yours again until you have asked the Holy Spirit to go with you! My Brother, do not go up those pulpit stairs again, nor even up the stairs of that infirmary where you go visit the sick, or of that prison where you go to visit the inmates without first saying, Spirit of God, it is Your business to glorify Christ and that is also my businessso will You graciously go with me and go in me? Give me the right words to utter and the right spirit in which to utter them. You and I are perfectly agreed in what we are seeking in this matter. Oh, work by me so that Jesus Christ may be glorified!   
I see also another thing in this precedent, which is that if I want to glorify Christ, I must first take care to apprehend Him clearly myself. Two of Christs declarations in the text show me this. The Holy Spirit does not glorify Christ till first He receives of the things of ChristHe shall receive of Mine. And then He does not glorify Christ in us except by showing the things of Christ to us, so that if you and I want to glorify Christ, our first objective must be to see Him and to see His Glory for ourselves. You cannot, I think, do good to others to any great extent unless you are living in the light of Gods Countenance. The Lords general rule is first to give the provision into the disciples hands before those disciples are able to feed the multitude. Wait awhile, dear Brother, and go to your Lord and say to Him, Lord, fill me with Your own fullness, for how can I hope to pour out to others till You have done so? Show me Yourself, for how can I describe You to others unless I have Your image very vividly revealed to my own mind and heart? If I am myself rejoicing in You, then shall I be able to tell others, with fluent tongue, how gracious You are. If I hear Your voice giving me a message to deliver from You, then shall I be able to tell the message with all the greater impressiveness and power because I received it first from You.   
The next point is also clear from the precedent of the textthat is, in conjunction with the Holy Spirit, having ourselves apprehended Christ if we want to glorify Christ, we must tell others about the things of Christ. You have said that already, says someone. Very well, then, if I have. I will say it again because I do not know anything that needs more to be said nowadays than thisthat the way for any of us to glorify Jesus is to show to others the things of Jesus. How many congregations there are in which the greatest treat to the people would be a sermon about the Lord Jesus Christ and especially about His substitutionary Sacrifice! I have heard it said that there are thousands of sermons preached about the Gospel, but very few in which there is the Gospel, itself. This will not do! Souls will never be saved that way! Nobody has ever had his hunger satisfied by hearing a discourse about bread! It is bread, itself, that is needed to feed the hungry, so keep on, dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, giving the Bread of Life to starving souls! I know that many call us fools and say that we are the old stick-in-the-mud Puritans who never get any furtherbut never mind, dear Friends, what they saykeep on feeding the hungry! We do not mean to change our message even if all should reject it. Here we have stood, these many years, talking to you about Jesus Christ and Him Crucifiedand if anybody heard us 20 years ago and shall come again now, he will hear just the same message as he heard then! Why do we not make progress, as others do? Simply because there is nothing which we should regard as progress except progressing in the knowledge of this precious Truth of Jesus Christ and Him Crucified!   
In the Infallible Truth of God, which has been revealed by the Holy Spirit, there is no possibility of progress or advance! He has been pleased to reveal the whole Truth, so there is nothing more to be revealed! We can continually search further and deeper into the Truth that has been revealed, and so may be enabled, by the help of the Spirit of God, to speak better concerning it, but better Truth we never shall have and another Gospel we never will declare! We should certainly be accursed if we did, for there is but one Gospeland to that Gospel we shall remain steadfast, God helping useven to the end. Hit that nail on the head again, Brother! Drive it in further and clinch it on the other side. Stick to the Gospel! It may be a long time before it wins, but it will win in the long run! Some say that it is going out of fashion, and that it is at a discount. We were told, the other day, that Calvinism is almost obsolete, but we do not mind what men say about itwe believe that it will yet see everything else obsolete! When modern culture has been blown away, like the thistledown from the side of the hill, the Gospel I have preached will stand like the eternal hills, themselves, outliving every opposition, for God Himself has piled this Truth like a mighty mountain and it shall stand fast till Christ Himself shall come! Not a jot or tittle of it shall ever pass away. The Holy Spirit glorifies Christ by taking of the things of Christ, so let us take care that we follow that precedent and glorify Christ in the same way!   
But with regard to the things of Christ, of course the Holy Spirit glorifies Christ by explaining them, by showing them to us. So, Beloved, your business and mine is to make the things of Christ plain to people as far as we can. Show them to themturn them first one way and then anothertry and get them to see all of them that there is to be seen. You have not wasted your time if you have taught one child to read and understand one verse like this, The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. You have done something that was worth doing if you have only whispered into one human ear this short message, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved. In some way or other, keep on showing to saints and sinners the things of Christ! That will glorify Christ, somehow or other, both in them that are saved and in them that perishand will be a sweet savor unto God in every place where Christ is made known! Keep on then, my dear fellow workers, at this blessed work of glorifying Christ!   
There are many of you who are doing this under great discouragements, but I pray you not to leave off doing it. It is the Holy Spirits way to continue this work unceasingly, so let it be your way, also, as long as you live! But take care that the things which you show to others are the things which you have really received yourself. You must have experimental religion, or else you cannot tell of it to others with any hope that they will accept it. How idle it would be for me to come here to preach to you of a way of salvation which I had never tried and proved in my own experience! It would be as foolish as for a sick man to stand before a company of his fellow patients and recommend to them a medicine which he had never taken! Do not be guilty of such inconsistency, dear Friends, but live upon Christ! Get more and more of Christ into your soul and then you will be able to go and say to others, We have found Him of whom Moses and the Prophets did write! We have found Him whom God has set forth to be the Propitiation for our sins, the Healer of all our wounds, the Comforter in all our woes. They will probably say to you, What do you know about all this? Then you will begin to tell how you were broken down on account of sin and how Jesus met with you in His mercy and saved you with His great salvation! As you tell the story, they will want to know more and more about it, for personal narratives are always interesting! And then you will, by-and-by, see the tears glistening in their eyes as one or another tremblingly asks, Would Jesus save

me in that way? I wonder if I went to Him and confessed my sin, whether I, too, would receive pardon and become a child of God. Then you would seize the golden opportunity and, laying a loving hand upon his shoulder, you would say, Come, dear Friend, let us kneel down and pray together. Let us together seek that dear Savior who has said, Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out.   
If you are moved to act and speak like that, I cannot tell how often God the Holy Spirit would glorify Christ by enabling you, first, to receive the things of Christ, yourself, and then to so show them to others that they would be moved to say, We will go with you to the Cross of Calvary. We will go with you to the sinners Savior. Where you were saved, there we, also, will be saved. How I wish that all in this congregation would make this resolve now through the effectual working of the ever-blessed Spirit, Jesus is a great Savior! We will have Him as our Savior. How I wish that this sacred impulse might come upon all of us who are now in this building, that we might all be unhappy and unsatisfied until we found Christ! That is the way for you to glorify Christ, Sinnernot for you to bring Him any of your own goodnessbut to go to Him and take of His goodness! Not for you to try to make yourself better, but to come to Him just as you are, and accept Him as your Savior, to be your Lord and Master forever!   
May the Holy Spirit lead you to do so! Do it, blessed Spirit! You love to glorify Christhere is Your opportunity in this vast congregation! Come and work this great work for Jesus sake! Amen.

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #465 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE HOLY SPIRIT GLORIFYING CHRIST   
NO. 465

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON SUNDAY MORNING, AUGUST 17, 1862, BY REV. C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**He shall glorify Me: for He shall take of Mine,   
and shall show it unto you.   
John 16:14.**

WE always need the Spirit of God in our preaching. But I think we more especially require His Divine direction and instruction when the subject is Himselffor the Holy Spirit is so mysterious in His varied attributes and operations, that unless He Himself shall reveal Himself to us and give us the words in which to speak of Him, we shall surely fail either to understand for ourselves, or to enlighten others. In His light we see light, butwithout Him we grope like blind men in the dark.

Certain sins against the Holy Spirit continually exist in a degree in the Christian Church. Unholiness of life grieves the Holy Spirit. When Christian men walk not according to the Gospel. When their conversation is not ordered according to the pattern of Christ, then the Holy Spirit, who has no fellowship with unholiness, withdraws Himself in a measure from the Church. Discord, too, strife among Brethren, forgetfulness of the new commandment, that we love one another, grieves the sacred Dovefor as His nature is peaceable, as His office is to be the peace giverso He tarries not where there is the din and noise of contending parties.

So, also, when He perceives His saints to be diseased with worldliness, when we prefer the treasures of Egypt to the reproach of Christ, and seek rather the things which are seen, which are temporal, than the things which are not seen, which are eternalthen again is the Holy Spirit quenched and departs from our midst. Above all, pride and that murmuring, rebellion, unbelief, obstinacy and self-seeking which pride leads toall this grieves the Holy Spirit, for He dwells with those who are humble and of a contrite spirit. Where there is the voice of murmuring, where one man seeks to lift himself above another, and all to exalt themselves above their despised Lord, the Holy Spirit hides Himself and suffers barrenness to take the place of plenty, and death to reign where once life triumphed.

These are a few of the common and the constant infirmities of the Church, by which the Holy Spirit is much hindered in those marvelous manifestations which otherwise would be common and usual in the midst of our Israel.

But there are two faults of the Church which appear to me periodically to manifest themselves. The one is when men ascribe wrong things to the Holy Spirit, and make Him the Author of human novelties and delusions. In seasons when the minds of good men were anxiously alive to spiritual operations, certain weak-headed or designing persons have grown fanatical. Bewildered by their own confused feelings and puffed up by their fleshly minds, they have forsaken the true light which is in the Word, to follow after the will-o-the-wisps of their own fancies, the absurdities of their own brains. Such vainglorious fools aspiring to be leaders, masters of sects, will boldly tell men of itching ears that fresh doctrines have been

especially revealed to them.

They prate much of what they call the inner light (which is often an inner darkness), which dim candle they exalt above the light of the Word of God, and tell you that marvelous things have been taught to them in dreams and visions. Ah, this is a high and crying crime. What? Will you lay at the door of the Holy Spirit a deed which God has solemnly cursed? Do you not start back at such a thought? Is it not almost blasphemy to imagine it? And yet remember, he that adds a single word to the canon of inspiration is cursed. Give ear to the very words of the Lord our God, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this Book. And if any man shall take away from the Words of the Book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the Book of Life and out of the holy city and from the things which are written in this Book.

And do you think the Holy Spirit would do that which involves a curse upon man? If I venture to add to Gods Word, or to take from it, I do it with this as my penaltythat God shall blot my name out of the Book of Life and out of the holy city. And yet these base pretenders, who would lay their foolish notions at the door of God the Holy Spirit, will have it that He has taught them more than is in the Book, that He has removed that which God laid down as the grand landmark and added to the finished testimony of God. Let none of you have any sort of patience with men who talk thus.

Deny their very first principle. Tell themwhether it is the deceiver of Western America, or the false prophet of Arabiatell them that they are all impostors, for they ascribe to the Holy Spirit that which is impossible for Him to commita violation of the revealed will of God in which it is declared that the canon of inspiration is shut up once and for all. A little of this evil I detect among godly people. I find that sometimes even gracious men think they have had revelations. Texts of Scripture are no doubt laid home by the Holy Spirit to the souls of men as much today as in Pauls time, and there can be no doubt whatever that the Spirit brings all things Christ has taught to our remembrance, and that He leads us into all Truth.

But when a man tells me that the Holy Spirit has revealed to him something that is not in the Bible, he lies! Is that a hard word? It does but express the Truth of God. The man may have dreamed his revelation, he may have fancied itbut the Holy Spirit goes never beyond the written Word. He shall take of Mine and shall show it unto you. And beyond what Christ has spoken and what Christ has taught, the Holy Spirit goes in no sense and in no respect. You understand what Christ has taught through the Spirits teaching. But anything beyond the teaching of Christ and His Apostles must be not of God but of man.

This is a most important principle to be held fast by all godly people, for the day may come when false prophets shall arise and delude the people, and by this shall we be able to discover them. If they claim anything beyond what Christ has taught, put them aside, for they are false prophets, wolves in sheeps clothing. The Spirit only teaches us that which Christ has taught beforehand either by Himself or by the inspired Apostles. He shall take of Mine and shall show it unto you.

Just now we are in little danger from the excesses of fevered brains, for, as a rule, our sin is in being far too cold and dead to spiritual influences. I fear we are liable to another evil and are apt to forget the Person and work of the Comforter altogether. We fear some congregations might say, We have not so much as heard whether there is any Holy Spirit. From how many modern sermons would you even know that there was a Holy Spirit? If it were not for the benediction, or the doxology, you might go in and out of many Churches and meeting houses in a year and scarcely know that there was such a Person as that blessed, blessed Giver of all good, the Holy Spirit.

Sometimes we hear a little about His influences, as if the Holy Spirit were not as truly a Person as even Jesus Christ Himself, who in flesh and blood trod this earth. Oh, dear Friends, I fear the first dangerthat of running wild with whimsies and fancies about inner lights and new revelations. But I equally dread this last, this putting the Revelation above the Revealer, this taking the Book without the Author, this preaching of the Truth of God without the great Truth Applierthis going forth to work with the Sword, forgetting that it is the Sword of the Spirit and only as mighty as the Holy Spirit makes it mighty to the pulling down of strongholds.

May this Church ever continue to reverence the Holy Spirit without exaggerating His work! May we prize Him, love Him, and adore Him because He so wondrously glorifies our blessed Lord! With this, by way of preface, I shall now come at once to our text, using it three waysfirst, as a test to try various things by. Secondly, as a direction how to honor Jesus. And thirdly,

as a stimulus, stirring us up to glorify Christ.

I. First, then, we shall use our text AS A TEST. There are a thousand things that claim to be of the Holy Spirit. How can we know whether they are or not? Here is a simple mode of discovering, He shall glorify Me.

1. Let us, first of all, apply this test to ministers. There are crowds of preachers and reverend divines nowadays in the world. But all are not ministers of God. A true minister is a creation of the God of Heaven. It is no more in the power of the Church than it is in the power of the bishops to make ministers. Independency is as weak as Episcopacy on this point. God, alone, ordains ministers. All that the Church can do is to recognize them. We cannot make them at our colleges. We cannot make them by the laying on of hands, nor even by the choice of the Church. God must make themGod must ordain them. It is only for the Church to perceive Gods work, and cheerfully to submit to His choice.

And, there are some churches which clearly are not of the Holy Spirit, because they glorify ceremonies. We could take you into certain places of worship where the general strain of ministry is a glorification of Baptism, the blessed Eucharist, confirmation, priesthood, and so on. There you hear much of the childish millinery with which they deck the altar, and much is said of those grotesque garments in which their priests disguise themselves. We could point to many places where the main object of teaching seems to be to exalt a rubric, to magnify a liturgy, to hold up a hierarchy, or to extol a ritual. All such churches we may at once sweepingly and unerringly condemn. They are not of the Holy Spirit, for the Holy Spirit teaches us not to magnify outward rites, but Christ. And that teaching is not of the Holy Spirit which does not glorify the Lord Jesus.

Into other places we might take you where very clearly the object is the extolling of doctrine. From the first of January to the last of December the minister bitterly contends for the favorite corners of his faith. Doctrine, with certain friends, is everything, and their rigid orthodoxy is the one care of their life. Now, against a sound creed and the Doctrines of Grace we have not a word to say. God be thanked that we love these things as much as those who exalt them above measure. We are not a whit behind the chief of these champions in our zeal for orthodoxy.

But still our Lord is, and must be, the leading theme of our ministry. We must continue to exalt Him rather than Calvinism, or any other system of theology. We are bold to say it, much as we love the Masters Throne, we still love the Master better. And dearly as we love battling for the walls of His vineyard, yet the clusters of His Eshcol are sweeter to our taste. We love Christ better than creed, and we think we would rather magnify our Master than any set of truths, however important they may be.

There are certain doctrinal Brethren, good enough in their way, but still you can evidently see that the doctrine of election is a thing that they contend more for than the doctrine of the redemption of Christ. Or if it is redemption, it is the specialty of redemption rather than the Divine sacrifice itself. I love to preach the distinguishing Grace of God, but I am far from thinking that some four or five points comprise all the truths which God has revealed. Be it ours to preach the doctrines as Dr. Hawker preached themwith Christ as their sum and substance. A full Christ for empty sinnersmay this be our theme. To a great extent it is true of a church that seeks only to exalt doctrines, that it has not the fullness of the Holy Spirit in it, for of the Holy Spirit it is written, He shall glorify Me.

Another class of ministers are well known to those of us who have looked upon the Church of God at large, whose ministry tends mainly to magnify a certain experience. If you have felt thus and thus, and so and so, no words of praise can be too strong for you. But if you have been led in another way, in a different path, then depend on it, according to the judgment of these divines, you never knew vital godliness at all. They are as intimate with the secrets of Heaven as the pope himself, and are quite as infallible as he, in their small dominions. Some of these Brethren have, no doubt, gone through a very deep and awful experiencethey have lived so much in sin, and have been so untrue to their Lord, that it is little marvel if they have to walk in darkness and see no light. These Brethren hold up that experience as a model and tell us that unless we know all they have learned, we are not Christs.

Now, I say not a word against experimental preaching. I believe it to be the most soul-fattening preaching in the worldbut it must be experience about Christ, it must be an experience that leads me out of self to Jesus and if any ministry is experimental, yet does not exalt Christ, I have cause to suspect whether the Holy Spirit is with it, for this stands as an unchanging ruleHe shall glorify Me.

And, dear Brothers and Sisters, once again, we are cursed with some few menwould to God they were fewerwhose teaching constantly is, morality. If we will do this, and do that and the other, we shall be savedthe old Law of Moses is toned down and then held up as the road to Heaven. Now, at once, you may forsake the synagogues where such men are in the chief places. If any man exalt the works of flesh, and not the finished work of Christif the doings, the willings, the prayers, the feelings of man, are put in the place of the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christthat church is not of the Holy Spirit.

And what might I say of many who produce each Sunday their pretty little essays, their elaborate disquisitions, their high-sounding periods? What shall I say of all these, but that they are as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal, inasmuch as they forget Christ, the Person of Christ God and man, the work of ChristHis Atonement and righteousness? The resurrection of Christthe gift and joy of the saints, the intercession of Christour hope and our strength, and the second advent of Christ, which is as the bright morning star to every weary watcher in this worlds darkness? That Church, and that Church only, is of the Holy Spirit which magnifies Christ Jesus.

And here, dear Brethren in the ministryand there are some such presenthow bitterly may you and I lament much of our ministry because it has not glorified Christ! When we shall lie stretched upon our dying beds, we shall look back with satisfaction to that poor stammering sermon in which we magnified the Master. We shall look with intense regret to that well-delivered oration in which we glorified a sect, or lifted up an ordinance at the expense of our Lord. Oh, what joy it shall be to remember that we did lift Him up, however feebly, yet we did extol Him. Though sometimes utterance would not come as our heart would have it, yet we did point to His flowing wounds and said, Behold the way to God.

Oh, the sweet bliss of a Whitfield when he retires to his last couch, to feel that he did preach Jesus, whether it was at the market, or on the hill side, or in the Church, or in the barn! What a consolation to feel that he did cry faithfully, Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid! Oh, the curse on the other hand, that shall rest on a man who, in his last moments, shall have to reflectI preached other mens sermons and talked of anything but Christ. I lifted up anything but the Lord! Oh, how shall the howling of his eternal doom commence in his ear! How shall the judgments of God get hold upon him even before he passes to the dread tribunal of the Most High. We must, as preachers, come back more and more to this ruleto feel that if the Holy Spirit is in us, He will make us glorify Christ.

2. Having thus tried ministers, let us now take the same test with regard to doctrine. And very briefly here, lay it down as a self-evident truth that any teaching, whatever authority it may claim, which does not glorify Christ, is most assuredly false. And on the other hand, I think we shall seldom be wrong if we believe that when a teaching lifts Christ up and puts many crowns upon His head, it must be a doctrine according to godliness.

Dear Friends, Socinianism must be utterly abhorred of us, for it strikes at once at the Deity of our blessed Lord and Master. We cannot give to such persons even the name of Christians. Mohammedan they may beit were well if they would join with those menthey may be good men, they may be moral men, they may be excellent citizens, but Christians they cannot be, if they deny our Lord to be very God of very God and worthy to be worshipped even as is the Father.

I marvel that sundry Dissenters should have fraternized with Arians and Socinians in attacking the Church of England, in the present sorrowfully mistaken onslaught called the Bicentenary. And I can only pray that the Lord may not visit them for this shameful confederacy with His enemies. In Arminianism, which is a mixture of truth and error, there is the doctrine of the saints falling from Divine Grace. This is a doctrine which is more dishonorable to Christ than I can tell you. To my mind, it seems to put its black and sooty finger right down the escutcheon of my Lord and Master, setting Him as a laughingstock to the whole world. It says He is One who begins to build and is not able to finishthere is a blot upon His power.

He loves, and yet He loves not to the endthere is a blot upon His faithfulness. He says, I give unto My sheep eternal life and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of My hand. And yet, according to the Arminian, they do perishaccording to that doctrine which is a stain upon His truthfulness. In fact, the doctrine of final falling away impugns the whole Character of Christ so much that it would render Him unworthy of our faith. When they shall prove that one who was once in Christ has fallen away and has been lost, I know not Christ, for He has violated His Word. He can no more be the Truth, when He has thus put His own promises into the background and suffered His darlings to fall into the power of the dog.

If there is anything in Scripture as plain as noonday, it is the doctrine that, He that believes in Him has everlasting life, and shall never perish, neither shall he come into condemnation. If the child of God can be disinherited, if Christ can divorce His spouse, if the Good Shepherd shall lose His sheep, if the limbs of Christs mystical body can be cut off, or can be allowed to rot, then I know not what Scripture teaches, nor do I understand how Christ can be worthy of the Believers trust. That doctrine, I think, must be reprobated, because it stains the honor and glory of Christ.

Without alluding to others, let that suffice as an instance. Examine well all doctrines. Look not at them with complacency because they are put in cunning language, or asserted in vigorous declamation. But if you perceive that any teaching dishonors Christ and makes much of human abilityif it exalts man and derogates from the Grace of Godit is false and dangerous. And if, on the other hand, it lays man in the dust and lifts up Christ as a Savior, the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End of salvation, you may safely say that is the Holy Spirits doctrine, for He shall glorify Christ.

3. Again, we may use our text as a means by which to try much of the conviction through which a sinner passes. In the first dawn of our spiritual life a mighty tempest of spiritual influence sweeps over the heart. The Holy Spirit is active, and the prince of the power of the air is active, too. There is more of God and more of Satan in a new convert, than perhaps in any other stage of human existence. For just then Satan rages with extraordinary fury to drag back the soul to destruction, and the Holy Spirit works in him mightily, with a power which only Omnipotence can wield.

How, in this confusion, can a man know what part of his conviction is of God, and what part of the devil? Young man, listen to me. You have a thought in your head that you are too great a sinner to be saved. That is not of the Holy Spirit, clearly, because it detracts from the power of Christ as a Savior. That cannot be of the Holy Spirit, for the Holy Spirit glorifies Christ. Yes, Sir, but I feel myself to be a great sinner, utterly lost and ruined. That is of the Holy Spirit, because it lays you low in order that the greatness of Christs salvation may be the more apparent.

Oh but, you say, I am not fit to come to Christ. Surely this feeling is not of the Holy Spirit, but of the devil, for it does not glorify Christ. What? Are you to make yourself fit to come to Christ? Why, that is making you a Christyes, it is making you an antichrist, which is no work of Heaven but a foul design of Hell. But I heard old Mr. So-and-So say the other day, Sir, that when he was converted, he seemed to be dragged by the hair of his head to the very depths of Hell. He said his soul was full of blasphemy and his heart was in such an awful state that he cursed the day of his birth, because he thought he was shut out of the Covenant and was utterly lost beyond the reach of mercy.

Very well, no doubt what he has told you was his veritable experience. But do you want to experience every piece of devilry that a good man has known? Because a good man trips and falls into the gutter, must you trip and fall there, too? Because Jonah descends into the whales belly, must we all dive into the sea? I tell you, Soul, that much of what your friend felt was not of God, but of his own corrupt heart and of the deviland he knows it, and he will confess the same to you. Why, therefore, should you pant after that which is sinful and Satanic? Why should you desire to drink the poison of asps and sniff the fumes of Tophet?

If the Lord brings you, this morning, to put your soul just as it is into the hands of the Redeemer, honoring Him by a childlike trust, you have an experience infinitely more precious than the howling of devils, and the ravings of your proud heart could ever yield you. To be nothing, and to accept Christ as everything, is worked in us of the Holy Spiritall the rest, those horrible insinuations, that terrible Hell-shakingmay be all dispensed with. Good men have felt these, but they are not good things. They come from Satan and are to be avoided and prayed againstnot to be sought after.

I pray you, therefore, let the Holy Spirit lead you in His own way and ask not to be led in a way of your own choice. Why long for darkness when the Master wills to let you walk in the light? Into these balances, then, put all your convictions, and discover how far they are of God and how far of Satan. That which glorifies Christ is of the Holy Spirit. All the rest is of flesh, or of Hell.

4. Thus, we may test what is called experience. Very much of the experience of a Christian is not Christian experience. If any person should mount the platform and say, I will tell you the experience of a man, and then inform us that he had been five times tried at the Old Bailey, you would say, Well, you may have experienced that disgrace but it is not fair to call it human experience.

So, a Christian man may fall into great darkness and into sin, too. Let us mournfully confess it. But then, if he shall set up his darkness and his sin as being Christian experience, we say, No. We do not judge you, you may be a Christian and know all this, but we cannot allow you to judge us and decide our spiritual state according to your peculiar method of feeling. I fear that many biographies have done as much mischief as service. While no doubt they comfort many who fall into the same state, yet a sufficient discrimination is not made between the man stirred by the powers of evil, and the same man when filled with the Holy Spirit.

When we get to that which comes from beneath we ought to write always in the spirit of our Apostle who cannot describe himself without an agonyOh, wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ my Lord. That which glorifies Christ is true Christian experience, and that which does anything but this, a Christian may experiencebut it is not Christian experience.

5. Let us lift the scales of judgment once more. I think our text gives us an excellent test by which to try ourselves. My Hearer, are you saved or not, this morning? If you are saved, the bent, the tenor, the bias of your life is to glorify Christ. What do you say in looking back? Does the past glorify! When I think of the love that cleansed me from such sin, of the Divine Grace that broke a heart so hard as mine, of the faithfulness that has kept me to this day, I can only glorify Christ. And what about the present? Oh, can you say, when I think of what I now am by the Grace of God and what I should have been now if the Holy Spirit had not prevented. When I look within and see so much blackness, I must magnify the Grace that keeps me. And when It look without and see so many temptations, I must and will speak well of His dear name. I must glorify my Lord Jesus?

And what do you say about the future? Will you glorify Him then? I think I see even the timid ones with their eyes, a little brightening up when they say, Yes! If He will but once bring me across the river, if I ever get beyond gunshot of the devil, and behold the face of Christ in Glory, I will sing loudest of all the crowd. I will magnify Him with all my powers, for I shall owe more to Him than anyone else before the Throne. I will never cease to sing with all the blood-washed throng, Bring forth the royal diadem, and crown him Lord of all.

Oh, if your heart is not so that Christ is ALL to you, and if your soul is not desiring this morning to honor Him, Him only, then indeed, I fear the Holy Spirit has had no dealing with your spirit, for where He has been at work, He must, He shall glorify Christ.

II. We are now to use our text as DIRECTION. How are we to glorify Christ?   
The text tells us that we must have the Holy Spirit. Let our text, then, be sanctified to our humiliation. Here are we saved by the rich love of Christ, delivered from our sins, and made alive unto God. And yet we are such weak things that we cannot glorify Christ without the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. We may pant, and long, and pray that we may have helped to honor our Master, but we shall only dishonor Him and disgrace His cause, unless the Holy Spirit holds us up and strengthen us. Do you hear that, Christian Man and Woman? You have ten talents but those ten talents shall make you ten times a worse defaulter to your Master unless the Holy Spirit helps you.  
You have eloquence, you have wit, you have wealthwith none of these can you glorify Christ, unless the Holy Spirit is with you. For, He shall glorify Me. Man cannot, except as the Holy Spirit is with him. Bow your heads, then, O you saints of God, and ascribe glory unto the Holy Spirit, but unto yourselves shame and confusion of face. Let us employ this text as an excitement to earnest prayer. We as a Church, and I may speak freely for my own flock, we long to see Christ glorified. It is to this end we seek to train up our sons, young men in our much-loved college, that they may go forth as preachers of the Word.   
We have agencies by which we hope to do something in our generation for our Masterbut what is everything we can do without the Holy Spirit? Let us, therefore, pray without ceasing. Oh, without prayer, what are the Churchs agencies but the stretching out of a dead mans arm, or the lifting up of the lid of a blind mans eye? Only when the Holy Spirit comes is there any life and force and power. Cry then mightily unto God, O you who seek to glorify Christ, for without the Holy Spirit you utterly fail.   
And here what a lesson our text reads us of entire dependence upon the Holy Spirit. You can do nothing, you ministers of God! Nothing, you faithful watchmen of Jerusalem! You can do nothing, you teachers of youth, nothing you heralds of the Cross in foreign fields, nothing you ten thousands who are willing to give all your substance, your time and your talentsabsolutely

nothing can you accomplish until God the Holy Spirit comes.   
We are by the seaside. There are a number of ships left high and dry by the ebb of the tide. A long tract of mud stretches out before us. What is to be done? Call the kings horses, bring the kings men, gather together the wise and the mighty. What can they all do? Nothingtheir learning can only avail to prove most clearly that they can do nothing. But see, the tide rolls in, wave after wave rises from the deep, and lo, every ship floats and all the mud and sand is covered with the fullness of the sea. So is it with the Churches. We all lie high and dry upon the beach and there is nothing but the rock and mud of our own inability that is visibleand we can do nothing, absolutely nothing, till the holy tide comes.   
The blessed spirit of revival, the Holy Spirit, is poured out, and now the heaviest Church is floating out to sea and that which was most inactive begins to move! Oh, what can we not do if we have the Holy Spirit? What can we do if we have Him not? See our utter and entire dependence upon Him. When we, as a Church, first came out into broader light and more public notice, I bear my witness, we had an entire dependence upon the Holy Spirit. What prayers have I heard, what striving and what groaning! We are reaping now the ripe fruits of the early sowing.   
Lo, your minister but a stripling from the countryall untrained in academic lore, knowing nothing but just the doctrine of the Crosscame forth before the multitudes to proclaim simply the Word. How he felt his nothingness then, and how often he told you so! You cried to God, and the child, the lad, was helped. What mighty deeds were done in the conversion of hundreds! And now we have a name, and there is a great temptation to rest upon our success, and for men to think there is something in the preacher, that he can gather the crowd, can preach the Word, and it is sure to be blessed when he preaches it.   
Brothers and Sisters, again I say we are nothing, we are less than nothing. Your minister is a fool, and nothing beyond. Unless the Holy Spirit is with him, he is able to do nothing except mischief. Nothing that shall be profitable to you, or make any heart glad but the heart of the Evil One, unless the Holy Spirit is with us still. Joyously would I receive again the jeer, the sneer, the constant slander that was heaped upon my devoted head, if I might have back again your entire dependence upon the Holy Spirit.   
Oh, members of this Church, you who have been quickened under our word, let not your faith stand in the wisdom of man, but in the demonstration of the Spirit! And let us one and all feel that we are still as weak as water, and as vain as the whistling wind, unless He that was first with us is with us still. He shall glorify Me. The Holy Spirit shall do it. None can do it if He is absent.   
I know I am addressing some this morning who have seen the goings forth of the Holy One of Israel. In fact we as a Church have had to rejoice these nearly nine years in a blessed revival. But how diligent should we be while we have that revival, in order that we may retain it! All the farmers in England cannot make it leave off raining but when it does leave off and the sun shines, I know what they doget their wheat in as quickly as they can. All the sailors on the ocean cannot make a capful of wind. When the sail flaps to and fro they cannot make it swell out as in the galebut what can they do when the wind does blow? They can crowd on every yard of canvas.   
So all the Christians in the world cannot make the Holy Spirit work. The wind blows where it lists, and you hear the sound thereof, but can not tell from where it comes nor where it goes. But what we can do is this, when we have the Holy Spiritwe can use Him. When He is with us we can work. We must make hay while the sun shines. We must grind while the wind blows, we must be active and diligent for God when the visitation of the Holy Spirit is with us. The revival has, to a great extent, ceased in many places. I fear it is because they did not diligently use its influence.   
In Ireland how much of revival there was but the Holy Spirit withdrew necessarily because it was held up as a curiosity. Every newspaper reeked with the news of the revival. People went from England to see it. It could not last, then. God never does His great works to be stared at, to be held up as curiosities. The thing was ruined the moment men began curiously to talk of it, and spread abroad the news as of a phenomenon worthy of philosophical investigation.   
These good things should never be made a subject of. Come, see my zeal for the Lord of Hosts. While the good work goes on we should be so hard at work for the Master, that we have not time to put into every penny newspaper the tale of what God is doing. Let us then be up while the Master is with us, and doing His work, doing it in the Spirits own way, seeking to glorify Jesus, and seeking to retain the Spirit in our midst.   
III. And now, lastly, I am to take my text by way of A STIMULUS. Does the Holy Spirit glorify Christ? Ah, then, how should we aim to do it! Let us make, then, Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ, let us make this the one object of our lifeto glorify Christ. You have been a man in a large way of business. Could you say while you were doing business so largely that your object was to honor Christ in it?  
Well, you have come down in the world. You have a smaller shop now. Yes, and suppose you can glorify God more? Then you are in a better position than you used to be. I have seen many a man who prospered in his soul and honored his Master much, who has made a wrong step and has injured his usefulness and happiness. Wanting to get more business, he has launched into wide speculations and has had less time for serving his Lord. And he has thus really been in a worse position, for spirituals were under a decay.   
You may have seen in the newspapers an instance of what sometimes comes through getting wealthy. A man and his wife were prospering in a little way of business, as hard-working people, near Birmingham. A friend died and left the wife some 1,300, no great sum but quite enough to ruin a man. They at once took a public house and you will remember that he now lies in prison on a charge of murdering his wife. Little marvel that when, tempted by what little they had, to seek after more they entered upon an ill occupation in order to increase their wealth. That evil trade soon led to vicious habits and to death.   
Now I have seen Believers mournfully impoverish their souls by seeking after carnal wealth instead of seeking Christ. But let a mans only object be to glorify Christ, and he will feel very little concern where Providence places him, so long as he may still promote his one object and put crowns on the Redeemers head.   
This brings me to say, Brethren, while we make this our aim, let us take every opportunity of glorifying Christ. We throw thousands of opportunities away. Where we might do good, we neglect it. I chide my own self here very bitterly, and very often, but I fear I might chide many of you, too. You had an opportunity yesterday but you lost it. You might have spoken for Christ but you did not. No one can tell the good you might have done, but you did not do it. You were backward. Oh, as the Holy Spirit glorifies Christ everywhere, so do you! I pray you do this always, not merely at particular times, but make your whole life a glorifying of Christ.   
As I sat on an omnibus yesterday, I heard a man saying behind me how greatly he admired the continental way of keeping Sundaysgoing to Church in the morning, and going to the theater at night. Dont you see, he said, it is irrational to think that the Almighty expects us to spend the whole day in praying. There is no man living who can pray for six hours together, let alone twelve. That was just putting in broad language what most ungodly people feel. I wonder what they would make of the Apostle Pauls admonition, Pray without ceasing. Here was a man who thought that nobody could pray for six hours together, while the saints of God are to continue always in prayer.   
No man comes up to the stature of the Christian, or such a man as he should be, unless he cannot only pray for six hours together but his whole life long. It was said of good old Rowland Hill that people did not so much notice his particular times of retirement, for he was a man who was always praying, wherever he might be. You would often find him alone talking to himself. And even in company his heart would be going away to the object of his best lovehe would still be in communion with Christ.   
Be always glorifying Christ, Christians, from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof. Whether you work at a lap stone, or drive a plow, or lay the stones in a buildingserve the Master in all these things. Whether you are diligent with the pen, or whether you buy and sell, or plow the seado all even to your eating or your drinking in the name of the Lord Jesusand so like the Holy Spirit let it be said of you, He shall glorify Me.   
We conclude by endeavoring to magnify our Master ourselves. I want to say just two or three things to glorify Him and they shall be just these. I shall say this to the poor troubled doubting sinner, Sinner, my Master is able to save you. Oh but I am the biggest sinner out of Hell. Yes, and He is the greatest of all Saviors. Yes, but I have gone over head and ears in iniquity. Yes, and He was baptized also in His agonies that He might save you. Oh but He cannot save me! Yes! He can! And if I am now addressing the scum of the earth, one of the devils sweepings, one who is hardly fit for decent company, my Master is able to save you. Unto the uttermost He saves, and your sin, though black, He can cleanse and make you whiter than snow.   
I would say something else to glorify Him. He is willing to save you. His generous heart desires you. Your perishing will not make Him glad, but He will weep over you as He did over Jerusalem. But your being saved will give Him to see of the travail of His soul. Do you know who you are speaking to, Sir? No I dont, but my Master does. For now He fixes His poor tearful eyes on you. Where is the sinner? Behind that pillar? Or in yonder corner? The Master looks at him, and He says, Come unto Me all you that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly of heart and you shall find rest unto your souls.

What? Are you so far away? How loudly does He call you, Come, Sinner, repent and come. Are you willing to come? Lo! He meets you! In the road He meets youembracing you, He falls upon your neck to kiss you. He says, even this morning, He says it, Take off his rags and clothe him in fine apparel. Wash him and make him clean, for I have put away his sins like a cloud, and like a thick cloud his iniquities.   
That which glorifies Christ the most of all is the preaching of the Gospel to sinners, and therefore have I glorified Him now and would do so as long as I live. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved, for he that believes and is baptized shall be saved. He that believes not shall be damned. God give us to glorify Christ by trusting in Him! Amen.

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HONEY IN THE MOUTH!   
NO. 2213

**A SERMON INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, JULY 19, 1891, DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
ON FRIDAY MORNING, APRIL 24, 1891,   
AT THE CONFERENCE OF THE PASTORS COLLEGE EVANGELICAL ASSOCIATION.

**He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father has are Mine: therefore said I, that He shall take of Mine and shall show it unto you.**

**John 16:14, 15.**

BELOVED Friends, here you have the Trinity, and there is no salvation apart from the Trinity! It must be the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. All things that the Father has are Mine, says Christ, and the Father has all things. They were always His; they are still His; they always will be Hisand they cannot become ours till they change ownershiptill Christ can say, All things that the Father has are Minefor it is by virtue of the representative Character of Christ standing as the Surety of the Covenant, that the all things of the Father are passed over to the Son, that they might be passed over to us. It pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell; and of His fullness have all we received. But yet we are so dull that though the conduit pipe is laid on to the great fountain, we cannot get at it. We are lame. We cannot reach it, but in comes the third Person of the Divine Unity, even the Holy Spirit, and He receives of the things of Christ and then delivers them over to us! So we actually receive, through Jesus Christ, by the Spirit, what is in the Father!

Ralph Erskine, in his preface to a sermon upon the 15th verse, has a notable piece. He speaks of Grace as honeyhoney for the cheering of the saints, for the sweetening of their mouths and heartsbut he says that in the Father, the honey is in the flower, which is at such a distance from us that we could never extract it. In the Son, the honey is in the comb, prepared for us in our Immanuel, God-Man, Redeemer, the Word that was made flesh, saying, All things that the Father has are Mine; and Mine for your use and benefitit is in the comb. But then, next, we have honey in the mouththe Spirit taking all things and making application of them, by showing them unto us and making us to eat and drink with Christ, and share of these all thingsyes, not only eat the honey, but the honeycomb with the honeynot only His benefits, but Himself.

It is a very beautiful division of the subject. Honey in the flower in God, as in mystery, really there. There never will be any more honey than there is in the flower. There it is. But how shall you and I get it? We have not wisdom to extract the sweetness. We are not as the bees that are able to find it out. It is bee honey, not man honey. Yet you see in Christ it becomes the honey in the honeycomb and, therefore, He is sweet to our taste as honey dropping from the comb. Sometimes we are so faint that we cannot reach out a hand to grasp that honeycomb and, alas, there was a time when our palates were so depraved that we preferred bitter things and even thought them sweet! But now that the Holy Spirit has come, we have got the honey in the mouth and the taste that enjoys it! Yes, we have now so long enjoyed it that the honey of Grace has entered into our constitution and we have become sweet unto GodHis sweetness having been conveyed by this strange method unto us.

Beloved Friends, I scarcely need say to you, keep the existence of the Trinity prominent in your ministry! Remember, you cannot pray without the Trinity. If the full work of salvation requires a Trinity, so does that very breath by which we live. You cannot draw near to the Father except through the Son and by the Holy Spirit. There is undoubtedly a trinity in nature. There certainly constantly turns up the need of a Trinity in the realm of Graceand when we get to Heaven we shall understand, perhaps, more fully what is meant by the Trinity in Unity. But if that is a thing never to be understood, we shall at least apprehend it more lovingly, and we shall rejoice more completely as the three tones of our music shall rise up in perfect harmony unto Him who is One and indivisible, and yet is Three, forever blessed, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one God!

Now for the point which I am to open up to you this morning, though I cannot do it, but He must do it. We must sit here and have the text acted out upon ourselves. He shall glorify Me. He shall take of Mine and shall show it unto you. May it be so just now!

First, what the Holy Spirit doesHe shall take of Mine and shall show it unto you. Secondly, what the Holy Spirit aims at and really effectsHe shall glorify Me. And then, thirdly, how, in doing both these things, He is the Comforter. It is the Comforter that does this and we shall find our richest, surest comfort in this work of the Holy Spirit, who shall take of the things of Christ and show them unto us.

I. First, WHAT THE HOLY SPIRIT DOES. It is clear, Beloved Friends, that the Holy Spirit deals with the things of Christ. As our brother, Archibald Brown, said, when expounding the chapter just now, He does not aim at any originality. He deals with the things of Christ. All things that Christ had heard from His Father He made known to us. He kept to them. And now the Spirit takes of the things of Christ and of nothing else. Do not let us strain at anything new. The Holy Spirit could deal with anything in Heaven above, or in the earth beneaththe story of the ages past, the story of the ages to come, the inward secrets of the earth, the evolution of all things, if there is an evolution. He could do it all! Like the Master, He could handle any topic He chose, but He confines Himself to the things of Christ and therein finds unutterable liberty and boundless freedom.

Do you think, dear Friend, that you can be wiser than the Holy Spirit? And if His choice must be a wise one, will yours be a wise one if you begin to take of the things of something or somebody else? You will have the Holy Spirit near you when you are receiving of the things of Christ, but, as the Holy Spirit is said never to receive anything else, when you are handling other things on the Sabbath, you will be handling them aloneand the pulpit is a dreary solitude, even in the midst of a crowdif the Holy Spirit is not with you there. You may, if you please, think through a theology out of your own vast brain, but the Holy Spirit is not with you there. And, mark you, there are some of us that are resolved to tarry with the things of Christ and keep on dealing with them as far as He enables us to do so! And we feel that we are in such blessed company with the Divine Spirit that we do not envy you that wider range of thought, if you prefer it.

The Holy Spirit still exists, works and teaches in the Church. And we have a test by which to know whether what people claim to be Revelation is Revelation or notHe shall receive of Mine. The Holy Spirit will never go farther than the Cross and the coming of the Lord. He will go no farther than that which concerns Christ. He shall receive of Mine. When, therefore, anybody whispers in my ear that there has been revealed to him this or that, which I do not find in the teaching of Christ and His Apostles, I tell him that we must be taught by the Holy Spirit. His one vocation is to deal with the things of Christ! If we do not remember this, we may be carried away by quirks, as many have been. Those who will have to do with other things, let thembut as for us, we shall be satisfied to confine our thoughts and our teaching within these limitless limitsHe shall take of Mine, and shall show it unto you.

I like to think of the Holy Spirit handling such things. They seem so worthy of Him. Now has He got among the hills. Now is His mighty mind among the infinities when He has to deal with Christ, for Christ is the Infinite veiled in the finite. Why, He seems something more than Infinite when He gets into the finite, and the Christ of Bethlehem is less to be understood than the Christ of the Fathers bosom! He seems, if it were possible, to have out-infinited the infinite, and the Spirit of God has themes here worthy of His vast Nature!

When you have been the whole Sunday morning whittling away a text to the small end of nothing, what have you done? A king spent a day in trying to make a portrait on a cherrystonea king who was ruling empires! And here is a minister who professes to have been called of the Holy Spirit to the employ of taking of the things of Christ, who spent a whole morning with precious souls who were dying while he spoke to them on a theme concerning which it did not signify the turn of a hair whether it was so or not! Oh, imitate the Holy Spirit! If you profess to have Him dwelling in you, be moved by Him! Let it be said of you, in your measure, as of the Holy Spirit without measure, He shall receive of Mine and shall show it unto you.

But, next, what does the Holy Spirit do? Why, He deals with feeble men. Yes, He dwells with us poor creatures! I can understand the Holy Spirit taking the things of Christ and rejoicing therein, but the marvel is that He should glorify Christ by coming and showing these things to us! And yet, Brothers, it is among us that Christ is to get His glory. Our eyes must see Him! An unseen Christ is little glorious. And the things of Christ unknownthe things of Christ untasted and unlovedseem to have lost their brilliance to a high degree. The Holy Spirit, therefore, feeling that to show a sinner the salvation of Christ glorifies Him, spends His time and has been spending these centuries in taking of the things of Christ and showing them to us. Ah, it is a great condescension on His part to show them to us. And it is a miracle, too. If it were reported that suddenly stones had life, hills had eyes and trees had ears, it would be a strange thing. But for us who were dead and blind and deaf in an awful sensefor the spiritual is more emphatic than the naturalfor us to be so far gone and for the Holy Spirit to be able to show the things of Christ to us is to His honor! And He does it. He comes from Heaven to dwell with us. Let us honor and bless His name.

I never could make up my mind which to admire most as an act of condescensionthe Incarnation of Christ, or the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The Incarnation of Christ is marvelousthat He should dwell in human nature, but, observe, the Holy Spirit dwells in human nature in its sinfulnessnot in perfect human nature, but in imperfect human nature! And He continues to dwell, not in one body, which was fashioned strangely for Himself and was pure and without taint, but He dwells in our bodies! Know you not that they are the temples of the Holy Spirit, which were defiled by nature and in which a measure of defilement still remains, despite His indwelling? And this He has done these multitudes of years, not in one instance, nor in thousands of instances, but in a number that no man can number! He continues to come into contact with sinful humanity! Not to the angels, nor to the seraphim, nor to the cherubim, nor to the host who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, does He show the things of Christbut He shall show them to us!

I suppose that it means this, that He takes of the words of our Lord those which He spoke personally and by His Apostles. Let us never allow anybody to divide between the word of the Apostles and the word of Christ! Our Savior has joined them together. Neither pray I for these, alone, but for them, also, which shall believe on Me through their word. And if any begin rejecting the Apostolic word, they will be outside the number for whom Christ praysthey shut themselves out by that very fact! I wish that they would solemnly remember that the word of the Apostles is the word of Christ. He tarried not long enough, after He had risen from the dead, to give us a further exposition of His mind and will. And He could not have given it before His death, because it would have been unsuitable. I have yet many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now. After the descent of the Holy Spirit, the disciples were prepared to receive that which Christ spoke by His servants, Paul and Peter, and James and John.

Certain doctrines which we are sometimes taunted about as being not revealed by Christ, but by His Apostles, were all revealed by Christ, every one of them! They can all be found in His teaching, but they are very much in the parabolic form. It is after He has gone up into Glory and has prepared a people, by His Spirit, to understand the Truths of God more fully, that He sends His Apostles and says, Go forth, and open up to those whom I have chosen out of the world the meaning of all I said. The meaning is all there, just as all the New Testament is in the Old! And sometimes I have thought that, instead of the Old being less inspired than the New, it is more inspired! Things are packed away more tightly in the Old Testament than in the New, if possible. There are worlds of meaning in one pregnant line in the Old Testamentand in Christs words it is just so. He is the Old Testament to which the Epistles come in as a kind of New Testament, but they are all one and indivisiblethey cannot be separated.

Well, now, the words of the Lord Jesus, and the words of His Apostles, are to be expounded to us by the Holy Spirit. We shall never get at the center of their meaning apart from His teaching. We shall never get at their meaning at all if we begin disputing about the words, saying, I cannot accept the words. If you will not have the shell, you will never have the chick! It is impossible. The words are not Inspired, they say. Here is a man in the witness box and he has sworn to speak the truth and he says that he has. And now he is cross-examined and he says, Now, I have spoken the truth, but I do not stand by my words. The cross-examining lawyer has got hold of a certain statement of his. The witness says, Oh, I do not swear to the words, you know. The question is asked, What, then, do you swear to? There is nothing else. We do not know anything about your meaning. All that you have sworn to must be your words. But what the fellow means is thishe is a liar. He is a perjurer. Well, I say no more than commonsense would suggest to you if you were sitting in a court. Now, if a man says, I have spoken the truth, but still I do not swear to the words, what is left? If we have no Inspiration in the Words of God, we have got an impalpable Inspiration that oozes away between your fingers and leaves nothing behind!

Well, take the words and never dispute over them! Still, into their soulfullness of meaning you cannot come until the Holy Spirit shall lead you into them. They that wrote them for you did not fully understand what they wrote in many instances. There were some of them who enquired and searched diligently to know what manner of things those were which the Holy Spirit had spoken to them and of which He had made them speak. And you to whom the words come will have to do the same. You must go and say, Great Master, we thank You for the Book with all our hearts. And we thank You for putting the Book into words. But now, good Master, we will not quibble over the letter, as did the Jews and the rabbis and the scribes of old, and so miss Your meaning. Open wide the door of the words, that we may enter into the secret closet of their meaning. Teach us this, we pray You. You have the key. Lead us in.

Dear Friends, whenever you want to understand a text of Scripture, try to read the original. Consult anybody who has studied what the original means, but remember that the quickest way into a text is praying in the Holy Spirit. Pray the chapter over! I do not hesitate to say that if a chapter is read upon ones knees, looking up at every word to Him that gave it, the meaning will come to you with infinitely more light than by any other method of studying it. He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine and shall show it unto you. He shall re-deliver the Masters message to you in the fullness of its meaning!

But I do not think that is all that the text means. He shall receive of Mine. In the next verse the Lord goes on to say, All things that the Father has are Mine. I think that it means, therefore, that the Holy Spirit will show us the things of Christ. Here is a text for usThe things of Christ. Christ speaks as if He had not any things, just then, which were specially His own, for He had not yet died. He had not yet risen. He was not pleading, then, as the great Intercessor in Heavenall that was to come. But still, He says, Even now all things that the Father has are Mineall His attributes, all His Glory, all His rest, all His happiness, all His blessedness. All that is Mine and the Holy Spirit shall show that to you.

But I might almost read my text in another light, for He has died, risen and gone on high, and lo, He comes! His chariots are on the way! Now, there are certain things which the Father has and which Jesus Christ has, which are truly the things of Christ, emphatically the things of Christ. And my prayer is that you and I, preachers of the Gospel, might have this text fulfilled in usHe shall take of MineMy thingsand shall show them unto you.

Suppose, dear Brothers, that we are going to preach the Word, again, and the Holy Spirit shows to us our Master in His Godhead. Oh, how we will preach Him as Divinehow surely He can bless our congregation! How certainly He must be able to subdue all things unto Himself, seeing that He is very God of very God! It is equally sweet to see Him as Man. Oh, to have the Spirits view of Christs Manhood, distinctly to recognize that He is bone of my bone and flesh of my fleshand that in His infinite tenderness He will be compassionate to me and deal with my poor people and with the troubled consciences that are round me! I have still to go to them and tell them of One who is touched with the feeling of their infirmities, having been tempted in all points like as they still are! Oh, my Brothers, if we once, no, if every time before we preach, we get a view of Christ in His Divine and Human Natures and come down fresh from that vision to speak about Him, what glorious preaching it would be for our people!

It is a glorious thing to get a view of the offices of Christ by the Holy Spirit, but especially of His office as a Savior! I have often said to Him, You must save my people. It is no business of mine. I never set up in that line, or put over my door that I was a saviorbut You have been apprenticed to this trade! You have learned it by experience and You claim it as Your own honor. You are exalted on high to be a Prince and a Savior. Do Your own work, my Lord. I took this text and used it with sinners the other Sunday night, and I know that God blessed it when I said to them, May the Holy Spirit show you that Christ is a Savior! A physician does not expect you to make any apologies when you call upon him because you are ill, for he is a physician and he needs you in order that he may prove his skill. So Christ is a Savior and you need not apologize for going to Him! He cannot be a Savior if there is not somebody to be saved! The fact is, Christ cannot get hold of us anywhere except by our sin. The point of contact between the sick one and the physician is the disease. Our sin is the point of contact between us and Christ. Oh, that the Spirit of God would take of Christs Divine offices, especially that of a Savior, and show them unto us!

Did the Holy Spirit ever show you these thing of Christ, namely, His Covenant engagements? When He struck hands with the Father, it was that He would bring many sons to Glorythat of those whom the Father gave Him, He would lose none, but that they should be saved, for He is under bonds to His Father to bring His elect Home. When the sheep have to pass, again, under the hands of Him that counts them, they will go under the rod, one by one, each one having the blood-markand He will never rest till the number in the heavenly fold shall tally with the number in the Book.

So I believe and it has seemed delightful to me to have this shown to me when I have gone to preach. It is a dull, dreary, wet, foggy morning. There are only a few present. Yes, but they are picked people whom God has ordained to be thereand there will be the right number there! I shall preach and there will be some saved. We do not go at a chance, but, guided by the blessed Spirit of God, we go with a living certainty, knowing that God has a people that Christ is bound to bring Home and bring them Home He will! And while He shall see of the travail of His soul, His Father shall delight in every one of them! If you get a clear view of that, it will give you backbone and make you strong. He shall take of Mine and shall show you my Covenant engagements, and when you see them, you shall be comforted.

But, Beloved, the Holy Spirit favors you by taking what is peculiarly Christs, namely, His love, and showing that to you. We have seen it, seen it sometimes more vividly than at other times. But if the full blaze of the Holy Spirit were to be concentrated upon the love of Christand our eyesight enlarged to its utmost capacityit would be such a vision that Heaven could not excel it! We should sit with our Bible before us in our study and feel, Well now, here is a man, whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell. Such a man is caught up into the third Heaven. Oh, to see the love of Christ in the light of the Holy Spirit! When it is so revealed to us, it is not merely the surface which we see, but the love of Christ itself! You know that you never saw anything yet, strictly speaking. You only see the appearance of the thingthe light reflected by itthat is all you see. But the Holy Spirit shows us the naked Truth of God, the essence of the love of Christ! And what that essence isthat love without beginning, without change, without limit, without endand that love set upon His people simply from motives within Himself. And from no motive ab extrawhat that must be, what tongue can tell? Oh, it is a ravishing sight!

I think that if there could be one sight more wonderful than the love of Christ, it would be the blood of Christ   
*Much we talk of Jesus blood,   
But how littles understood.*

It is the climax of God! I do not know of anything more Divine. It seems to me as if all the eternal purposes worked up to the blood of the Cross and then worked from the blood of the Cross towards the sublime consummation of all things. Oh, to think that He should become Man! God has made spirit, pure spirit, embodied spiritand then materialismand somehow, as if He would take all up into one, the Godhead links Himself with the material and He wears dust about Him even as we wear it! And taking it all up, He then goes and, in that fashion, redeems His people from all the evil of their soul, their spirit and their body by the pouring out of a life which, while it was Human, was so in connection with the Divine, that we speak correctly of the blood of God.

Turn to the 20th chapter of Acts and read how the Apostle Paul puts it Feed the Church of God, which He has purchased with His own blood. I believe that Dr. Watts is not wrong when he saysGod that loved and died. It is an incorrect accuracy, a strictly absolute accuracy of incorrectness! So it must be ever when the finite talks of the Infinite. It was a wonderful Sacrifice that could absolutely obliterate, annihilate and extinguish sin and all the traces that could possibly remain of it, for, He has finished the transgression, made an end of sins, made reconciliation for iniquity and brought in everlasting righteousness. Ah, dear Friends, you have seen this, have you not? But you have yet to see more of it. And when we get to Heaven, we shall then know what that blood meansand with what vigor shall we sing, Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood! Will anybody be there to say, Is not that the religion of the shambles? as they blasphemously call it. Ah, my Friends, they will find themselves where they will wish they had believed the religion of the shambles! And I think that it will burn like coals of juniper into the soul of any man that has ever dared to talk like that, that he did despite unto the blood of God and so, by his own willful deeds, will be cast away forever.

May the Holy Spirit show unto you Gethsemane, Gabbatha and Golgotha! And then, may it please Him to give you a sight of what our Lord is now doing! Oh, how it would cheer you up at any time when you were depressed, only to see Him standing and pleading for you! Do you not think that if your wife were ill, your child were sick and there was hardly any food in the cupboardif you were to go out the back door and you saw Him with the breastplate on, and all the stones glitteringand your name there and Him pleading for youdont you think you would go in and say, There, Wife, it is all right, He is praying for us? Oh, it would be a comfort if the Holy Spirit showed you a pleading Christ! And then, to think that He is reigning as well as pleading! He is at the right hand of God, even the Father, who has put all things under His feet. And He waits till the last enemy shall lie there. Now, you are not afraid, are you, of those who have been snubbing you and opposing you? Remember, He has said, All power is given unto Me in Heaven and in earth. Go you therefore, and teach all nations; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.

Next, and best of all, may the Holy Spirit give you a clear view of His coming. This is our most brilliant hopeLo, He comes! The more the adversary waxes bold and the less of faith there is, and when zeal seems almost extinct, these are the tokens of His coming. The Lord always said that He would not come unless there was first a falling away. And so the darker the night grows and the fiercer the storm becomes, the better will we remember that He of the lake of Galilee came to them upon the waves in the night when the storm was wildest. Oh, what will His enemies say when He comes? When they behold the nail-prints of the Glorified and the Man with the Crown of thornswhen they see Him really come, they that have despised His Word and His ever-blessed bloodhow will they flee before that face of injured love! And we, on the contrary, through His infinite mercy, will say, This is what the Holy Spirit showed us and now we behold it literally! We thank Him for the foresights which He gave us of the Beatific Vision.

I am not yet done on the first head, because there is one point which I want you to remember. When the Holy Spirit takes of the things of Christ and shows them to us, He has a purpose in so doing. You will not laugh, I hope, when I remind you of what the little boys sometimes do at school with one another. I have seen a boy take out of his pocket an apple and say to his schoolmate, Do you see that apple? Yes, says the other. Then, you may see me eat it, he says. But the Holy Spirit is no Tantalus, taking of the things of Christ and holding them up to mock us! No. He says, Do you see these things? If you can see them, you may have them. Did not Christ, Himself, say, Look unto Me, and be you saved, all the ends of the earth? Looking gives you a claim and if you can see Him, He is yours! It is with you, with regard to the Spirit showing you things, as it was with Jacob. You know Jacob lay down and went to sleep. And the Lord said to him, The land whereon you lie, to you will I give it. Now, wherever you go, throughout the whole of Scripture, if you can find a place where you can lie down, that is yours! If you can sleep on a promise, that promise is yours! Lift up now your eyes, said God to Abraham, and look from the place where you, are northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: for all the land which you see, to you will I give it.

May the Lord increase our holy vision of delighted faith, for there is nothing we see but we may also enjoyall that is in Christ is there for us!   
II. Now, secondly, WHAT THE HOLY SPIRIT AIMS AT AND WHAT HE REALLY ACCOMPLISHES. He shall glorify Me.   
Ah, Brothers, the Holy Spirit never comes to glorify us, or to glorify a denomination, or, I think, even to glorify a systematic arrangement of doctrines! He comes to glorify CHRIST! If we want to be in accord with Him, we must preach in order to glorify Christ. May we never have this thoughtI will put that bit in. It will sound well. The friends will feel that oratory is not quite extinct, that Demosthenes lives again in this village. No, no! I would say, Brother, though it is a very delightful piece, strike that out because if you have had a thought of that kind about it, you had better not put yourself in the way of temptation by using it. Yes, that is a magnificent sentence! I do not know where I met with it, or whether it is my own. I am afraid that most of our friends will not understand it, but then it will give them an impression that they have a deep thinker in their pulpit. Well then, it may be very admirable and, further, it might be a very right thing to give them that precious piece; but if you have that thought about it, strike it out! Strike it out ruthlessly! Say, No, no, no! If it is not distinctly my aim to glorify Christ, I am not in accord with the aim of the Holy Spirit and I cannot expect His help! We shall not be pulling the same way and, therefore, I will have nothing of which I cannot say that I am saying it simply, sincerely and only that I may glorify Christ.   
How, then, does the Holy Spirit glorify Christ? It is very beautiful to think that He glorifies Christ by showing Christs things. If you wanted to do honor to a man, you would, perhaps, take him a present to decorate his house. But here, if you want to glorify Christ, you must go and take the things out of Christs housethe things of Christ. Whenever we have to praise God, what do we do? We simply say what He is! You are this and You are that. There is no other praise. We cannot fetch anything from anywhere else and bring it to Godthe praises of God are simply the facts about Himself! If you want to praise the Lord Jesus Christ, tell the people about Him. Take of the things of Christ and show them to the peopleand you will glorify Christ.   
Alas, I know what you will do. You will weave words together and you will form and fashion them in a marvelous manner till you have produced a charming piece of literature. When you have carefully done that, put it in the fire under the ovenand let it burn! Possibly you may help to bake some bread with it. Brethren, it is better for us to tell what Christ is than to invent 10,000 fine words of praise in reference to Him. He shall glorify Me, for He shall receive of Mine and shall show it unto you.   
Again, I think that the blessed Spirit glorifies Christ by showing us the things of Christ

as Christs. Oh, to be pardoned! Yes, it is a great thing, but to find that pardon in His woundsthat is a greater thing! Oh, to get peace! Yes, but to find that peace in the blood of His Cross! Brothers, have the blood-mark very visibly on all your mercies! They are all marked with the blood of the Cross, but sometimes we think so much of the sweetness of the bread, or of the coolness of the waters, that we forget from where these came and how they cameand then they lack their choicest flavor. That it came from Christ is the best thing about the best thing that ever came from Christ! That He saves me is, somehow, better than my being saved! It is a blessed thing to go to Heaven, but I do not know that it is not a better thing to be in Christ and so, as the result of it, to get into Heaven. It is Himself and that which comes of Himself that becomes best of all because it comes of Himself! So the Holy Spirit shall glorify Christ by making us see that these things of Christ are, indeed, of Christ, and completely of Christand still are in connection with Christand we only enjoy them because we are in connection with Christ.   
Then it is said in the text, He shall glorify Me: for He shall take of Mine and shall show it unto you. Yes, it does glorify Christ for the Holy Spirit to show Christ to us. How often I have wished that men of great minds might be converted! I have wished that we could have a few Miltons and such men, to sing of the love of Christ. A few mighty men who teach politics and the like, to consecrate their talents to the preaching of the Gospel. Why is it not so? Well, because the Holy Spirit does not seem to think that that would be the way to supremely glorify Christ and He prefers, as a better way, to take us commonplace sort of persons and to take the things of Christ and to show them to us. He does glorify Christ and, blessed be His name that ever my bleary eyes should look upon His infinite loveliness! That ever such a wretch as I, who can understand everything but what I ought to understand, should be made to comprehend the heights and depths and to know, with all saints, the love of Christ that passes knowledge!   
You see, in a school, that clever boy. Well, it is not much for the master to have made a scholar of him. But here is one who shines as a scholar and his mother says that he was the greatest dolt in the family! All his schoolfellows say, Why, he was the butt of all our jokes! He seemed to have no brains, but our master, somehow, got some brains into him and made him know something which he appeared, at one time, incapable of knowing. Somehow, it does seem to be as if our very folly, impotence and spiritual deathif the Holy Spirit shows to us the things of Christwill go towards the increase of that great glorifying of Christ at which the Holy Spirit aims!   
Then, Beloved Brothers, since it is for the honor of Christ for His things to be shown to men, He will show them to us, that we may go and show them to other people. This we cannot do, except as He is with us to make the others to see. But He will be with us while we tell forth what He has taught us and so the Holy Spirit will really be showing to others while He is showing to us! A secondary influence will flow from this service, for we shall be helped to use the right means to make others see the things of Christ.   
III. Our time is almost gone, but in the third place I must just point out to you HOW HE IS, IN BOTH OF THESE THINGS, OUR COMFORTER. He is so, first, for this reasonthat there is no comfort in the world like a sight of Christ. He shows to us the things of Christ. Oh, Brothers, if you are poor and if the Holy Spirit shows you that Christ had not where to lay His head, what a sight for you! And if you are sick and if the Holy Spirit shows you what sufferings Christ endured, what comfort comes to you! If you are made to see the things of Christ, each thing according to the condition which you are in, how speedily you are delivered out of your sorrow!   
And then, if the Holy Spirit glorifies Christ, that is the cure for every kind of sorrow. He is the Comforter. I may have told you before, but I cannot help telling you again, that many years ago, after the terrible tragedy in the Surrey Royal Gardens, [See Emotional Trial by Fire!

http://www.pilgrimpublications.com/agonies.htm EOD] I had to go away into the

country and keep quite still. The very sight of the Bible made me cry. I could only keep alone in the garden and I was heavy and sad, for people had been killed and there I was, half dead, myself.

And I remember how I got back my comfort and I preached on the Sabbath after I recovered. I had been walking round the garden and I was standing under a tree. If it is there now, I should know it and I remember these wordsHim has God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Savior. Oh, I thought to myself, I am only a common soldier. If I die in a ditch, I do not care. The King is honored. He wins the victory. And I was like those French soldiers in the old times who loved the emperor and you know how, when they were dying, if he rode by, the wounded man would raise himself up on his elbow and cry once more, Vive l Empereur! for the emperor was engraved on his heart! And so, I am sure, it is with everyone of you, my Brothers, in this holy war! If our Lord and King is exalted, then let other things go which way they like. If He is exalted, never mind what becomes of us. We are a set of pigmiesit is all right if He is exalted! Gods Truth is safe. We are perfectly willing to be forgotten, derided, slandered, or anything else that men please. The cause is safe and the King is on the Throne. Hallelujah! Blessed be His name! Amen.

MR. SPURGEON UPDATE:   
Another anxious week has passed, and by the blessing of the Lord upon the means used, MR. SPURGEONS life is still spared. United and almost universal prayer for his complete recovery has continued to be offered and, at the time that this sermon is sent to the printers, there appears to be a slight improvement in the dear sufferers condition which is still very critical. MRS. SPURGEON and the other members of the family, as well as the Church at the Tabernacle, are very grateful for all the sympathy that has found expression in various ways. And they entreat all Believers to continue pleading for MR. SPURGEONS full restoration, if it is the Lords will.

Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #2382 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE HOLY SPIRITS CHIEF OFFICE   
NO 2382

**A SERMON INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS DAY, OCTOBER 14, 1894.   
DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON THURSDAY EVENING, JULY 26, 1888.

**He shall glorify Me: for He shall take of Mine, and shall show it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine: therefore said I, that He shall take of Mine and shall show it to you.   
John 16:14, 15.**

IT is the chief office of the Holy Spirit to glorify Christ. He does many things, but this is what He aims at in all of themto glorify Christ. Brothers and Sisters, what the Holy Spirit does must be right for us to imitate! Therefore, let us endeavor to glorify Christ. To what higher ends can we devote ourselves, than to something to which God the Holy Spirit devotes Himself? Be this, then, your continual prayer, Blessed Spirit, help me to always glorify the Lord Jesus Christ!

Observe that the Holy Spirit glorifies Christ by showing to us the things of Christ. It is a great marvel that there should be any Glory given to Christ by showing Him to such poor creatures as we are! What? To make us see Christdoes that glorify Him? For our weak eyes to behold Him, for our trembling hearts to know Him and to love Himdoes this glorify Him? It is even so, for the Holy Spirit chooses this as His principal way of glorifying the Lord Jesus. He takes of the things of Christ, not to show them to angels, not to write them in letters of fire across the brow of night, but to show them to us! Within the little temple of a sanctified heart, Christ is praised, not so much by what we do, or think, as by what we see. This puts great value upon meditation, upon the study of Gods Word, and upon silent thought under the teaching of the Holy Spirit, for Jesus says, He shall glorify Me: for He shall take of Mine, and shall show it to you.

Here is a Gospel word at the very outset of our sermon! Poor sinner, conscious of your sin, it is possible for Christ to be glorified by His being shown to you! If you look to Him, if you see Him to be a suitable Savior, an all-sufficient Savior. If your minds eye takes Him in. If He is effectually shown to you by the Holy Spirit, He is thereby glorified! Sinner as you are, unworthy, apparently, to become the arena of Christs Glory, yet shall you be a temple in which the Kings Glory shall be revealed and your poor heart, like a mirror, shall reflect His Grace

*Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove,   
With all Your quickening powers*   
and show Christ to the sinner, that Christ may be glorified in the sinners salvation!

If that great work of Grace is really done at the beginning of the sermon, I shall not mind, even, if I never finish it! God the Holy Spirit will have worked more without me than I could possibly have worked myself, and to the Triune Jehovah shall be all the praise! Oh, that the name of Christ may be glorified in every one of you! Has the Holy Spirit shown you Christ, the Sin-Bearer, the one Sacrifice for sin, exalted on high, to give repentance and remission? If so, then the Holy Spirit has glorified Christ, even in you!

Now, proceeding to examine the text a little in detail, my first observation upon it is thisthe Holy Spirit is our Lords Glorifier. He shall glorify Me. Secondly, Christs own things are His best Glory. He shall glorify Me: for He shall take of Mine, and shall show it to you. And, thirdly, Christs Glory is His Fathers Glory. All things that the Father has are Mine: therefore said I, that He shall take of Mine, and shall show it to you.

I. To begin, then, THE HOLY SPIRIT IS OUR LORDS GLORIFIER. I want you to keep this Truth of God in your mind and never to forget it that which does not glorify Christ is not of the Holy Spirit, and that which is of the Holy Spirit invariably glorifies our Lord Jesus Christ!

First, then, have an eye to this Truth in all comforts. If a comfort which you think you need and which appears to you to be very sweet, does not glorify Christ, look very suspiciously upon it. If, in conversing with an apparently religious man, he prates about truth which he says is comforting, but which does not honor Christ, do not have anything to do with it! It is a poisonous sweetit may charm you for a moment, but it will ruin your soul forever if you partake of it. But blessed are those comforts which smell of Christ, those consolations in which there is a fragrance of myrrh, aloes and cassia, out of the Kings palacethe comfort drawn from His Person, from His work, from His blood, from the Resurrection, from His Glorythe comfort directly fetched from that sacred spot where He trod the winepress alone! This is wine of which you may drink, forget your misery and be unhappy no more!

But always look with great suspicion upon any comfort offered to you, either as a sinner or a saint, which does not come distinctly from Christ. Say, I will not be comforted till Jesus comforts me. I will refuse to lay aside my despondency until He removes my sin. I will not go to Mr. Civility, or Mr. Legality, for the unloading of my burden. No hands shall ever lift the load of conscious sin from off my heart but those that were nailed to the Cross, when Jesus, Himself, bore my sins in His own body on the tree. Please carry this Truth of God with you wherever you go as a kind of spiritual litmus paper by which you may test everything that is presented to you as a cordial or comfort. If it does not glorify Christ, let it not console or please you!

In the next place, have an eye to this Truth of God in all ministries. There are many ministries in the world and they are very diverse from one another, but this Truth will enable you to judge which is right out of them all. That ministry which makes much of Christ, is of the Holy Spirit, but that ministry which decries Him, ignores Him, or puts Him in the background in any degree, is not of the Spirit of God! Any doctrine which magnifies man, but not mans Redeemer. Any doctrine which denies the depth of the Fall and, consequently, derogates from the greatness of salvation. Any doctrine which makes sin less and, therefore, makes Christs work lessaway with it, away with it! This shall be your infallible test as to whether it is of the Holy Spirit or not, for Jesus says, He shall glorify Me. It were better to speak five words to the Glory of Christ, than to be the greatest orator who ever lived and to neglect or dishonor the Lord Jesus Christ!

We, my Brothers, who are preachers of the Word, have but a short time to live. Let us dedicate all that time to the glorious work of magnifying Christ! Longfellow says, in his Psalm of Life, that, Art is long, but longer, still, is the great art of lifting up the Crucified before the eyes of the sin-bitten sons of men. Let us keep to that one employment! If we have but this one string upon which we can play, we may discourse such music on it as would ravish angels and will save men! Therefore, again I say, let us keep to that alone! Cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer and all kinds of music are for Nebuchadnezzars golden image, but as for our God, our one harp is Christ Jesus! We will touch every string of that wondrous instrument, even though it is with trembling fingers and marvelous shall be the music we shall evoke from it!

All ministries, therefore, must be subjected to this testif they do not glorify Christ, they are not of the Holy Spirit.   
We should also have an eye to this Truth in all religious movements and judge them by this standard. If they are of the Holy Spirit, they glorify Christ. There are great movements in the world, every now and then, and we are inclined to look upon them hopefully, for any stir is better than stagnation. But, by-and-by, we begin to fear, with a holy jealousy, what their effects will be. How shall we judge them? To what test shall we put them? Always to this testdoes this movement glorify Christ? Is Christ preached? Then, therein, I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice! Are men pointed to Christ? Then this is the ministry of salvation! Is He preached as First and Last? Are men bid to be justified by faith in Him and then to follow Him, and copy His Divine example? It is well! I do not believe that any man ever lifted up the Cross of Christ in a hurtful way. If it is but the Cross that is seen, it is the sight of the Cross, not of the hands that lift it, that will bring salvation. Some modern movements are heralded with great noise and some come quietly, but if they glorify Christ, it is well.   
But, dear Friends, if it is some new theory that is propounded. If it is some old error revived. If it is something very glittering and fascinating and, for a while it bears the multitudes away, think nothing of it. Unless it glorifies Christ, it is not for you and me. Aliquid Christi, as one of the old fathers said, Anything of Christ, and I love it! But nothing of Christ, or something against Christand it may be very fine and flowery, and it may be very fascinating and charming, highly poetical, and in consonance with the spirit of the agebut we say of it, Vanity of vanities, all is vanity where there is no Christ! Where He is lifted up there is all that is needed for the salvation of a guilty race! Judge every movement, then, not by those who adhere to it, nor by those who admire and praise it, but by this Word of our Lord, He shall glorify Me. The Spirit of God is not in it if it does not glorify Christ!   
Once again, Brothers, I pray you, eye this Truth of God when you are under a sense of great weaknessphysical, mental, or spiritual. You have finished preaching a sermon, you have completed a round with your tracts, or you have ended your Sunday school work for another Sabbath. You say to yourself, I fear that I have done very poorly. You groan as you go to your bed because you think that you have not glorified Christ. It is as well that you should groan if that is the case. I will not forbid it, but I will relieve the bitterness of your distress by reminding you that it is the Holy Spirit who is to glorify ChristHe shall glorify Me. If I preach and the Holy Spirit is with me, Christ will be glorified! But if I were able to speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but without the power of the Holy Spirit, Christ would not be glorified. Sometimes our weakness may even help to make way for the greater display of the might of God. If so, we may glory in infirmity, that the power of Christ may rest upon us! It is not merely we, who speak, but the Spirit of the Lord who speaks by us.   
There is a sound of abundance of rain outside the Tabernaclewould God that there were also the sound of abundance of rain within our hearts! May the Holy Spirit come at this moment and come at all times whenever His servants are trying to glorify Christand do, Himself, what must always be His own work! How can you and I glorify anybody, much less glorify Him who is infinitely glorious? But the Holy Spirit, being, Himself, the glorious God, can glorify the glorious Christ! It is a work worthy of God and it shows us, when we think of it, the absolute need of our crying to the Holy Spirit that He would take us in His hands and use us as a workman uses his hammer. What can a hammer do without the hand that grasps it? And what can we do without the Spirit of God?   
I will make only one more observation upon this first point. If the Holy Spirit is to glorify Christ, I beg you to have an eye to the Truth of God amid all oppositions, controversies and contentions. If we, alone, had the task of glorifying Christ, we might be beaten. But as the Holy Spirit is the Glorifier of Christ, His Glory is in very safe hands. Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The Holy Spirit is still to the front! The eternal purpose of God to set His King upon the Throne and to make Jesus Christ reign forever and ever must be fulfilled, for the Holy Spirit has undertaken to see it accomplished! Amidst the surging tumults of the battle, the result of the conflict is never in doubt for a moment! It may seem as though the fate of Christs cause hung in a balance and that the scales were in equilibrium, but it is not so. The glory of Christ never wanesit must increase from day to day as it is made known in the hearts of men by the Holy Spirit! And the day shall come when Christs praise shall go up from all human tongues. To Him every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father! Therefore, lift up the hands that hang down and confirm the feeble knees. If you have failed to glorify Christ by your speech as you should, there is Another who has done it and who will still do it, according to Christs words, He shall glorify Me. My text seems to be a silver bell, ringing sweet comfort into the dispirited workers ears, He shall glorify Me.   
That is the first pointthe Holy Spirit is our Lords Glorifier. Keep that Truth of God before your minds eye under all circumstances.   
II. Now, secondly, CHRISTS OWN THINGS ARE HIS BEST GLORY. When the Holy Spirit wants to glorify Christ, what does He do? He does not go abroad for anythingHe comes to Christ, Himself, for that which will be for Christs own GloryHe shall glorify Me: for He shall take of Mine, and shall show it to you. There can be no Glory added to Christ! It must be His own Glory which He has, already, which is made more apparent to the hearts of Gods chosen by the Holy Spirit!   
First of all, Christ needs no new inventions to glorify Him. We have struck out a new line of things, says one. Have you? We have discovered something very wonderful. I dare say you have, but Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever, needs none of your inventions, or discoveries, or additions to His Truth. A plain Christ is always the loveliest Christ. Dress Him up and you have deformed Him and defamed Him. Bring Him out just as He isthe Christ of God, nothing else but Christ, unless you bring in His Crossfor we preach Christ Crucified! Indeed, you cannot have the Christ without the Cross, but preach Christ Crucified and you have given Him all the Glory that He wants. The Holy Spirit does not reveal in these last times any fresh ordinances, or any novel doctrines, or any new evolutionsHe simply brings to mind the things which Christ, Himself, spoke, He brings Christs own things to us and, in that was, glorifies Him!

Think for a minute of Christs Person as revealed to us by the Holy Spirit. What can more glorify Him than for us to see His Person, very God of very God, and yet as truly Man? What a wondrous Being, as Human as ourselves, but as Divine as God! Was there ever another like He? Never!   
Think of His Incarnation, His birth at Bethlehem. There was greater Glory among the oxen in the stall than ever was seen where those born in marble halls were swathed in purple and fine linen! Was there ever another Baby like Christ? Never! I wonder not that the wise men fell down to worship Him!   
Look at His life, the standing wonder of all ages! Men who have not worshipped Him, have admired Him. His life is incomparable, unique there is nothing like it in all the history of mankind! Imagination has never been able to invent anything approximating to the perfect beauty of the life of Jesus Christ!   
Think of His death. There have been many heroic and martyr deaths, but there is not one that can be set side by side with Christs death. He did not pay the debt of nature as others do, and yet He paid our natures debt. He did not die because He mustHe died because He would. The only must that came upon Him was a necessity of all-conquering love. The Cross of Christ is the greatest wonder of fact or of fiction! Fiction invents many marvelous things, but nothing that can be looked at for a moment in comparison with the Cross of Christ!   
Think of our Lords Resurrection. If this is one of the things that are taken and shown to you by the Holy Spirit, it will fill you with holy delight! I am sure that I could go into that sepulcher, where John and Peter went, and spend a lifetime in reverencing Him who broke down the barriers of the tomb and made it a passageway to Heaven. Instead of being a dungeon and a cul-de-sac into which all men seemed to go, but none could ever come out, Christ has, by His Resurrection, made a tunnel right through the grave! Jesus, by dying, has killed death for all Believers!   
Then think of His Ascension. But why need I take you over all these scenes with which you are blessedly familiar? What a wondrous fact that when the cloud received Him out of the disciples sight, the angels came to convoy Him to His heavenly Home!   
*They brought His chariot from above   
To bear Him to His Throne!   
Clapped their triumphant wings and cried, The glorious work is done.*   
Think of Him, now, at His Fathers right hand, adored of all the heavenly host, and then let your mind fly forward to the glory of His Second Advent, the final judgment with its terrible terrors, the millennium with its indescribable bliss and the Heaven of heavens, with its endless and unparalleled splendor! If these things are shown to you by the Holy Spirit, the beatific visions will, indeed, glorify Christ, and you will sit down and sing with the blessed Virgin, My soul does magnify the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God, my Savior.   
Thus you see that the things which glorify Christ are all in Christthe Holy Spirit fetches nothing from abroad, but He takes of the things of Christ and shows them to us. The glory of kings lies in their silver and their gold, their silk and their gems, but the Glory of Christ lies in Himself! If we want to glorify a man, we bring him presents. If we wish to glorify Christ, we must accept presents from Him. Thus we take the cup of salvation, calling upon the name of the Lord, and in so doing we glorify Christ!   
Notice, next, that these things of Christ are too bright for us to see till the Spirit shows them to us. We cannot see them because of their excessive Glory, until the Holy Spirit tenderly reveals them to us, until He takes of the things of Christ and shows them to us.   
What does this mean? Does it not mean, first, that He enlightens our understandings? It is wonderful how the Holy Spirit can take a fool and make him know the wonders of Christs dying love. And He does make him know it very quickly when He begins to teach him. Some of us have been very slow learners, yet the Holy Spirit has been able to teach something, even, to us! He opens the Scriptures and He also opens our mindsand when there are these two openings, together, what a wonderful opening it is! It becomes like a new revelationthe first is the revelation of the letter, which we have in the Bookthe second is the revelation of the Spirit, which we get in our own spirit. O my dear Friend, if the Holy Spirit has ever enlightened your understanding, you know what it is for Him to show the things of Christ to you!   
But next, He does this by a work upon the whole soul. I mean this. When the Holy Spirit convinces us of sin, we become fitted to see Christ and so the blessed Spirit shows Christ to us. When we are conscious of our feebleness, then we see Christs strength, and thus the Holy Spirit shows Him to us. Often, the operations of the Spirit of God may seem not to be directly the showing of Christ to us, but as they prepare us for seeing Him, they are a part of the work.   
The Holy Spirit sometimes shows Christ to us by His power of vivifying the Truth of God. I do not know whether I can quite tell you what I mean, but I have, sometimes, seen a Truth of God differently from what I have ever seen it before. I knew it long ago, I acknowledged it as part of the Divine Revelation, but now I realize it, grip it, grasp it, or, what is better, it seems to get a grip of me and hold me in its mighty hands! Have you not, sometimes, been overjoyed with a promise which never seemed anything to you before? Or a doctrine which you believed, but never fully appreciated, has suddenly become to you a gem of the first water, a very Kohinoor, or, Fountain of Light?   
The Holy Spirit has a way of focusing the Light of God and, when it falls in this special way upon a certain point, then the Truth is revealed to us. He shall take of the things of Christ and show them to you. Have you ever felt ready to jump for joy, ready to jump from your seat, ready to sit up in your bed at night and sing praises to God through the overpowering influence of some grand old Truth which has seemed to be, at once, quite new to you? The Holy Spirit also shows to us the things of Christ in our experience. As we journey on in life, we pass up hill and down dale, through bright sunlight and through dark shadowsand in each of these conditions we learn a little more of Christ, a little more of His Grace, a little more of His Glory, a little more of His sin-bearing, a little more of His glorious righteousness! Blessed is the life which is just one long lesson upon the Glory of Christ! And I think that is what every Christian life should be. Every dark and bending line in our experience should meet in the center of Christs Glory and should lead us nearer and nearer to the power of enjoying the bliss at His right hand forever and ever. Thus the Holy Spirit takes of the things of Christ and shows them to us, and so glorifies Christ.   
Beloved, the practical lesson for us to learn is thislet us try to live under the influence of the Holy Spirit. To that end, let us think very reverently of Him. Some never think of Him at all. How many sermons there are without even an allusion to Him! Shame on the preachers of such discourses! If any hearers come without praying for the Holy Spirit, shame on such hearers! We know and we confess that He is everything to our spiritual lifethen why do we not remember Him with greater love, worship Him with greater honor and think of Him continually with greater reverence? Beware of committing the sin against the Holy Spirit! If any of you feel any gentle touches of His power when you are hearing a sermon, beware lest you harden your heart against it! Whenever the sacred fire comes as but a spark, quench not the Holy Spirit, but pray that the spark may become a flame.   
And you, Christian people, cry to Him that you may not read your Bibles without His light. Do not pray without being helped by the Spirit. Above all, may you never preach without the Holy Spirit! It seems a pity when a man asks to be guided of the Spirit in His preachingand then pulls out a manuscript and reads it! The Holy Spirit may bless what he reads, but He cannot very well guide him when he has tied himself down to what he has written! And it will be the same with the speaker if he only repeats what he has learned and leaves no room for the Spirit to give him a new thought, a fresh Revelation of Christ! How can he hope for the Divine blessing under such circumstances? Oh, it were better for us to sit still until some of us were moved by the Spirit to get up and speak, than for us to prescribe the methods by which He should speak to us and even to write down the very words we mean to utter! What room is there for the Spirits operations then   
*Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove,*   
I cannot help breaking out into that prayer, Blessed Spirit, abide with us! Take of the things of Christ and show them to us that Christ may be glorified.   
III. I am only going to speak a minute or two on the last point. It is a very deep one, much too deep for me. I am unable to take you into the depths of my text, I will not pretend to do so. I believe that there are meanings here which probably we shall never understand till we get to Heaven. What you know not now, you shall know hereafter. But this is the pointCHRISTS GLORY IS HIS FATHERS GLORYAll things that the Father has are Mine: therefore said I, that He shall take of Mine, and shall show it to you.   
First, Christ has all that the Father has. Think of that! No mere man dares to say, All things that the Father has are mine. All the Godhead is in Christnot only all the attributes of it, but the essence of it. The Nicene Creed well puts it and it is not too strong in the expression: Light of Light, very God of very God, for Christ has all that the Father has. When we come to Christ, we come to Omnipotent, Omnipresent Omnisciencewe come to Almighty Immutabilitywe come, in fact, to the eternal Godhead! The Father has all things and all power is given to Christ in Heaven and on earth, so that He has all that the Father has!

And, further, the Father is glorified in Christs Glory. Never let us fall into the false notion that if we magnify Christ, we are depreciating the Father. If any lips have ever spoken concerning the Christ of God so as to depreciate the God of Christ, let those lips be covered with shame! We never preached Christ as merciful and the Father as only just, or Christ as moving the Father to be gracious. That is a slander which has been cast upon us, but there is not an atom of truth in it! We have known and believed what Christ, Himself, said, I and My Father are One. The more glorious Christ is, the more glorious the Father isand when men, professedly Christians, begin to cast off Christ, they cast off God the Father to a large extent. Irreverence to the Son of God soon becomes irreverence to God the Father, Himself! But, dear Friends, we delight to honor Christ, and we will continue to do so. Even when we stand in the Heaven of heavens, before the burning Throne of the Infinite Jehovah, we will sing praises unto Him and unto the Lamb, putting the two evermore in that Divine conjunction in which they are always to be found!   
Thus, you see, Christ has all that the Father has, and when He is glorified, the Father, also, is glorified.   
Next, the Holy Spirit must lead us to see this, and I am sure that He will. If we give ourselves up to His teaching, we shall fall into no errors. It will be a great mystery, but we shall know enough so that it will never trouble us. If you sit down and try to study the mystery of the Eternal well, I believe that the longer you look, the more you will be like persons who look into the sea from a great height, until they grow dizzy, and are ready to fall and to be drowned. Believe what the Spirit teaches you and adore your Divine Teacherthen shall His instruction become easy to you. I believe that as we grow older, we come to worship God as Abraham did, as Jehovah, the great I AM. Jesus does not fade into the background, but the glorious Godhead seems to become more and more apparent to us. Our Lords Word to His disciples, You believe in God, believe also in Me, as we grow older, seems to turn into this, You believe in Me, believe also in God. And as we come to a full confidence in the glorious Lord, the God of Nature, and of Providence, and of Redemption, and of Heaven, the Holy Spirit gives us to know more of the glories of Christ!   
I have talked with you as well as I could upon this sublime theme and if I did not know that the Holy Spirit glorifies Christ, I would go home miserable, for I have not been able to glorify my Lord as I would. But I know that the Holy Spirit can take what I have said out of my very heart and can put it into your heartsand He can add to it whatever I have omitted. Go, you who love the Lord, and glorify Him! Try to do it by your lips and by your lives. Go and preach Him, preach more of Him, and preach Him up higher, and higher, and higher!   
An old lady, of whom I have heard, made a mistake in what she said, yet there was a Truth behind her blunder. She had been to a little Baptist Chapel where a high Calvinist preached and, on coming away she said that she liked High Calvary preachers best. So do I! Give me a High Calvary preacherone who will make Calvary the highest of all the mountains! I suppose it was not a hill at all, but only a mound. Still, let us lift it higher and higher, and say to all other hills, Why leap you, you high hills? This is the hill which God desires to dwell in! Yes, the Lord will dwell in it forever. The Crucified Christ is wiser than all the wisdom of the world! The Cross of Christ has more novelty in it than all the fresh things of the earth! O Believers and preachers of the Gospel, glorify Christ! May the Holy Spirit help you to do so!   
And you, poor Sinners, who think that you cannot glorify Christ at all, come and trust Him   
*Come naked, come filthy, come just as you are,* and believe that He will receive you, for that will glorify Him! Believe, even now, O Sinner at deaths door, that Christ can make you live, and your faith will glorify Him! Look up out of the awful depths of Hell into which conscience has cast you and believe that He can pluck you out of the horrible pit, and out of the miry clay and set your feet upon a rock, and your trust will glorify Him! It is in the power of the sinner to give Christ the greatest Glory, if the Holy Spirit enables him to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. You may come, you who are more leprous, more diseased, more corrupt than any other! And if you look to Him and He saves you, oh, then you will praise Him!   
You will be of the mind of the one I have spoken of many times, who said to me, Sir, you say that Christ can save me? Well, if He does, He shall never hear the last of it. No, and He never will hear the last of it! Blessed Jesus   
*I will love You in life, I will love You in death And praise You as long as You lend me breath; And say when the death-dew lies cold on my brow, If ever I loved You, my Jesus, tis now!   
In mansions of glory and endless delight, Ill ever adore You in Heaven so bright.   
Ill sing with the glittering crown on my brow, If ever I loved You, my Jesus, tis now.*   
We will do nothing else but praise Christ and glorify Him, if He will but save us from sin! God grant that it may be so with all of us, for the Lord Jesus Christs sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **John 16:1-16.**

Verse 1. These things have I spoken unto you, that you should not be offended. Or, made to stumble. Christ would not have you who are His people caused to stumble by anything that happens to you. He wants you to walk without tripping. His angels bear you up in their hands lest at any time you should dash your foot against a stone. He, Himself, as your Guardian, comes and speaks beforehand to let you know what is to occur to you, that you may not be caused to stumble by any fresh trial that may assail you.

2. They shall put you out of the synagogues: yes, the time comes, that whoever kills you will think that he does God service. Christs disciples were to expect opposition of the most cruel kind. They were to be put away from those with whom they had long worshipped. They were even to run the risk of losing their lives, but Jesus foretold what would happen to them, that they might not be stumbled at it. Such was their Lords love to them that He would not have them attacked unawares. By His Grace they would hold on and hold outthey would persevere to the end, but there would have to be a struggleand to help them in the fight, Jesus tells them all about it before it begins. We say, Forewarned, forearmed. So the disciples were, and so are you. Your Lord tells you that you will not get to Heaven without trialsIn the world you shall have tribulation. And He tells you this that it may not surprise you when it comesthat it may not act upon you like a sudden gust of wind that would upset a little shipbut that you may just keep everything in trim looking for the storm to come. These things have I spoken unto you, that you should not be caused to stumble.

3. And these things will they do unto you because they have not known the Father, nor Me. The persecuting Jews professed to be worshippers of Jehovah, but they did not know the Christ, whom He sent and, therefore, in very truth they did not know the Father, either. How can you expect that those who do not know the Father will know the Son, or any of the other children of the Divine family? As they rejected the Elder Brother, will they not, also, reject the younger ones? Is the disciple to be above his Master, or the servant to be treated better than his Lord? Think not so and, therefore, expect that you will not be known, even as the Father and the Son were not known

*Tis no surprising thing   
That we should be unknown!   
The Jewish world knew not their King,   
Gods everlasting Son.*

4. But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, you may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you. Our Lord did tell His disciples something about, these things. He warned them to expect opposition, but He did not dwell upon that theme. He did not expatiate upon it. He did not, at first, give that prominence to it which He was about to do, and He explains to His disciples why He had not talked much upon that topicbecause I was with you. It did not matter how they were opposed so long as He was with them. His society more than made up for anything they might have to suffer and, dear child of God, if you now enjoy the Presence of Christ, and the power of His Spirit, you need not mind what happens to you!

5, 6. But now I go My way to Him that sent Me, and none of you asks Me, Where are You going? But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow has filled your heart. They were cast down because He was going away from them. Love awoke fear. It was a hard thing for them to have to miss Himthey could not tell what might happen to them when their Leader was gone from their midst. Do you wonder that they were filled with sorrow? Yet there was no real cause for griefthere was, rather, reason for rejoicing when they understood the true lesson of Christs departure! There is no real cause for your sorrow, dear Friends. If you knew all things, you would rejoice exceedingly in that very thing that now most troubles you.

7. Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. And the Comforter is better for us than the personal Presence of Christ! We do not always think so, but it is true. It is better for the Church to have the Holy Spirit in the midst of her than for Christ to be here in His bodily Presence on the earth.

8. And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgement. The world is not as yet convinced, but it is convictedthough it does not acknowledge its guiltthere is more than sufficient evidence to prove it guilty in the sight of God.

9. Of sin, because they believe not on Me. What must be the depth of human wickedness that sinners will not accept a Divine Savior? This is the crowning, crushing proof of human guiltThey believe not on Me.

10. Of righteousness, because I go to My Father, and you see Me no more. Christ was righteous, the Righteous One, whom men rejected, for He has gone up to the Fathers side, where He could not have been if He had not perfected righteousness. The very going back of Christ to the Fathers Throne proves that righteousness does exist and convicts men of sinning against it!

11. Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. The Gospel judges him and dethrones him and, as there has been a judgment of the worlds king, so there will be a judgment of the world, itself.

12. I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. Some teachers overload their hearers with the Truth of God till, I might truly say, that they pile on the agony. Truth which cannot be received is often most irksome and burdensome to the hearer. When the mind is not in a fit condition to bear any more instruction, it is cruel work to impose it. Our Lord Jesus did not so overburden His disciplesI have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.

13. Howbeit when He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all Truth: for He shall not speak of Himself. This is a very wonderful expressionHe shall not speak of Himself. We have plenty of men, nowadays, who boast that they do speak of or from themselvesthat is to say, they profess to borrow from no one, not even from God! They are original thinkers, inventors! They bring forth fresh things out of the depth of their wonderful minds. But even the Holy Spirit is, here, said not to speak of Himself.

13. But whatever He shall hear, that shall He speak. That is just our businessto hear Gods message and then to speak itand if the Holy Spirit does this and if Jesus did it, we may also be glad to do the same! We are no inventors of great noveltieswe are simply the bearers of the message of the Most High, the declarers of the old Truths of God which God has revealed to us.

13-16. And He will show you things to come. He shall glorify Me: for He shall take of Mine, and shall show it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine: therefore said I, that He shall take of Mine, and shall show it to you. A little while, and you shall not see Me: and again, a little while, and you shall see Me, because I go to the Father. How wonderful this is! We are to see Jesus because He has gone to the Father! It looks as if that were a reason why we should not see Him, but we see Him better, by faith, now that He has gone to the Father, than we could have seen Him while He was here below covered with the veil of His humiliation! Yet it is hardly surprising that the disciples were puzzled by their Lords words A little while, and you shall not see Me: and again, a little while, and you shall see Me. And, Because I go to the Father.

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A WONDERFUL TRANSFORMATION   
NO. 2983

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, APRIL 12,1906.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, OCTOBER 3, 1875.**

**Your sorrow shall be turned into joy.   
John 16:20.**

You all know that at that time, our Lord was speaking of His death which would cause the deepest grief to His own people, while the ungodly world would rejoice and laugh them to scorn. So He bade them look beyond the immediate present into the future and believe that, ultimately, the cause of their sorrow would become a fountain of perpetual joy to them. It is always well to look a little ahead. Instead of deploring the dark clouds, let us anticipate the fruits and the flowers that will follow the descent of the needed showers. We might be always wretched if we lived only in the present, for our brightest time is yet to come. We are now, as Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, only in the twilight of our daythe high noon shall come to us by-and-by.

But although our Saviors words, just then, related immediately to His death, He was such a wonderful speaker that everything He said had a wider meaning in it than one might at first imagine. Even the leaves of the Tree of Life are for the healing of the nationsand even those words of Christ which have a direct application to a special occasion have a further wondrous power about themand may be used on other occasions as well as upon the one when they were first uttered. I think I may fairly say that our Lord did not merely mean that just when He died, His children would have sorrow, but that we may take His words as a prophecy that all who truly follow Him will have their seasons of darkness and gloom. Our Lord Jesus Christ has nowhere promised to His people immunity from trial. On the contrary, He said to His disciples, In the world you shall have tribulation. I cannot imagine a better promise for the wheat than that it shall be threshedand that is the promise that is made to us if we are the Lords wheatand not the enemys tares, You shall have the threshing which shall fit you for the heavenly garner. You need not mourn, Beloved, that it is to be so. If you do, it will make no difference, for your Lord has declared that in the world you shall have tribulation. Rest quite sure of that. If you could ask those Believers who are now in Heaven, they would tell you that they came through great tribulationmany of them not only washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb, but they sealed their faithfulness to Him with their own blood!

Our Lord meant His disciples to feel the sorrow that was to come upon them, for He said to them, You shall weep and lament, and He did not express any blame upon them for doing so. I would not have any of you imaging that there is any virtue in stoicism. I once heard a woman who wished to show the wonders worked in her by the Grace of God, say that when her baby was taken from her, she was so resigned to the Divine will that she did not even shed a tear! But I do not believe that it ever was the Divine will that mothers should lose their babies without shedding tears over them. I thank God that I did not have a mother who could have acted like that. And I believe that as Jesus, Himself, wept, there can be no virtue in our saying that we do not weep. God means you to feel the rod, my Brother, my Sister. He intends you to sometimes weep and lament, as Peter says, if need be, you are in heaviness through manifold temptations. It is not merely the temptation or trial for which there is a necessity, but that we should be in heaviness is also a necessary part of our earthly discipline. Unfelt trial is no trial! Certainly it would be an unsanctified trial. Christ never meant Christians to be stoics. There is a wide and grave distinction between a gracious acquiescence in the Divine will and a callous steeling of your heart to bear anything that happens without any feeling whatever. You shall be sorrowful, says our Lord to His disciples, and you shall weep and lament. It is through the weeping and the lamenting, oftentimes, that the very kernel of the blessing comes to us!

Our Savior mentions one aggravation of our grief which some of us have often feltthe world shall rejoice. That is the old story. David found his own trials all the harder to bear when he saw the prosperity of the wicked. He had been plagued all the day long and chastened every morninghe could have endured that if he had not seen that the ungodly had more than heart could wish! He found himself, sometimes, even troubled with the fear of death, but as for the wicked, he said, There are no bonds in their death: but their strength is firm. They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men. It makes our bitterness all the more bitter when the saints of God are afflicted and the enemies of God are made to dwell in ease. I daresay when you were a boy, you may have fallen and hurt yourselfand while you were smarting from your bruises, the other lads who were around you, were laughing at you! The pain was all the sharper because of their laughing. And the righteous are wounded to the quick when they see the ungodly prosperingprospering, apparently, by their ungodliness. And when these ungodly persons point the finger of scorn at them and ask, Where is your God now? Is this the result of serving Him? When this is your lot, remember that your Savior told His disciples that it would be soand He has told you the same. While you are sorrowing, you shall hear their shouts of revelry. You shall be up in your own room weeping and you shall hear the sound of their merry feet in the dizzy dance. The very contrast between their circumstances and your own will make you feel your grief more. Well, if this is to be our lot, we must not count it a strange thing when it comes, but we may hear our Master say to us, I told you that it would be so. When it happens to any of you, Beloved, you must say, This is even as Jesus Christ said it would be.

His first disciples, if they ventured out into the streets of Jerusalem after their Saviors crucifixion, and while He was lying in the tomb of Joseph, must have found it very trying to hear the jests and jeers of those who had put the Nazarene to death. There is an end of Him now, they said. His imposture is exposed and His disciplespoor, foolish fanaticswill soon come to their senses and the whole thing will collapse. Just so. That was what Jesus said would happen, you shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice.

Now, what was the Saviors cure for all this? It was the fact that this trial was to last only for a little whilefor a very little while. In the case of His first disciples, it was only to last for a few days and then it would to over, for they would hear the joyful announcement, The Lord is risen, indeed, and has appeared to Simon. So is it to be with you and with me, dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ. Our sorrows are all, like ourselves, mortal. There are no immortal sorrows for immortal saints! They come, but, blessed be God, they also go like birds of the airthey fly over our heads but they cannot make their abode in our souls. We suffer today, but we shall rejoice tomorrow! Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning. But as for yonder laughing sinner, what weeping and wailing will be his portion unless he repents and weeps in penitence over his many sins! The prosperity of the wicked is like a thin layer of ice on which they always stand in peril. In a moment they may be brought down to destruction! And the place that knew them will know them no more forever. Our weeping is soon to end, but their weeping will never end. Our joy will be forever, but their joy will speedily come to an end. Look a little ahead, Christian pilgrims, for you will soon have passed through the Valley of the Shadow of Death and have come into the land where even the shadow of death shall never fall across your pathway again!

In speaking those comforting words to His disciples, our Savior made use of this memorable sentence, Your sorrow shall to turned into joy. As I read the whole passage, I pondered over those words and tried to find out their meaning. Perhaps you think, as you glance at them, that they mean that the man who was sorrowful would be joyous. That is part of their meaning, but they mean a great deal more than that. They mean, literally and actually, your sorrow, itself, shall be turned into joynot the sorrow to be taken away and joy to be put in its placebut the very sorrow which now grieves you, shall be turned into joy! This is a very wonderful transformation and only the God who works great marvels could possibly accomplish itcould, somehow, not only take away the bitterness and give sweetness in its place, but turn the bitterness, itself, into sweetness!

That is to be the subject of our present meditation and I am glad to have, in the communion at which many of us will presently unite in the highest act of Christian fellowship, an apt illustration of my theme. You know that the Supper of the Lord is not at all a funereal gathering, but it is a sacred festival at which we sit at our ease, restfully enjoying ourselves as at a banquet. But what are the provisions for this feast and what do they represent? That bread, that winewhat do they mean? They represent, my dear Friends, sorrowsorrow even unto death! The bread, separate from the wine, represents the flesh of Christ separate from His blood, and so they set forth death. The broken bread represents the flesh of Christ bruised, marred, suffering, full of anguish. The wine represents Christs blood poured out upon the Cross amidst agony which only ended with His death. Yet these emblems of sorrow and suffering furnish us with our great feast of love! This is, indeed, joy arising out of sorrow! The festival is itself the ordained memorial of the greatest grief that was ever endured on earth. Here, then, as you gather around this Table, you shall see, in the outward signs and emblems, that sorrow is turned into joy!

I. If you will keep that picture in your minds eye, it will help me to bring out the meaning of the text. And our first point will be thisOUR SORROW AS TO OUR BLESSED LORD IS NOW TURNED INTO JOY. The very things that make us grieve concerning Him are the things which make us rejoice concerning Him!

And, first, this comes to pass when we look upon Him as tempted, tried and tested in a thousand ways. We see Him no sooner rising from the waters of Baptism than He is led into the desert to be tempted by the devil. And we grieve to think that, for our sakes, it was necessary that He should there bear the brunt of a fierce duel with the Prince of Darkness. We see Him afterwards, all His life, tempted, tried and tested this way and thatsometimes by a scribe or a Pharisee, sometimes by a Sadducee. All sorts of temptations were brought to bear upon Him, for He was in all points tempted like as we are. But, oh, how thankful we are to know that He was thus tempted, for those very temptations helped to prove the sinlessness of His Character! How could we know what there was in a man who was never tested and tried? But our Lord was tested at every pointand at no point did He fall. It is established, beyond all question, that He is the Lamb of God without blemish and without spot. You cannot tell what a mans strength of character is unless he is tried. There must be something to develop the excellence that lies hidden in his nature. And we ought to rejoice and bless God that our Savior was passed, like silver, through the furnace seven times and, like gold, was tried again and again in the crucible in the hottest part of the furnace yet there was found no dross in Him, but only the pure, precious metal without a particle of alloy! Therein do we greatly rejoice! He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. He was tempted by Satan and contradicted by sinners, yet He was found faultless to the end and, thus, our joy arises out of that which otherwise would have made us mourn!

Further, dear Brothers and Sisters, remember that the griefs and trials of our Lord not only manifested His sinless Character, but they made Him fit for that priestly office which He has undertaken on our behalf. The Captain of our salvation was made perfect through sufferings. It was necessary that He who would really be a Benefactor to men should know them thoroughly and understand them. How can He sympathize with them in their sorrows unless He has, at least to some extent, felt as they do? So, our merciful and faithful High Priest is one who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, seeing that He was tempted and tried even as we are. I think that had I been alive at the time, I would have spared my Lord many of His griefs had it been in my powerand many of you will say the same. He would never have needed to say, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has not where to lay His head, for you would gladly have given Him the best room in your house! Ah, but then the poor would have missed that gracious Word of God which, I have no doubt, has often comforted them when they have been houseless and forlorn! You would not have allowed Him, if you could have helped it, to be weary, and worn, and hungry, and thirsty. You would have liberally supplied all His needs to the utmost of your power. But then He would not have been so fully in sympathy as He now is with those who have to endure the direst straits of poverty, seeing that He has passed through a similar experience to theirs. What joy it is to a sorrowing soul to know that Jesus has gone that way long before!

I had a great grief that struck me down to the very dust, but I looked up and saw that face that was marred more than any other. And I rose to my feet in hope and joyful confidence and I said, Are You, my Lord, here where I am? Have you suffered thus, and did you endure far more than I can ever know of grief and brokenness of heart? Then, Savior, I rejoice and bless Your holy name! I know that you, Beloved, must often have grieved over your Saviors suffering, though you have been, at the same time, glad to remember that He passed through it allbecause He thus became such a matchless Comforter, who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way because of the very experience through which He passedfor in that He Himself has suffered being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted.

The meaning of the text comes out even more clearly when we think of the sorrows to which our Lord had been referring, which ended in His death. Oh, the griefs of Jesus when He laid down His life for His sheep! Have you not sometimes said, or at least thought, that the ransom price was too costly for such insignificant creatures as we are? Think of the agony and bloody sweat, the scourging, the spitting, the shame, the hounding through the streets, the piercing of the hands and feet, the mockery, the vinegar, the gall, the Eloi Eloi, lama Sabachthani? and all the other horrors and terrors that gathered around the Cross! We wish that this might never have happened and yet the fact that they did happen brings to us unspeakable bliss! It is our greatest joy to know that Jesus bled and died upon the tree! How else could our sins be put away? How else could we, who are Gods enemies, be reconciled and brought near to Him? How else could Heaven be made secure for us? We might, from one aspect of Christs sufferings, chant a mournful miserere at the foot of the Cross, but before we have done more than just commence the sad strain, we perceive the blessed results that come to the children of men through Christs deathso we lay down our instruments of mourning and take up the harp and the trumpetand sound forth glad notes of rejoicing and thanksgiving!

Our sorrow about Christs death is also turned into joy because not only do we derive the greatest possible benefit from it, but Jesus Himself, by His death, achieved such wonders. That precious body of His, that fair lily all stained with crimson lines where flowed His hearts blood must have been a piteous sight for anyone to see. I wonder how any artist could ever paint the taking down of Christ from the Cross, or the robing Him for the sepulcher? They were sorrowful sights for art to spend itself upon. Jesus, the final Conqueror, lies in the grave! The cerements of the tomb are wrapped about Him who once wore the purple of the universe! But we have scarcely time to sorrow over these facts before we recollect that the death of Christ was the death of sin! The death of Christ was the overthrow of Satan! The death of Christ was the death of death! And out of His very tomb we hear that pealing trumpet note, O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the Law. But thanks be to God, which gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. I am glad that He fought with Satan in the Garden and vanquished Him. I am glad that He fought with sin upon the Cross and destroyed it. I am glad that He fought with grim death in that dark hour and that He seized him by the throat and held him captive. I am glad that He ever entered the gloomy sepulcher, for He rifled it of all its terrors for all His loved ones, tore its iron bars away and set His people free! So you see, it is all gladness, even as He said to His disciples, Your sorrow shall be turned into joy.

And whatever else there may be of sorrow that came out of Christs Cross, we may all be glad of it, for now Christ Himself is the more glorious because of it. It is true that nothing could add to His Glory as God, but seeing that He assumed our Nature and became Man as well as God, He added to His Glory by all the shame He bore! There is not a reproach that pierced His heart which did not make Him more beautiful! There is not a line of sorrow that furrowed His face which did not make Him more lovelythat marred Countenance is more to be admired by us than all the comeliness of earthly beauty! He was always superlatively beautiful. His beauty was such as might well hold the angels spellbound as they looked upon Him! The sun and moon and stars were dim compared with the brightness of His eyes. Heaven and earth could not find His equal and if all Heaven had been sold, it could not have purchased this precious Pearl! Yet the setting of the pearl has made Christ appear even brighter than beforethe setting of His Humanity, the setting of His sufferings, His pangs, His shameful death has made His beauty shine out the more resplendent! The plant that sprang from Jesses root is now the plant of renown! He who was despised at Nazareth is glorified in Paradise and the more glorified because, between Nazareth and Paradise, He was despised and rejected of men, a Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief. Blessed Savior, we rejoice that You have gained by all Your sorrows, for therefore has God highly exalted You, and given You a name which is above every name!

II. But, now, secondly, and very briefly, I want to remind you that THE SORROW OF THE WHOLE CHURCH HAS ALSO BEEN TURNED INTO JOY.

In speaking of the sorrows of the persecuted Church of Christ, I will not compare them to the sorrows of her Lord. But if anything could have been comparable to the suffering of the Bridegroom, it would have been the suffering of the bride. Think of the early ages of the Church of God under the Roman persecutions. Think of the Church of Christ among the Vaudois of the Alps, or in England during the Marian persecution. Our blood runs cold as we read of what the saints of God have suffered! I have often put up Foxes Book of Martyrs upon the shelf and thought that I could not read it any moreit is such a terribly true account of what human nature can bear when faith in Christ sustains it. Yet, Brothers and Sisters, we are not sorry that the martyrs suffered as they did. Or if we are, that very sorrow is turned into joy at the remembrance of how Christ has been glorified through the sufferings of His saints! Even our poor humanity looks more comely when we recall what it endured for Christs sake. When I think of the honor of being a martyr for the Truth of God, I confess that I would sooner be a martyr than be the angel Gabriel, for I think it would be far better to have gone to Heaven from one of Smithfields stakes than to have been always in Heaven. What honor it has brought to Christ that poor, feeble men could love Him so that they could bleed and die for Him! Yes, and women, too, like that brave Anne Askew, who, after they had racked her till they had put every bone out of joint, was still courageous enough to argue on behalf of her dear Lord! When they thought that her womanly weakness would make her give way, she seemed stronger than any man might have been as she said to her persecutors

*I am not she that lyst   
My anker to let fall   
For every dryslynge myst;   
My shippes substancyal*

and so defied them to do their worst! The Church of God may well rejoice as she thinks of the noble army of martyrs who praise the Lord on high for, among the sweetest notes that ascend even in Heaven, are the songs that come from the white-robed throng who shed their blood rather than deny their Lord!

The Church of Christ has also passed through a fierce fire of opposition , as well as of persecution. Heresy after heresy has raged. Men have arisen who have denied this, and that, and the other Doctrines taught in the Scriptures. And every time these oppositions have come, certain feeble folk in the Church have been greatly alarmed but, in looking back upon them all up to the present, I think that they are causes for joy rather than sorrow! Whenever what is supposed to be a new heresy comes up, I say to myself, Ah, I know you! I remember reading about you. There was an old pair of shoes, worn by heresy many hundreds of years ago which were thrown on a dunghilland you have picked them up and refurbished them a little, and brought them forth as if they had been new. I bless the Lord that at this moment there scarcely remains any Doctrine to be defended for the first time, for they have all been fought over so fiercely in years gone by that there is hardly any point that our noble forefathers did not defend! And they did their work so well that we can frequently use their weapons for the defense of the Truth today. Who would wish to have kept the Word of God from going through this furnace of opposition? It is like silver seven times purified in a furnace of earth. Philosophers have tried you, O precious Book, but you were not found wanting! Atheists have tried you! Sneering skeptics have tried you! They have all passed you through the fire, but not even the smell of fire is upon you to this day! And therein do we rejoice, yes, and will rejoice! And the day will come when the present errors and opposition will only be recorded on the pages of history as things for our successors to rejoice over just as we now rejoice over the past victories of the Truth of God!

And once again, dear Friends, not only is it so with the persecutions and oppositions of the Church of Christ, but the Churchs difficulties have also become themes of rejoicing. As I look abroad upon the world at the present time, it does seem an impossible thing that the nations of the earth should ever be converted to Christ. It is impossible so far as man alone is concerned, yet God has commanded the Christian Church to evangelize the world! Someone complains that the Church is too feeble and its adherents too few to accomplish such a task as this. The fewer the fighters, the greater their share of glory when the victory is won! In order to overcome indifference, idolatry, atheism, Mohammedanism and Popery, the battle must be a very stern one, but who wants Christs followers to fight only little battles? My Brothers and Sisters, let us thank God that our foes are so numerous! It matters not how many there may be of themthere are only the more to be destroyed! What said David concerning his adversaries? They compassed me about; yes, they compassed me about; but in the name of the Lord I will destroy them. When the Last Great Day shall come and Jehovahs banner shall be finally furled because the Book of the Wars of the Lord shall have reached its last page, it will be a grand thing to tell the story of the whole campaign! Then it will be known to all that the fight for the faith was not a mere skirmish against a few feeble folk, nor was it a brief battle which began and ended in an hourbut it was a tremendous conflict against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. They gather, they gather, my Brothers and Sisters, thick as the clouds in the day of tempest, but, out of Heaven Jehovah, Himself, will thunder and give battle and scatter themand they shall fly before Him like the chaff before the wind!

III. Now, lastly, to come down from those high themes to minor matters, OUR OWN PERSONAL SORROW SHALL BE TURNED INTO JOY.  
When I think of the sorrows of Christ and the sorrows of His Church as a whole, I say to myself, What pin pricks are our griefs compared with the great gash in the Saviors side, and the many scars that adorn His Church today! But, dear Friends, whatever our sorrows may be, they will be turned into joy. Sometimes we witness this wonderful transformation. Poor old Jacob sorrowed greatly when he thought that he had lost his favorite son, Joseph. An evil beast has devoured him, he said. Joseph is without doubt torn in pieces. And he wrung his hands and wept bitterly for many a day over his lost Joseph. Then came the famine and the poor old man was dreadfully alarmed concerning his large family. He must send some of his sons into Egypt to buy corn, and when he sends them there, they do not all come back, for Simeon is detained as a hostageand the lord of the land says that they shall not see his face again unless they bring Benjamin with themBenjamin, the dear and only remaining child of the beloved Rachel! Jacob cannot bear the thought of parting with him, so he says to his sons, You have bereaved me of my children; Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and you will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me. Poor old soul, what a mistake he made! Why, everything was as much for him as it could possibly be! There was his dear Joseph, down in Egypt, next to Pharaoh on the throne and ready to provide for his poor old father and all the family during the time of famine! Then there was the famine to make him send down to Egypt and find out where Joseph was, so that he might go and see his face again, and confess that the Lord had dealt graciously with him. You dear children of God who get to fretting and are troubled should carry out Cowpers good advice  
*Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,   
But trust Him for His Grace   
Behind a frowning Providence   
He hides a smiling face!*   
You have quite enough to cry over without fretting concerning things that, some day, you will rejoice over! The Lord will put your tears into His bottle and when He shows them to you, by-and-by, I think you will say, How foolish I was ever to shed them, because the very thing I wept over was really a cause for rejoicing if I could but have seen a little way ahead. It is so sometimes, in Providence, as you will find over and over again between here and Heaven!   
Our sorrows, dear Friends, are turned into joy in many different ways. For instance, there are some of us who are such naughty children that we never seem to come close to our Heavenly Father unless some sorrow drives us to Him. We ought to be more with Him in days of sunshine, if it were possible, than in days of storm, but it is not always so. It is said that there are some dogs which, the more you whip them, the more they love you. I should not like to try that plan even on a dog, but I fear that some of us are very much like dogs in that respect, if the saying is true. When we have a great trouble, or get a sharp cut, we seem to wake up and say, Lord, we forgot You when all was going smoothly. We wandered from You, then, but now we must come back to You. And there is a special softness of heart and mellowness of spirit which we often get through being tried and troubled. And when that is the case, you and I have great cause to rejoice in our sorrows, if they draw us nearer to God and bring us to a clear and more careful walk with Him. If they draw us away from worldliness, self-sufficiency and self-complacency, our sorrows, if we are wise men and women, will be immediately turned into joy!   
Again, there is no doubt that, to many, sorrow is a great means of opening the eyes to the preciousness of the promises of God. I believe that there are some of Gods promises of which we shall never get to know the meaning until we have been placed in the circumstances for which those promises were written. Certain objects in Nature can only be seen from certain points of view. And there are precious things in the Covenant of Grace that can only be perceived from the deep places of trouble. Well, then, if your trouble brings you into a position where you can understand more of the loving kindness of the Lord, you may be very thankful that you were ever put there and may thus find your sorrow turned into joy.

Again, sorrow often gives us further fellowship with Christ. There are times when we can say, Now, Lord, we can sympathize with You better than we ever did before, for we have felt somewhat as You did in Your agony here below. We have sometimes felt as though that prophecy had been fulfilled to us, You shall indeed drink of My cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with. For instance, if friends forsake youif he that eats bread with you lifts up his heel against you, you can say, Now, Lord, I know a little better what Your feeling was when Judas so basely betrayed You. You cannot so fully comprehend the griefs of Christ unless, in your humble measure, you have to pass through a somewhat similar experience. But when you perceive that you can sympathize more with Christ because of your own sorrow, then, for certain, your sorrow is turned into joy.   
Sorrow also gives us fellowship with our Lord in another waywhen we feel as if Christ and we had become partners in one trouble. Here is a cross and I have to carry one end of it. But I look around and see that my Lord is carrying the heavier end of itand then it is a very sweet sorrow to carry the cross in partnership with Christ! Rutherford says, in one of his letters, When Christs dear child is carrying a burden, it often happens that Christ says, Halves, My love, and carries half of it for him. It is indeed sweet when it is so. If there is a ring of fire on your finger and that ring means that you are married to Christ, you may well be willing to wear it, whatever suffering it may cause you. Those were blessed bolts that fastened you to the Cross even though they were bolts of iron that went right through your flesh, for they kept you the more closely to your Lord! Our motto must be, Anywhere with Jesus, nowhere without Jesus. Anywhere with Jesus! Yes, even in Nebuchadnezzars furnace! When we have the Son of God with us, the glowing coals cannot hurt usthey become a bed of roses to us when He is there! Where Jesus is, our sorrow is turned into joy.   
I must not fail to remind you that there is a time coming when the sorrows of death will get hold upon us and I want you, Brothers and Sisters, to understand that unless the Lord shall come first, we shall not escape the sorrow of dying, but it will be turned into joy. It has been my great joy to see many Christians in their last moments an earth and I am sure that the merriest people I have ever seen have been dying saints! I have been to wedding feasts. I have seen the joy of young people in their youth. I have seen the joy of the merchant when he has made a prosperous venture and I have, myself, experienced joys of various kinds, but I have never seen any joy that I have so envied as that which has sparkled in the eyes of departing Believers! There rises up before me now a vision of the two eyes of a poor consumptive girloh, how bright they were! I heard that she must soon die, so I went to try to comfort her. To comfort her? Oh, dear, she needed no comforting from me! Every now and then she would burst forth into a verse of sacred song and when she stopped, she would tell me how precious Jesus was to her, what love visits He had already paid her, and how soon she expected to be with Him forever! There was not, in all the palaces of Europe, or in all the mansions of the wealthy, or in all the ballrooms of the happy, such a merry and joyous spirit as I saw shining through the bright eyes of that poor consumptive girl who had very little here below, but who had so much laid up for her in Heaven that it did not matter what she had here!   
Yes, Beloved, your sorrow will be turned into joy! Many of you will not even know that you are dyingyou will shut your eyes on earth and open them in Heaven! Some of you may be dreading death, for there is still a measure of unbelief remaining in you, but also in your case, death will be swallowed up in victory! Just as when some people have to take medicine which is very bitter, it is put into some sweet liquid and they drink it down without tasting the bitterness, so will it be with all of us who are trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ when we have to drink our last potion. In a few more days, or weeks, or months, or yearsit does not matter which, for it will be a very short time at the longestall of us who love the Lord will be with Him where He isto behold His Glory and to share it with Him forever! Have any of you any sorrows that you still wish to talk about? Some of you are very poor and others of you are very much tried and troubled in many ways, but, my dear Friends, when you and I get up thereand we shall do so before longI think you will have the best of it! If there is any truth in that line   
*The deeper their sorrows, the louder theyll sing*

the more sorrows you have had, the more will you sing! Nobody enjoys wealth like a man who has been poor. Nobody enjoys health like a man who has been sick. I think that the most pleasant days I ever spend are they that follow a long illness when I, at last, begin to creep outside and drink in the sweet fresh air again. And, oh, what joy it will be to you poor ones and you sick ones and you tried ones to get into the land where all is plentiful, where all is peaceful, where all is gladsome, where all is holy! You will be there soonsome of you will be there very soon. Dr. Watts says that

*There, on a green and flowery mount,   
Our weary souls shall sit.   
And with transporting joys recount   
The labors of our feet.*

That is to say, the very sorrows that we pass through in our earthly pilgrimage will constitute topics for joyful conversations in Heaven. I do not doubt that it will be so.

In Heaven we shall be as glad of our troubles as of our mercies! Perhaps it will appear to us, then, that God never loved us so much as when He chastened and tried us. When we get home to Glory, we shall be like children who have grown up, who, sometimes say to a wise parent, Father, I have forgotten about the holidays you gave me. I have forgotten about the pocket money you gave me. I have forgotten about a great many sweet things that I very much liked when I was a child, but I have never forgotten that whipping which you gave me when I did wrong, for it saved me from turning altogether aside. Dear Father, I know you did not like to do it, but I am very grateful to you for it nowmore grateful for that whipping than for all the sponge cakes and sweetmeats that you gave me. And, in like manner, when we get home to Heaven, I have no doubt that we shall feel and perhaps say, Lord, we are grateful to You for everything, but most of all for our sorrows. We see that had You left us unchastised, we would never have been what we now are and, thus, our sorrows are turned into joy.

As for you who are not Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, I want you to ponder most solemnly these few words and carry them home with you. If you remain as you are, your joys will be turned into sorrows. God grant that they may not be, for Jesus Christs sake! Amen.

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #1442 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

SORROW AT THE CROSS TURNED INTO JOY   
NO. 1442

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING NOVEMBER 3, 1878, BY C.H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE NEWINGTON.

**Verily, verily, I say unto you, that you shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and you shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. A woman, when she is in travail, has sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembers no more the**

**anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. And you now, therefore, have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man will take from you. John 16:20-22.**

WE were singing, just now a hymn in which the first verse started a difficult question *It is finished. Shall we raise   
Songs of sorrow, or of praise?   
Mourn to see the Savior die,   
Or proclaim His victory?*

The case is very well argued in the second and third verses *If of Calvary we tell,   
How can songs of triumph swell?   
If of man redeemed from woe,   
How shall notes of mourning flow?   
Ours the guilt which pierced His side,   
Ours the sin for which He died;   
But the blood which flowed that day   
Washed our sin and guilt away.*

The conclusion at which we arrived in the concluding verse seems to me to be the right one *Lamb of God! Your death has given   
Pardon, peace and hope of Heaven:*

*It is finished. Let us raise*

*Songs of thankfulness and praise!*   
The chief thought connected with the Redeemers death should be that of grateful praise! That our Lord Jesus Christ died upon the Cross is a very natural cause for sorrow and well may they who pierced Himand we are all among the numberlook unto Him and mourn for their sin and be in bitterness for Him as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.

Before we know that we are pardoned, our grief may well be exceedingly heavy, for till sin is put away we stand guilty of the Saviors blood! While our souls are only conscious of our guilty share in the Redeemers blood, we may well stand aghast at the sight of the accursed tree, but the case is altered when, by faith, we discern the glorious fruit of our Lords sufferings and know that on the Cross He saved us and triumphed in the deed. The feeling of sorrow at the sight of the crucified Savior is one to be cultivated up to a certain point, especially if we take care to avoid mere senment and turn our grief into repentancethen it is godly sorrow which works after a godly sortand it is likely to create in us an intense horror of sin and a strong determination to purge ourselves from all fellowship with the works of darkness.

We do not, therefore, condemn those who frequently preach upon the sufferings of our Lord with the view of exciting emotions of grief in the hearts of their hearers, for such emotions have a softening and sanctifying influence if attended by faith and directed by sound wisdom. There is, however, a middle path in everything, and this needs to be followed, for we believe that such preaching may be carried too far. It is most remarkable and instructive that the Apostles do not appear in their sermons or Epistles to have spoken of the death of our Lord with any kind of regret. The Gospels mention their distress during the actual occurrence of the Crucifixion, but after the Resurrection and especially after Pentecost, we hear of no such grief. If I confine myself to the sayings and writings of the Apostles, I can scarcely find a passage from which I could preach a sermon upon

sorrow on account of the death of Jesus.

On the contrary, there are many expressions which treat of the Crucifixion in the spirit of exulting joy. Remember the well-known exclamation of PaulGod forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. He had, no doubt, as vivid an idea of the agonies of our Lord as any of us have ever attained and yet, instead of saying, God forbid that I should cease to weep at the sight of my crucified Master, he declares that he glories in His Cross. The death of Jesus was to him a thing to rejoice in and even to glory in! He kept no black fasts to commemorate the worlds redemption! Note well the exalted key in which he speaks of our Lords death in the Epistle to the ColossiansBlotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His Cross; and having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

When you turn to Johns Epistles, where most of all pathos and tenderness would naturally abound, you hear no weeping and wailing, but he speaks of the cleansing blood which is the very center of the great Sacrifice, in a calm, quiet, happy manner, which is far removed from bursting grief and flowing tears. He says, If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. This allusion to the blood of Atonement rather suggests joy and peace than woe and agony! This is He, says John, that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is evidently to John a theme of congratulation and delight rather than a cause for sorrow that Jesus came by blood as well as by water.

Peter, also, when he mentions the death of his Lord and Master, speaks of the precious blood of Christ, but not in words of sadness. And he describes our Lords bearing our sins in His own body on the tree, but not in the language of lament. He says of those who suffered for the Gospel, Rejoice, inasmuch as you are partakers in Christs sufferings. Now, if he finds joy in those sufferings of ours which are in fellowship with the sufferings of Christ, much more, I gather, did he find ground for rejoicing in the sufferings of Christ, Himself! I do not believe that the three hours agony, the darkened church, the altar in mourning, the tolling of a bell and all the other mock funereal rites of superstition derive even the least encouragement from the spirit and language of the Apostles! Those practical charades in which the Crucifixion is mimicked in many churches on Good Friday are more worthy of the heathen women weeping for Thammuz, or of Baals priests crying and cutting themselves with knives, than of a Christian assembly who know that the Lord is not here, for He is risen!

Let us mourn, by all means, for Jesus died. But by no means let us make mourning the prominent thought in connection with His death if we have obtained, thereby, the pardon of our sins! The language of our text allowed and yet forbade sorrow! It gave permission to weep, but only for a little while, and then it forbade all further weeping by the promise to turn the sorrow into joy. You shall weep and lament, that is, His disciples, while He was dying and dead and buried, would be sorely distressed. And you shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joytheir grief would end when they saw Him risen from the dead! And so it did, for we read, Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord. The sight of the Cross to their unbelief was sadness, and sadness onlybut now, to the eye of faith, it is the most gladsome sight that ever the human eye can rest upon!

The Cross is as the light of the morning which ends the long and dreary darkness which covered the nations. Oh wounds of Jesus, you are as stars breaking the night of mans despair! Oh spear, you have opened the fountain of healing for mortal woe! Oh crown of thorns, you are a constellation of promises! Eyes that were red with weeping sparkle with hope at the sight of You, O bleeding Lord! As for Your tortured body, O Emmanuel, the blood which dropped, cried from the ground and proclaimed peace, pardon and Paradise to all Believers! Though laid in the grave by Your weeping friends, Your body, O Divine Savior, is no longer in Josephs tomb, for You are risen from the dead and we find in the songs of Resurrection and Ascension an abundant solace for the griefs of Your death! Like a woman to whom a son is born, we forget the travail for the joy of the glorious birth which the Church and the world may now gaze upon with the utmost delight as they behold in Jesus, the Firstborn from the dead.

The subject for this morning, then, you will readily guess, is how far we should sorrow for the death of Jesus and how much further we are permitted to rejoice. The first point will be the death of our Lord was and still is a theme for sorrow. But secondly, that sorrow is transmuted into joy. When we have meditated upon these two points we shall for a little space notice a general principle which underlies all holy sorrow as well as this particular form of it.

I. First, then, THE DEATH OF OUR LORD WAS AND IS A TIME FOR

SORROW. I make a point of saying it was so because during the three days of the Saviors burial there was more cause for distress than there can be now that He is risen. To the disciples, first of all, the death of Jesus was the loss of His personal Presence. It was a great delight to that little family to have the Lord always among them as their Father and their Teacher and it was a great grief to think that they should no more hear His loving voice or catch the smile of His Countenance. It brought untold comforts to them to be able to go to Him with all their questions; to fly to Him in every moment of difficulty; to resort to Him in every hour of sorrow. Happy, happy disciples to have such a Master always in their midst communing with them in love, guiding them by His perfect example, animating them by His glorious Presence, relieving all their needs and guarding them from all ills.

Do you wonder that their hearts were heavy at the prospect of His going away from them? They felt that they would be sheep without a shepherd orphan children bereft of their best friend and helper. Do you wonder, I say, that they wept and lamented when the Rock of their confidence, the Delight of their eyes, the Hope of their souls was taken from them? What would you think if your best earthly friend was hurried away from you by a shameful death? They sorrowed not only because of their own personal loss by His removal, but because He, Himself, was very dear to them. They could not bear that He should be gone in whom their hearts centered all their affection! Their sorrow showed that their hearts were loyal to their Beloved and would never receive another occupant to sit upon the throne of their affections.

They wept and they lamented because their bosoms Lord was gone and His seat was empty. They could not endure the absence of their best Beloved. As pines the dove for its mate, so mourned they for Him whom their soul loved. Whom had they in Heaven if Jesus were gone? Certainly there was none upon earth that they could desire beside Him. They were widowed and they wept and refused to be comforted. Nothing could compensate them for Jesus absence, for He was their All in All. For His sake they had left all and followed Him and now they cannot bear that they should lose Him and so lose more than all!

You who have been bereaved of those whom you have dearly loved and deeply revered, will be able to guess what kind of sorrow filled the hearts of the disciples when their Beloved said that He was about to go from them and that they would not see Him for a while. This mourning was natural and it is natural that we, also, should feel some regret that our Lord is away from us now as to His bodily Presence, though I trust we have, by this time, learned to see the expediency of His absence and are so satisfied with it that we patiently wait and quietly hope until His next appearing. It added greatly to the disciples sorrow that the world would be rejoicing because their Lord was gone. The world shall rejoice.

His eager enemies would hasten Him off to Pilates judgment seat and triumph when they forced an unwilling sentence from that time-serving ruler. They would rejoice when they saw Him bearing His Cross along the way of dolorous. They would stand around the Cross and mock Him with their cruel gazes and with their ribald speechesand when He was dead they would say, This deceiver can speak no more! We have triumphed over Him who set our pretensions at nothing and exposed us before the people. They thought that they had quenched the light which had proved painful to their darkened eyes and, therefore, they were gladand by their gladness swelled the torrent of the disciples sorrow.

Brothers and Sisters, you know when you are in pain or in sorrow yourselves, how very bitter is the coarse laugh of an adversary who exults over your misery and extracts mirth from your tears. This made the disciples smart at their Lords death. Why should the wicked rejoice over Him? Why should the scornful Pharisee and priests shout insults over His dead body? This rubbed salt into the wounds of the downcast disciples and infused a double gall and wormwood into the cup which was already bitter enough. You do not wonder, therefore, that they wept and lamented when their Lord was put to death by wicked hands. Magdalene weeping at the sepulcher acted as her gracious nature prompted her and she was a fair sample of all the rest.

They had this, also, to make them sorrowful, that His death was, for a time, the disappointment of all their hopes. They at first had fondly looked for a kingdoma temporal kingdom, such as their brother Jews expected. Even when our Lord had moderated their expectations and enlightened their views so that they did not quite so much look for an actual temporal sovereignty, yet that thought that, this was He that would have restored the kingdom to Israel, lingered with them. If any of them were so enlightened as to believe in a

spiritual kingdom, as perhaps some of them were in a measure, yet by Jesus death it must have seemed that all their hopes were shattered. Without a leader, how could they succeed? How could a kingdom be set up when the King, Himself, was slain? He who has been betrayed by coward hands, how can He reign? He that was to be the King has been spat upon and mocked and nailed up like a felon to the gallows of woodwhere is His dominion?

He is cut off out of the land of the livingwho will now serve Him? Clay cold His body lies in Josephs tomb and a seal is set upon the stone which shuts up the sepulcheris this not the end of holy hopesthe final close to all holy ambitions? How can they be happy who have seen an end of their fairest dream? Poor followers of the dead Monarch, how can they have hope for His cause and crown? Doubtless in their unbelief they sorrowed deeply because their hope seemed blasted and their faith overturned. They knew so little of the meaning of the present and guessed so little of what the future would be that sorrow filled their hearts and they were ready to perish! You must remember that added to this was the sight which many of them had of their beloved Master in His agonies. Who would not grieve to see Him hurried away at dead of night from holy retirement to be falsely accused? Might not angels wish to weep in sympathy with Him?

Who can keep from sorrowing when Jesus stands insulted by menials, reviled by abjects, forsaken by His friends, blasphemed by His foes? It was enough to make a mans heart break to see the Lamb of God so roughly handled! Who can endure to see the innocent Savior nailed up there in the midst of a scornful crew? Who could endure to see His pangs as they

were mirrored in His Countenance, or to hear His sorrows as they expressed themselves in His painful cries of, I thirst? And in the still sharper agonizing exclamation, My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?

It is little marvel that it was said of the Virgin that the sword pierced through her heart, for surely there was never sorrow like unto Jesus sorrow, nor grief which could be likened unto His grief! His heavy woes must have pierced through the heart of all right-minded men who beheld His unexampled miseries and especially must all personal lovers of Christ have felt ready to die, themselves, when they saw Him thus put to death! Oh deeps of sorrow which my Lord has sufferedshall there be no deeps to answer to You? When all Gods waves and billows go over You, O Jesus, shall not we, also, be plunged into sorrow? Yes, verily, we will drink of Your cup and be baptized with Your Baptism. We will now sit down before Your Cross and watch with You one hour while love and grief conjointly occupy our souls. Now, at the remembrance of what our Lord endured, every Christian feels sympathy with Him. You cannot read the four stories of the Evangelists and weave them into one by imagination and affection without feeling that the minor key befits your voice at such a time, if you at all attempt to sing. There must beit is natural that there should be sorrow because Christ has died.

One of the sharpest points about our sorrow at Jesus death is this that we were the cause of it. We virtually crucified the Lord, seeing it was because we were sinners that He must be made a Sacrifice. Had none of us gone astray like lost sheep, then our wanderings would not have been gathered up and laid upon the Shepherds head. The sword which pierced His heart through and through was forged by our offensesthe vengeance was due for sins which we had committed and Justice exacted its rights at His hands. What loving disciple will refuse to sorrow when he sees that he, himself, has put his Lord to death? Now, putting all these things together, I think I see abundant reason why the disciples should be sorrowful and why they should even express their sorrow by weeping and lamenting. They sorrowed as those do who attend a funeralfor weeping and lamenting abound at eastern funerals.

Orientals are much more demonstrative than we are and, therefore, at the deaths of relatives they make a far greater show of grief by loud cries and flowing tears. The disciples are represented as using the same forcible expressions to set forth their woeYou shall weep and lamenta woe worthy of the buried One whom they mourned. You shall weep and lamentthere was a double vent for a double sorroweyes wept and voices lamented. Christs death was a true funeral to His followers and caused a crushing sorrow as much as if they had, each one, been bereft of all his house! Who marvels that it was so? Sorrow has filled your hearts, says Christ. They had no room to think of anything else but His death. Their heart was full to bursting with grief because He was taken from them and that grief was so sharp as to be likened to one of the keenest pangs which Nature is capable of bearingthe pangs of a travailing womanpangs which seem as if they must bring death with them, but compared with which death, itself, might be a relief!

The sharpness of their anguish in the hour of their trial was all that they could bear; more would have destroyed them! All this they felt and it is no wonder if we feel, in degree, as they did when we take a retrospect of what the Savior endured on our behalf. So far we are bound to concede that the death of our Lord works sorrow, but there is a moderation even in the most justifiable mourningand we are not to indulge excessive grief even at the foot of the Cross, lest it degenerate into folly.

II. Now, secondly, the Truth of God expressly taught in the text is that THIS SORROW IS CHANGED INTO JOY. Your sorrow shall be turned into joy. Not exchanged for joy, but actually transmuted so that the grief becomes joythe cause of sorrow becomes the source of rejoicing! Begin with what I said was a very sharp point of this sorrow and you will see at once how it is turned into joy. That Jesus Christ died for our sins is a sharp sorrowwe lament that our crimes became the nails and our unbelief the spearand yet, my Brothers and Sisters, this is the greatest joy of all! If each one of us can say, He loved me and gave Himself for me, we are truly happy. If you know by personal faith that Jesus took your sins and suffered for them on the Cross so that now your debt is paid and your transgression is blotted out forever by His precious blood, you do not need half-a-dozen words from me to indicate that this which was the center of your grief is also the essence of your joy!

What were it to us if He had saved all the rest of mankind if He had not redeemed us unto God by His blood? We might have been glad from sheer humanity that others should be benefited, but what would have been our deep regret to be, ourselves, excluded from the Grace? Blessed be the Saviors name, we are not left out! In proportion as we repentantly upbraid ourselves for Jesus death, in that same measure may we believingly exult in the fact that His Sacrifice has forever put away our sins and, therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Because God has condemned sin in the flesh of Jesus Christ, therefore He will no more condemn uswe are henceforth freethat the righteousness of the Law may be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit! Heartily do we lament our sin, but we do not lament that Christ has put it away nor lament the death by which He put it away! Rather do our hearts rejoice in all His atoning agonies and glory at every mention of that death by which He has reconciled us unto God. Tis a sad thought that we committed the sin which burdened our Lord, but it is a joy to think that He has taken on Himself our personal sins and carried them away!

The next point of joy is that Jesus Christ has now suffered all that was required of Him. That He should suffer was cause for grief, but that He has now suffered all is equal cause for joy. When a champion returns from the wars bearing the scars of conflict by which he gained his honors, does anyone lament over his campaigns? When he left the castle, his wife hung about his neck and mourned that her lord must go to the wars to bleed and perhaps to die. But when he returns with sounding trumpet and banner held aloft, bringing his trophies with himhonored and exalted

by reason of his victories in many landsdo his dearest friends regret his toils and suffering? Do they keep fast correspondent to the days in which he was covered with the sweat and dust of battle? Do they toll a bell on the anniversary of his conflict? Do they weep over the scars which are still upon him? Do they not glory in them as honorable memorials of his valor? They reckon that the marks the hero bears in his flesh are the noblest insignia of his glory and the best tokens of his prowess!

So let us not grieve, today, that Jesus hands were pierced! Behold, they are now as gold rings set with the beryl. Let us not lament that His feet were nailed to the tree, for His legs are now to us pillars of marble set upon sockets of fine gold. The face more marred than that of any man is now the more lovely for its marring and He, Himself, despite His agonies, is now endowed with a beauty which even the ravished spouse in the Song could only describe as altogether lovely. The mighty love which enabled Him to endure His mighty passion has impressed upon Him charms altogether inconceivable in their sweetness! Let us not mourn, then, for the agony is all over and He is none the worse for having endured it. There is no Cross for Him now, except in the sense that the Cross honors and glorifies Him! There remains for Him no cruel spear nor crown of thorns, except that from these He derives a revenue of honor and titles always new which exult Him higher and yet higher in the love of His saints.

Glory be unto God, Christ has not left a pang unsuffered of all His substitutionary sorrows! Of our dread ransom price He has paid the utmost farthing! The atoning griefs have all been endured! The cup of wrath is drunk quite dry and because of this, we, with all the hosts above, will rejoice forever and ever! We are glad not only that the hour of travail is over, but that our Lord has survived His pains. He died a real death, but now He lives a real life! He lay in the tomb and it was no fiction that the breath had departed from Himit is equally no fiction that our Redeemer lives! The Lord is risen, indeed! He has survived the death struggle and the agony and He lives unhurt! He has come out of the furnace without so much as the smell of fire upon Him! He is not injured in any faculty, whether human or Divine. He is not robbed of any glory, but His name is now surrounded with brighter luster than ever! He has lost no dominion, He claims superior rights and rules over a new empire. He is a gainer by His losses! He has risen by His descent.

All along the line He is victorious at every point. Never yet was there a victory won but what it was in some respects a loss as well as a gainbut our Lords triumph is unmingled gloryto Himself a gain as well as to us who share in it. Shall we not, then, rejoice? What? Would you sit and weep by a mother as she exultingly shows her new-born child? Would you call together a company of mourners to lament and to bewail when the heir is born into the household? This were to mock the mothers gladness! And so, today, should we use dreary music and sing dolorous hymns when the Lord is risen and is not only unhurt, unharmed and unconquered, but is far more glorified and exalted than before His death? He has gone into Glory because all His work is done! Shall not your sorrow be turned into joy in the most emphatic sense?

And there is this to add to it, that the grand end which His death was meant to accomplish is all attained. What was that end? I may divide it into three parts. It was the putting away of sin by the Sacrifice of Himself and that is complete. He has finished transgression. He has made an end of sin! He has taken the whole load of the sin of His elect and hurled it into the bottomless abyss! If it is searched for, it shall not be foundno, it shall not besays the Lord! He has put away our sin as far from us as the east is from the west and He has risen, again, to prove that all for whom He died are justified in Him.

A second purpose was the salvation of His chosen and that salvation is secured. When He died and rose again the salvation of all that were in Him was placed beyond all hazard. He has redeemed us unto God by His blood by an effectual redemption. None shall be enslaved who were by Him redeemed; none shall be left in sin or cast into Hell whose names are engraved on the palms of His hands. He has gone into Glory, carrying their names upon His heart and He stands pleading there for them and, therefore, He is able to save them to the uttermost. I will, He says, that they whom You have given Me be with Me where I am, that they may behold My Glory, and that effectual plea secures their being with Him and like He when the end shall be.

The grand objective, however, of His death was the Glory of God and, truly, God is glorified in the death of His Son beyond anything that was known before or since! Here the very heart of God is laid open to the inspection of all believing eyesHis justice and His love, His stern severity which will not pass by sin without atonement and His boundless love that gives His best, His darling from His bosom, that He may bleed and die in our place

*Here depths of wisdom shine,   
Which angels cannot trace   
The highest rank of cherubim   
Still lost in wonder gaze.*

Yes, O Christ of God, it is finished. You have done all You intended to do! The whole of Your design is achievednot one purpose has failed, nor even one part of it fallen throughand, therefore, shall we not rejoice? The child is born, shall we not be glad? The travail would have been a subject for great grief had the mother died, or had the child perished in the birthbut now that all is over and all is wellwhy should we remember any more the anguish?

Jesus lives and His great salvation makes glad the sons of men! Why should we tune the mournful string and mourn like doves? No! Ring out the clarion, for the battle is fought and the victory is won forever! Victory, VICTORY, VICTORY! His own right hand and His holy arm has gotten Him the victory! Though the Champion died in the conflict, yet in His death He slew Death and destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, Satan! Our glorious Champion has risen from His fall, for He could not be held by the bands of death! He has smitten His enemies, but, as for Himself, He has come up from the grave; He has risen as from the heart of the sea! Let us exult like Israel at the Red Sea when Pharaoh was overthrown!

With timbrel and dance let the daughters of Israel go forth to sing unto the Lord, for He has triumphed gloriously and utterly destroyed all our adversaries.

We have not yet completed this work of changing sorrow into joy till we notice that now the greatest possible blessings accrue to us because He was made a curse for us. Through His death come pardon, reconciliation, access, acceptanceHis blood speaks better things than that of Abel and invokes all Heavens blessings upon our heads! But Jesus is not dead! He is risen and that resurrection brings justification and the safeguard of His perpetual plea in Heaven! It brings us His representative Presence in Glory and the making of all things ready for us in the many mansions! It brings us a share in that all power which is given unto Him in Heaven and in earth, in the strength of which He bids us go and teach all nations, baptizing them into His sacred name.

Beloved, Pentecost comes to us because Jesus went away from us! The gifts of the Holy Spiritilluminating, comforting, quickening, the power to proclaim the Word and the might which attends that Wordall have come to us because He is no longer with us, but through the regions of the dead has passed to reach His crown! And now, today, we have this great joy, again, that because He died there is a kingdom set up in the world, a kingdom which never can be moved, a kingdom whose power lies in weakness and yet it is irresistible! It is a kingdom whose glory lies in suffering and yet it cannot be crushed! It is a kingdom of love, a kingdom of unselfishness, a kingdom of kindness, truth, purity, holiness and happiness! Jesus wears the imperial purple of a kingdom in which God loves men and men love God! Having proved Himself the Prince of selfsacrificing love, He is justly exalted to the throne amid the acclamations of all His saints!

His kingdoms, shapeless as it looks to carnal eyes, like a stone cut out of a mountain without hands, will, nevertheless, break all the kingdoms of this world to shivers in due time and fill the whole earth! His kingdom will grow and extend, till, from a handful of corn upon the top of the mountains its fruit shall so increase that it shall shake like Lebanon! It is a kingdom which shall comprehend all ranks and conditions of men, men of all colors, of all lands and nations, encircling all even as the ocean surrounds many lands. The unsuffering kingdom of the suffering Shepherd, inaugurated by His death, established by His Resurrection, extended by the Pentecostal descent of the Holy Spirit and secured by the Eternal Covenant is hastening on. Every winged hour brings it nearer to its perfect manifestation. Yes, the kingdom comes! The kingdom whose foundation was laid in the blood of its King at Calvary!

Happy are they who are helping it on, for when the Lord shall be revealed, they, also, shall be manifested with Him. The Chief among 10,000 and the 10,000 who were with Him shall stand side by side in the day of victory, even as they stood side by side in the hour of strife. Then, indeed, our sorrow shall be turned into joy! There we must leave the subject, only noticing this one fact, that that joy is right hearty joy. Your hearts shall rejoice, said the Savior. Ours is no superficial mirth, but heart-deep bliss! That joy is also abiding joy. Your joy no man takes from you. No, nor devil, either! Nor time nor eternity can rob us of it. At the foot of the Cross there wells up a flashing, sparkling fountain of joy which can never be dried up, but must flow on forever! In summer and in winter shall it be and none shall be able to keep us back from the living flood, but we shall drink to the full forever and ever!

III. And, now, my last point is THE GENERAL PRINCIPLE INVOLVED IN THIS ONE PARTICULAR INSTANCE. The general principle is this, that in connection with Christ you must expect to have sorrow. You shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice. But whatever sorrow you feel in connection with Jesus, there is this consolationthe pangs are all birth-pangsthey are all the necessary preliminaries of an everincreasing, abounding joy! Brothers and Sisters, since you have come to know Christ, you have felt a smarter grief on account of sin. Let it continue with you, for it is working holiness in you and holiness is happiness.

You have felt, of late, a keener sensibility on account of the sins of those around you. Do not wish to be deprived of itit will be the means of your loving them more, praying more for them and seeking more their goodand you will be the better qualified to do them real service and to lead them to your Lord. Perhaps you have had to bear a little persecution, hard words and the cold shoulder. Do not fret, for all this is necessary to make you have fellowship with Christs sufferings that you may know more of Him and may become more like He. You sometimes see the cause of Christ as it were dead and you are grieved about it, as well you might be. The enemy triumphs; false doctrine is advanced; Jesus seems to be crucified afresh, or hidden away in the grave, forgotten, as a dead man out of mind. It is well that you should feel this, but in that very feeling there should be the full persuasion that the Truth of Christ cannot long be buried, but waits to rise again with power!

Never did the Gospel lie in the grave more than its three days. Never did a lion roar upon it but what it turned and tore the enemy and found honey in its carcass in later days. Whenever the Truth of God seems to be repulsed, she does but draw back to take a more wondrous leap forward! As when the tide ebbs out very far, we expect it to return again in the fullness of its strength, so is it with the Church. If we see a small fall in the tide we know that it will not rise very far, but when we see the stream sinking right away and leaving the river-bed almost dry, we expect to see it roll in at flood tide till the banks overflow! Always look for the triumph of Christianity when others tell you it is defeated! Expect to find in the very quarter where it is covered with most disgrace and shame, that there it will win its most glorious laurels! The Truths superlative victories follow upon its worst defeats.

Have faith in God. You tell me you have that. Then, says your Master, you believe in God, believe also in Me. Believe in Christ! Trust in Him! Rest in Him! Fight for Him! Labor for Him! Suffer for Him, for He must conquer! Even now does He sit as King upon the hill of Zion and soon the heathen shall become His inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth shall be His possession! Your sorrow shall be turned into joy in all these

cases. Whenever your sorrow is the result of your belonging to Christ, always congratulate yourself upon it, since as the spring begets the summer, so does sorrow in connection with Christ bring forth joy to us in the Lord! By-and-by will come your last sorrowunless the Lord should suddenly appear, you will die. But be content to die! Look forward to it without the slightest alarm! Death is the gate of endless joy and shall we dread to enter there? No, Jesus being with you, meet death joyfully, for to die is to burst the bonds of this death which everywhere surrounds us and to enter into the true life of liberty and bliss. Even to the end, sorrow shall be to you the birth-pang of your joy! Carry that thought with you and be always glad.

With one remark I finish. I will not dwell upon it, but leave it to abide in the memories of those whom it concerns. I present it to the minds of all those who are not believers in Christ. Did you notice that the Lord said, You shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: you shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. Now, what is implied there to complete the sentence? Why, that the worlds joy shall be turned into sorrow! Even so shall it be. There is not a pleasure which the ungodly man enjoys when he is indulging in sin but what will curdle into grief and be his sorrow forever. Depend upon it that the wine of transgression will sour into the gripping vinegar of remorse which shall dissolve the rebels soul! The sparks which now delight you shall kindle the flames of your eternal misery! Every sin, though sweet when it is like a green fig, is bitterness itself when it comes to its ripeness.

Woe unto you that laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep! Woe unto you that now rejoice in sin, for you shall gnash your teeth and weep and wail because of that very Christ whom you now reject! All things will soon be turned upside down. Blessed are you that mourn now, for you shall be comforted. But woe unto you that are full this day, for you shall hunger! The sun will soon be set for you that rejoice in sin. Sadness, like a thick cloud, is now descending to surround you eternally in its horrible gloom! Out of that cloud shall leap the flashes of eternal Justice and from it shall peal the thunderclaps of righteous condemnation!

Upon the wicked He shall rain snares, fire and brimstone and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup. The Lord deliver you from such a doom by leading you, now, to yield to Jesus and to believe in His name. May He grant this prayer for Jesus sake. Amen.

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JOY IN PLACE OF SORROW   
NO. 2525

**INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, JULY 11, 1897. DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 10, 1884.

**And you now, therefore, have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man takes from you. John 16:22.**

Joy is the normal condition of a Believer. His proper state, his healthy state, is that of happiness and gladness. As I have often reminded you, it has become a Christian duty for Believers to be glad. Rejoice in the Lord, is a precept given to us over and over again and I believe that, broadly speaking, the general condition of Gods people is one of joy. It is not a falsehood if we say, Happy are you, O Israel! True Christians are the happiest people under Heaven. They have many sorrows, but there is a text which says, As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing. And old Master Brooks has a good note upon the passage. He says that it does not say, As sorrowful, yet as always rejoicing. The quasithe asrelates only to the sorrow. The joy is real, without any quasi. Christians have quasi sorrow, but they have real rejoicing! They are oftentimes as if they were sadyes, as if they were, of all men, most miserable, but in the very depths of their soul they have the peace of God which passes all understanding, to keep their heart and mind through Christ Jesus.

I will venture to assert that Christians, at least, always have matter for joy. They are never short of material out of which they may make melody unto the Lord! If they will, they may rejoice, for they have plenty of causes for joy. The Lord has done great things for them and they ought to add, Therefore we are glad. And, as they have plenty of matter for joy, so they have ample motive for joy, for when they joy and rejoice, they glorify God, they prove the reality of their faith and they make their religion attractive to others!

The joy of the Lord is their strength, their beauty, their charm. There are always reasons why a Christian should be happy and as he has matter for joy and motive for joy, so he always has a measure of joy! He may seem to be overwhelmed with trouble, but his boat still floats. He may seem to run short of joy, as the widow in Elijahs day ran short of meal and oil, but there shall always be a cake for him to eat and a little oil shall still remain in the cruse. His joy shall never utterly fail himhe shall always have a sufficient measure of hope to enable him to keep his lamp alight in the darkest night.

Above and beyond all this, the Christian always has a remainder of joy which shall be his in due time. What he has not yet in his own hand, is in the pierced hands of Jesus, held there fast and safe against all comers! And he may and he should always sing

*Glory to You for all the Grace   
I have not yet tasted.*

Some people have but little in possession at present, but they have a reversionary interest in a large estate. And it is so with us. We have a heritage of joy that as yet we have not entered upon, but it is ours by a covenant of salt, and none can break the sacred inheritance. So let us again take up the language of the hymn we sang at the beginning of the service

*The hill of Zion yields   
A thousand sacred sweets,   
Before we reach the heavenly fields,   
Or walk the golden streets.*

Thus you see, dear Friends, that Believers have matter for joy, motive for joy, a measure of joy already possessed and a greater remainder of joy yet to be realized! Gods people are a happy people, a blessed people. May my soul always be numbered among them!

Now, coming to the text, which is intended to promote our joy, I gather two observationsfirst, that the Lord Jesus enters into our sorrows. He does not overlook them, but He says, You now, therefore, have sorrow. Secondly, the Lord Jesus creates our joy. But I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man takes from you.

I. First, then, dear Friends, you who are sorrowful, listen to this former part of the discourse. THE LORD JESUS CHRIST ENTERS INTO OUR SORROWS.

One point in which He enters into them is thisHe sees our quickness in sorrowing. Perhaps you did not notice that in the text, but it is there. You observe, in the 20th verse, that Jesus said to His disciples, You shall be sorrowful, and He compared them to a woman in travail. But then He did not say what we might have thought He would have said, You will, therefore, have sorrow, but He said, You now, therefore, have sorrow. He saw their faces begin to pale before the sorrow had really come. He had not gone away from them, for there He stood in their midstbut in the expectation that He would go, their eyes began to grow dim and the tears commenced to roll down their cheeks, so He said as He looked at them, You now, therefore, have sorrow. And, Beloved, you and I also are very quick at this work of sorrowing. I wish that we anticipated our joys with half the readiness that we anticipate our sorrows! We would be much happier if we did, but there is many a child of God who cries long before he is hurt and sorrows long before his troubles actually come to him.

We often run to meet our troubleswe seem as if we were hungry to have our mouth full of bitterness and eager to drink the waters of Marah. It is a pity that it should be so with us. These disciples had not yet lost their MasterHe was still with them and a child-like spirit might have said, Ah, well, blessed Master, if You are only going to be with us five minutes, we may as well be happy for that five minutes! If You are going away in half-an-hour, at any rate You are here as yet. Let us not begin to be cast down until the parting moment really comes. Ah! you say, but it was very natural that they should begin to sorrow. Yes, and that is exactly what I say. It is very natural, it is so wonderfully natural that it is pretty nearly universal with us! But it is not any the better for being natural, is it? You take your medicine when the proper time comes for taking it, but do not be taking it all day long! There are many Christian people who chew their pills instead of swallowing them. If they took their sorrows when they came and accepted them as having been sent straight from God, there would not be half the bitterness in their mouths that there now is when they begin to think concerning some future trial, Oh, it is coming! I know it is coming! I can see that it is coming! The shadow of the sorrow is often worse than the sorrow, itself, and as Young speaks of him who feels a thousands deaths in fearing one, so I doubt not that we often feel a thousand sorrows in anticipating one. They will come soon enough, Brothers and Sistersdo not go to meet them! Go forth to meet the Bridegroom, but there cannot be any particular need to meet your troubles. Let them come when they must comeand welcome thembut why should you conjure up those which, perhaps, have no existence at all?

Notice, next, that our Lord has a very quick eye to observe our sorrows which relate to Himself. He says, You now, therefore, have sorrow. That is, sorrow because I am going away from you. Sorrow because I am about to die. I think that the Lord loves His people to have that kind of sorrow. While the Bridegroom is with the children of the bride chamber, it is fit and comely that they should rejoice. But when the Bridegroom is gone, it is loyalty to Him and it is a fit and comely thing that they should sorrow. Now, Brothers and Sisters, whenever your heart gets heavy because you have lost your Lords company, it is a proper sorrow. Whenever you hear His name blasphemed, whenever you find false doctrine preached instead of the Truth, whenever you see men undermining the blessed Gospel, when you notice apostates turning this way and that and forsaking the paths of Christ, you should sorrow. And, if you do, I believe that your Lord looks upon such sorrow as a token of your loyal affection to Him and, so far from condemning it, He justifies it and He says, You now, therefore, have sorrow. He looks at the reason for it and He says, This is not a causeless grief.

He did not blame the disciples for sorrowing when He was gone. No, He expected that they would do so and He saw the reason for their grief and spoke tenderly of it. If there can be found a reason for the sorrow of a child of God, Christ will find it. I know that, often, worldlings are unable to understand our sorrow. They say, Why does this man fret and worry? He has everything that heart can wish. But the Savior knows the secrets of the soul and He puts His finger on the source of our grief and says, You now, therefore, have sorrow. And if that, therefore, is because of something touching Himself and His Kingdom, and His work in the world, He justifies the sorrow and He will help us to bear it and, in due time, He will remove it! Let us, then, bless our Lord Jesus Christ that while He knows how quick we are to sorrow before we need to, yet He does approve of our sorrowing when there is a need for it and specially when it concerns His own dear Self.

Observe, further, that our blessed Master is quick to notice the limit of our sorrow. Take your pencil, if you will, and put a black mark under that third word in our text, And you now, therefore, have sorrow. I feel as if I could almost kiss that word, You now, therefore, have sorrow. What does that word, now, mean? Well, sometimes, it only means just the next few minutesYou now, therefore, have sorrow. But, now, cannot mean longif, you now, therefore, have sorrow, it does not mean that you will have sorrow forever! ListenWeeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning. Many are the afflictions of the righteous. Did you ever read that in the Psalm? Sing it in deep bass tones! Growl it out if you will! Many are the afflictions of the righteous. Up rises another singer and sends up the soprano note higher than my voice can goBut the Lord delivers him out of them all! And that glorious note seems to kill the other. You now, therefore, have sorrow.

Ah, but what is that little now? It is a mere drop that trembles on my fingertips! It is an inch of time, a moments space. You now, therefore, have sorrow. Perhaps tomorrow morning all that sorrow will be over and if not, that, now, is driving away on red-hot axles and will soon be gone! And there shall come the hereafter of endless joy and boundless bliss. Our Lord Jesus Christ recollects this fact when you do not. You say, I am so sorrowful, so broken down. And the Savior puts His dear pierced hand on you, and He says, Yes, you are so now, that is all. It is only now, and it will all soon be ended. And then you will take your harp down from the willows and sing and rejoice with the happiest and the merriest of the saints of God.

Notice, also, that the Lord Jesus Christ so enters into our sorrow that He has an eye to the outcome of it all. He says to each Believer, Yes, dear Child, you have sorrow, you have great sorrow, but you know what it is to produce. A woman, when she is in travail, has great sorrow, but in a short time her sorrow is turned into joy when her child is born into the world. So every sorrow of a child of God is the birth pang of a joy. I do not know whether you have noticed, but I have, that most of our joys, if they are of an earthly kind, are very expensive before long. You cannot delight in the creature without sorrow coming of it. You cannot love your wife, your child with a most lawful and laudable love, but one of these days it will be most expensive lovewhen the loved ones are taken away, or they sicken and suffer. The more we love them, the more they cost us! But our sorrows are fish that come to us with money in their mouths. Whenever they come, they always bring us joy! If you dig round the roots of a deep sorrow, you shall find tubers of joy, with stores of heavenly bliss laid up in them! They who sorrow for Christ shall soon have Christ to make them forget their sorrow. They who sorrow for His Kingdom, or sorrow for more of His righteousness, or sorrow for more of His likeness, or sorrow for closer communion with Him shall, before long, find to the delight of their soul that their sorrow is turned into joy!

Is not that a wonderful promise? Your sorrow shall be turned into joy. If any man here were greatly in debt and someone were to say, All your debts shall be transformed into assets, well, it is clear that then the richest man here would be the man that had the biggest debts! So is it with our sorrowsthe more of them that we have, the more joys we shall have, because they are to be turned into joy. If, as Believers, we have much sorrow, we shall have much joy coming out of it! Therefore, with the Apostle, we glory in tribulations, also, and triumph in the afflictions and trials of this mortal life, seeing that they shall work our lasting good.

Once more upon this first point, our Lord Jesus Christ sees that our sorrows will come to an end, for He says, You now, therefore, have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice. The Lord knows that His people are not hopelessly locked up in prison, they are not to be eternally in the shade. They shall soon come out of their sorrows and the darkness shall be turned into the brightness of the day. Our Lord can see this and He would have us see it, too, so He points it out to us. O sons and daughters of sorrow, I pray the Comforter to apply this Word with power to your souls!

II. Now I have to play on a higher string. Let me have your most earnest attention while I dwell for a little while on the latter part of our subjectthe Lord Jesus creates our joy. He says, in the second half of the text, I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man takes from you.

Observe, first, that when the Lord Jesus Christ comes to make His people glad, He always touches the very center of their grief. The disciples grief was that Jesus would soon be gone from them. Well, He said, I will see you again. So, Beloved, when the Lord Jesus shall come to you in your hour of sorrow, He will touch the center of your grief, whatever it is. There is a wonderful adaptation in the Word of God to the peculiarities of all His people. There are some very odd texts in the Bibledo you know why they are there? It is because there are so many odd people aboutand those texts are meant specially for them! You may see upon a locksmiths ring a number of strangely-shaped keysit is because there are so many strangely-made locks! And in Gods Word there is a key to fit every lock. There is a key for the strange lock that is inside your heart, my Brother or my Sister, and the Lord knows how to meet your case exactly and to touch your out-of-the-way, singular, special, peculiar, idiosyncrasy of sorrow! He can get at it and put it right away from you.

Notice, next, that the Good Physician makes the plaster wider than the wound. He says not what we might have thought that He would say, You will sorrow because you cannot see Me, but you shall see Me again. That plaster would have just fitted the sore, but He says, I will see you again. That is a great deal better! That covers the sorrow and covers all the wounds of all Gods people right down to this day, for though we do not see Him again just yet, yet He is still seeing us again as much as ever He saw those disciples when He stood in the midst of them and said, Peace be unto you. Oh, I love this Characteristic of my Master that, when He meets a poor Believer who asks Him for a penny, He says, Here, take seven. When we knock at His door and say, A friend, who is on a journey, has come to me, and I have nothing to set before him; lend me three loaves, He says, Take as many as you need. His liberality far outruns our needs and our desiresand He is both able and willing to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. So that our Lord Jesus Christ creates our joy by touching the very center of our grief and then by covering it with that which is greater than the grief itself!

Note, further, whenever the Lord Jesus Christ comes to one of His sorrowing people to give him joy, He gives it most effectually. What does He say to His disciples? I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice. That is more than any mere man could say. When I get to talking with Gods downcast people, I can say to them, I will see you again and talk with you again, and I shall be glad if I can make your heart rejoice. But I can never be sure that I shall succeed in cheering them. You and I, dear Friends, are very poor comforters, and we often fail. But when the Good Physician comes to any of His patients, He knows how to make the medicine effectual! I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice. See how the Lord Jesus Christ handles human hearts. This morning we had a grand subject in which we showed how the Lord, in His Omnipotence, by His authority and power, cast out devils with a word.

[Sermon #1765, Volume

30, An Astounding Miracleread/download the entire sermon for free at

http://www.spurgeongems.org] And here we have another instance of His Omnipotence! He does not say, I will try to cheer your heart. He says, Your heart shall rejoice, just as if He had our hearts in His hand and could do with them as He pleased, which is really the case! His Divine Spirit can now so effectually apply the comforts of the Word that it shall not be said, You ought to rejoice, but, You shall rejoice. The Lord can lift up the light of His Countenance upon us till we are glad in Him.

I want you also to notice that while the Lords application of joy to the heart is very effectual, it is very deep and very full. I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice. When the worldling is glad, you hear him laughing from his teeth outwards! He puts on a merry look, yet all the while there is heaviness in his heart. His wine vats are full to bursting and the sound of the buyer is in his ears, but there is a fear in his conscience and his soul is disquieted. But when the Lord Jesus Christ comes to deal with His people, He deals with their hearts, with the inmost core of their being, with the very center of their soul! Your heart shall rejoice. Do you not know what this experience is, beloved Brothers and Sisters? I think you do. Sometimes you could not explain your joy, it is too deepit is so excessive that words and noise of any kind seem quite out of place. You need to get alone and, in the silence of your soul, sit still, like David before the Lord, and there to drink in full draughts of His love. I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice.

True Christians need never covet the poor joy of worldlings. We cannot fall into the insanity of living with such miserable ends and objects as those which are compassed within the short pale of our existence here below. It has become slavery to us and I bear witness for myself and for you, also, that we do not forsake the pleasures of the world because we think that we are denying ourselves! It is no self-denial to us, for they would not please us. I have gone by a whole line of sties and seen the pigs feeding greedily, but I never thought that I was denying myself because I did not feed with them. I never wished to have a law passed that the unclean beasts should not have their swill. No, let them have it, and as much as they can eat! And we say just the same of the pleasures of the carnal man. We do not envy him that which is so great a relish, it is no self-denial to us to go without itwe have come out of that style of living and we do not want to go back to it. When the man says that he is perfectly happy and satisfied, we think, Just so, no doubt you are, and we have seen many a fat bullock in the field look perfectly content. But Christians have different pleasures and higher joys! And we cannot be bullocks, we cannot be swine. We have been brought out of that kind of merely animal life! We have been lifted up into another and a higher style of living and it is nothing short of a miracle of the Divine hand which has brought us right out of it, so that we have done with it forever, and loathe it, and could not go back to it under any circumstances whatever! Old things are passed away! Behold, all things are become new. The Lord has brought us out of the region of darkness into His marvelous light and delivered us forever from the power and dominion of Satan!

I saw, the other day, a blind fish that had been accustomed to live in a dark cave. It had not any eyes and it did not need any eyes because it lived where light never came. There are some people who are just like that fishthey are perfectly satisfied to be blind and, what is more there are some blind persons who declare that there is no such thing as light, for they say that they never saw it! Just sothey have not any eyes with which to see it. The carnal mind cannot understand the things of God. There is not the faculty in it by which it can understand them. The carnal mind has not the Spirit of God! Spiritual things must be spiritually discerned and until God, the Holy Spirit, comes and creates in us the eye-faculty called the spirit, by which we become body, soul, and spirit, we are like the blind fish which has no eyes. We are just mere men, but not men of God. We have not passed into the new world of spiritual perceptions. But, by the Grace of God, many of us have been made partakers of the Divine Nature and so have been permitted to share the joy of which our text speaks.

But I must get to the end of my discourse by reminding you that the glory of the Christians joy lies in the fact that it is permanent. Your joy no man takes from you. Well, says one, I wonder what that joy is? Let me tell you and then I will close. The sorrow about which Christ spoke to His disciples was that He was going away from them. Therefore the joy of which He spoke is that now He sees us again! I want you, dear Friends, specially to notice, as I have already told you, that it does not say that you see Him, but that He sees you and, therefore, to you, Peters words may be applied, Whom having not seen, you love; in whom, though now you see Him not, yet, believing, you rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

What, then, is our joy? It is, first, that Christ is not dead. He is alive, He is risen from the dead! Next, He reigns as well as lives, and He reigns for usHe is ruling all things on our behalf and, as He sees us with His royal eyes, He also pleads for us before the eternal Throne of God! And He is coming again! We know not when, but we know that He is coming quickly and that He is already on the road. He shall descend in like manner as they saw Him go up into Heaven.

All this is the joy of the Christian which no man takes from him! No man shall ever take from me the joy that Christ rose from the dead! I know that He didthere is no historical fact that is so certainly attested as this, that Christ died, was buried and, on the third day, rose again from the dead! And therein I do rejoice, yes, and will rejoice! If He rose not from the dead, then my preaching is vain and your faith is also vainbut as He surely rose from the dead, then every trouble has gone. I do not think that those poor disciples had any joy while Christ was in the grave. They could not rejoice then. Their big sorrow swallowed up all joy. And I do not think that if you and I were what we ought to be, we should have any sorrow, now that Christ is out of the gravethe joy because He has risen ought to swallow up every sorrow that we haveit should be a joy that no man can take from us!

There is this further joy that no man can take from me, that Jesus Christ reigns, King of kings and Lord of lords! I have often told you how, many years ago, that doctrine saved my reason. And I am alive and here to preach because of that glorious Truth of God. After the terrible tragedy in the Surrey Gardens Music Hall, my mind seemed to fail me, and my reason reeled. I had to get away and be alone. And so I walked about a friends garden. Someone watched me, for they did not know what might happen to meI was so unmanned that I did not seem able to pray or to read the Scriptures. But as I was walking in the garden, there came to me this passage, Therefore God also has highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name. And I said to myself, I am a poor soldier, wounded in the battle, and lying in the ditch. But there rides the King and all is well with Him, for He is King of kings and Lord of lords! I seemed to rouse myself up out of the ditch and cry, Hallelujah be to His blessed name! and in that moment all my faculties returned to me! I walked into the house, and said, I am perfectly well. I can preach next Sunday. And I did preach, the following Sabbath, from the text that had been so blessed to my own heart and mind. [Sermon #101,

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What matters it what becomes of me? Whether I live or whether I die, no man can take this joy from me, that Jesus Christ lives, reigns, triumphs and that He shall surely come to judge the quick and the dead according to my Gospel!

I preach to you, Beloved, a joy that no man takes from you! If you begin to live by your own feelings, you will sometimes be up and sometimes down, and be always unsettled. Now live on this Truth of Godfirst, that Jesus died. Then if you believe on Him, you died in Him. Next, that He was buried and that your sins were buried with Him. Then, that He rose again and you rose in Himand now that He lives and reigns forever and ever, your cause is safe in His hands and apart from your cause altogether, your spirit may rejoice that the cause of right, the cause of truth, the cause of God, is secure beyond all hazard because He who went away from us for a little while, though we have not seen Him, yet sees us, and our hearts do and will rejoice in Him! Blessed be His holy name!

I wish that all of you shared in this joy, but those who do not believe in Jesus cannot. Dear young people, I have a great longing that very early in life you should be reconciled to God by the death of His Son. It is such a joy to know the Lord early that I cannot understand why so many wish to put it off. There is a young man who wants to be married and he wrote to me to ask whether, on a certain day, I could marry him. I could not, for I could not be here, so I proposed to him to wait a week till I came back. Instead of which, he proposed that it should be a week earlier, as he said, to accommodate me! I notice that there is no wish to put off a wedding and I do not wonder that it is so, but I do marvel that, in the far higher joy of being married to Christ, the greater and truer delight of becoming one with Him forever, so many want it to be a week later, or a month later, or even a year later!

Oh, did you know that happy day when Jesus puts our sins awayif there were a time fixed and you knew itI think you would grow almost impatient to have it even earlier! Do not postpone this heavenly marriage, I pray you, who have been at enmity against God! Do not put off being reconciled to Him, for he who fights with God had better quickly end the battle! So be silent and end all your discussions with God without a word unless it is such a word as this, Lord, I believe! Help You my unbelief! God grant that you may be led to believe in Jesus

now, for His names sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 16:16-33.**   
Our Lord is speaking to His disciples before His departure from them to be crucified, and He says.

Verse 16. A little while, and you shall not see Me: and again, a little while, and you shall see Me, because I go to the Father. It is wonderful how He could talk thus calmly about His death, knowing that it would be a death of bitter shame and terrible agony. Yet He does, as it were, pass over that view of it as He says, A little while, and you shall not see Me: and again, a little while, and you shall see Me.Because I die? No. Because I am crucified? No, but, Because I go to the Father. Beloved, always think of your departure out of the world in the same lightI go to the Father. Do not say, I die. I languish upon the bed of pain. I expire. No, but, I go to the Father.

17, 18. Then said some of His disciples among themselves, What is this that He says unto us, A little while, and you shall not see Me: and again, a little while, and you shall see Me: and, Because I go to the Father? They said therefore, What is this that He says, A little while? We cannot tell what He says. Then why not ask Him? But are not you and I often very slow to ask the meaning of the Masters Words? You read in Scripture something that you cannot understand, and you say to yourself, I cannot make out the meaning of that chapter. But do you always pray over it and ask the Writer to tell you what He intended when He wrote it? It is a grand thing to have this Inspired Book. But it is a grander thing, still, to have the Spirit of God, who inspired it, abiding with His people forever! But we fail to learn many a secret from the Word because we do not pray our way into it. He who does not know can scarcely have his ignorance pitied when it remains willful. If you can know for the asking, why not ask?

19. Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask Him, and said unto them, Do you inquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and you shall not see Me: and again, a little while, and you shall see Me? They might have inquired a long while among themselves and all in vain! But to go to their Lord was the short way out of the difficulty, for He could explain it. See how ready He is to explain, for He expounds the Truth even to those who had not asked for an exposition! In this matter, He was found of them that sought Him not. Knowing that they were desirous to ask, He accepted the will for the deed, the wish for the prayerand He answered the secret longing of their heart.

20. Verily, verily, I say unto you, That you shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice. I am going away from you, and while I am gone, it will be all weeping and lamenting with you, but while I am gone the world shall have its hour of triumphit shall think that I am slain and that My cause is defeated.

20, 21. And you shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. A woman when she is in travail has sorrow because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembers no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. So, when Christ came back again, they would remember no more the sorrow of their travail hour in which they saw Him bound, spat upon and taken off to executionand mocked upon the tree. The joy that would come of it all would obliterate the remembrance of the sorrow!

22, 23. And you now, therefore, have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man takes from you. And in that day you shall ask Me nothing. You shall not need to make, anymore, inquiries of Me, for everything shall then be explained to you by the Spirit.

23. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatever you shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it to you. This shall be one fruit of My passion, that, henceforth, whatever you shall ask of the Father, in My name, shall be given to you; and though you may not, perhaps, address your prayers to Me personally, yet addressed to the Father, in My name, they shall succeed.

24. Hitherto have you asked nothing in My name. You have not yet learned how to use My name in prayer. Our Lord had not yet taught them so to pray, but now we know what it is to ask in the name of Christit is to pray with the authority of the risen and glorified Son of God!

24. Ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may be full. See how our Lord continues to drive at that point, for He would have His people happy. He wants you, Beloved, to be joy-fullfull of joy! Not merely to have a little joy hidden away in a corner somewhere, but, that your joy may be full.

25, 26. These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time comes when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall show you plainly of the Father. At that day you shall ask in My name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you. Though that is, indeed, what our Lord does!

27. For the Father Himself loves you. The Father, whom you are so apt to think of as sterner than Myself, and further off than I, the Son of Man am, the Father Himself loves you.

27. Because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came out from God. Have you, dear Friends, love to Christ? Do you believe that Christ came forth from God? Then does the Father give His special love to you!

28. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world. Again, I leave the world, and go to the Father. Had He not clearly explained what He meant by being absent a little while, and then coming back again?

29, 30. His disciples said unto Him, Lo, now speak You plainly, and speak no proverb. Now are we sure. Now they can give reasons for the hope that is in them. Now are we sure.

30. That You know all things, and need not that any man should ask You. By this we believe that You came forth from God. They are very positive, but notice the check that our Lord put upon all this confident assurance!

31, 32. Jesus answered them, Do you now believe? Behold, the hour comes, yes, is now come, that you shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone. Whenever there is any boasting upon your lips, even though you may think that you can rightly say, Now we are sure, stop a bit, dear Friends, stop a bit! We have not, any of us, all the good we think we have. No, they who think themselves perfect think the most amiss. They are altogether mistaken and there is some latent unbelief even where faith is strongest. Christ still asks, Do you now believe? You have only to be sufficiently tried and to be tempted long enough and in that very point where you think you are strongest you will fail. Now are we sure, say the confident disciples. Ah, says Christ, do you now believe? Behold, the hour comes, yes, is now come, that you shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone!

32. And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. How gloriously is that blessed Truth of God put in just here! The awful solitude that Christ was about to pass through can hardly be understood by us. It was not only that every friend forsook Him, but that there was not, under Heaven, a single person who could sympathize with Him. He was going through deeps that no other could ever fathom. He was to bear grief which no other could ever bear! You may, indeed, sip of His cup, but you can never drink it to its dregs as He did! You may be baptized with His baptism; but into the depths of the abyss of woe into which He was immersed, you cannot go. Alone! Alone! Never was there a human being so much alone as was the Man, Christ Jesus, in that dread hour! And yet He says, I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. O brave Master, make us also brave! May we be willing to stand alone for Your sake, and to feel that we are never so little alone as when we are alone with You!

33. These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me you might have peace. Your Lord wants you to have peace. Come, then, you tried ones, you who are tossed about with a thousand troublous thoughtsit is Your Masters wish and will that you should have peace!

33. In the world you shall have tribulation. You have found that true, have you not? Perhaps you are finding it true just now. In the world you shall have tribulation.

33. But be of good cheer; I have overcome the world. And in that overcoming He has conquered for you, also, and He guarantees to you the victory in His name!

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A SERMON   
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, OCTOBER 12, 1902.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 3, 1878.

**In that day you will ask in My name, and I do not say to you that I shall pray the Father for you, for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God. John 16:26, 27.**

THE present time in which we live is highly favored and ought to be highly valued. Let us never grudge the Patriarchs their communion with God when, sometimes, He spoke personally into their ear, or revealed Himself visibly to them. Blessed are our eyes, for they see, and our ears, for they hear the things which kings and Prophets waited for in vain. That which was denied to them has been revealed to us and we are, therefore, peculiarly privileged. Though John the Baptist, living on the very verge of the Gospel dispensation, was the greatest man who had been born of woman, yet the least in the kingdom of Heaven is greater than heand we are now living in that kingdom of Heaven, although there is, at present, much to mar the glory of the reign of Christ on earth. Be grateful, therefore, O you sons of men who are also sons of Godbe grateful that you live in this truly golden age, for, with all its sorrows and all its shortcomings, it is an age of great mercy and of high privilege!

I venture even to set the present period above that brave age in which Jesus dwelt here among men. We are very apt to look upon that time as being the sunniest era which the Church of God ever enjoyed, yet it was not so. The dispensation of the Holy Spirit is of a higher order than the dispensation of the humiliated and suffering Savior. That was the day of the Churchs childhood, when her Lord instructed her by pictures and taught her letters, but kept back many of the grander and deeper Truths of God because she was not able to bear them. But now the Holy Spirit has been given to lead us into all Truth and He takes of the things of Christ and shows them to us. It was but the twilight of the Gospel dispensation, or only its dawning hour when our Lord was here. True, He is the Sun of Righteousness, but His disciples saw only a little of His Glory, for their eyes were but slightly opened and they had less of the Light of God from Him than we have, though the blessedness of His corporeal personal Presence is denied to us.

At that time there was much backwardness in prayer even among the Apostles of Christ. Just before our text, we read that Christ said to them, Hitherto have you asked nothing in My name. We read of our Master praying

*Cold mountains and the midnight air,*

*Witnessed the fervor of His prayer*   
but we read very little about the prayers of the disciples. They did once get as far as to say, Lord, teach us to pray, but very little did any of them seem to know, then, of the power of prayer. Now, the Lord has not only taught us to pray, but He has also given us the Holy Spirit to help our infirmities and to make intercession for us with groaning which cannot be uttered. In many other respects upon which I need not, now, dwell in detail, we are far in advance of the highly-favored 12 who remained with Christ, or the privileged 70 who were sent forth by Him to teach, to preach and to heal the sick. It is a blessed period in which we live and I want you who are believers in Christ to prize your privileges. If you have been lamenting your lot, I want you to feel that your birth could scarcely have been at a more auspicious period and that to be living in the time when the Spirit of God has been givenand His sacred influences are exercising their power in the Churchis a high honor which God has granted to you!

I am led to make these remarks because our text commences with the words, At that day, which is the present period, the time when Christ has returned to His Fathers right hand after His terrible death-pangs on Calvarythe period when we are no longer full of sorrow because He died, but our sorrow has turned into joy on His account and on our own, too. It is at that day that the blessings I am going to speak of are given to us, so that we are even now enjoying them, or ought to be doing so.

Taking the text as referring to the period in which we live, I notice, first, the Believers daily exerciseIn that day you will ask in My name. Secondly, we have the Believers privileged positionI do not say to you, that I shall pray the Father for you, for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God. Then, thirdly, I shall try, practically, to suggest what should be the Believers natural conclusion from the blessed Truth of God which is here revealed to us.

I. First, then, let us notice THE BELIEVERS DAILY EXERCISE. It is to ask and to continue askingIn that day you will ask in My name.   
It is a very simple matter to ask, but how gracious it is, on the part of God, to append to such a simple thing as asking the promise of giving! He has not said, Deserve the blessing, but, Ask for it. He does not say, Purchase it, but, Ask for it. Not, Labor until you at length procure it by your own toil, but, Ask for it. Brothers and Sisters, if Heaven is to be had for the asking and if all that is needed to bring us to Heaven is to be had for the asking, who would not ask? Whatever else a Believer may fail to do, he should never fail, surely, in asking! If we have never asked God for anything at all, we may be quite sure that we were never converted. A prayerless soul must be a Christless soul. But if we are really in Christ, we must have practiced the sacred art of asking and we ought to go on continually with it. If there is any difficulty in our minds, let us ask, for the Holy Spirit can solve it. If there is any need in our homes, let us ask, for our Heavenly Father can supply it. If there is any weakness in our spiritual nature, let us ask, for God can strengthen us. If there is any longing desire of our soul which even leads to great heaviness of spirit, let us ask, for our desire can be granted if it is a right oneand our heaviness can be removed. To ask, my Brothers and Sisters, is very simpleand let the Lords name be praised that, usually, the best asking is that which is the most simple!   
To ask anything of God does not require that you should use a set form of words. The children in your family do not read a petition to you when they need any favor at your handsthey state their need in childish languageyou understand them and grant their request if it is a right and proper oneand compliance with it is within your power. Act in just the same way with your God! We are often far too careful about picking and choosing the phrases that we use in prayer. Do you think that God is pleased with a display of oratory, or that He takes notice of your elocution when you come to the Throne of Grace? It may suit a teacher of English composition to criticize your sentences, but God thinks much more of your desires than of the words in which they are expressed. It may be natural for a scholar to consider the accuracy of your terms, but God especially marks the earnestness of your soul. There is no other place where the heart should be so free as before the Mercy Seat. There, you may talk out your very soul, for that is the best prayer that you can present. Ask not for what some tell you that you should ask, but for that which you feel the need ofthat which the Holy Spirit has made you to hunger and to thirst forask for that.   
Ask always. Your whole life should be spent in asking! When the morning breaks, ask for the mercy needed during the day. And when the day has closed its eyelids and you go to your bed, ask for the protection and rest that you need during the night. Ask when your voice can be heard only by your God in secret. And ask when your tongue may not be able to move, but only your spirit whispers into the ear of God. Never hesitate to ask because of the greatness of the blessing you desire. The Lord is a great God though you are so littleand He delights to give great things to those who ask them at His hands. And be not backward to ask because of your unworthiness. You can never have any worthiness of your owntherefore, if a sense of unworthiness would check your prayer, now, it might always hinder you from praying. Yet the Lord bids you pray, so it must be right for you to pray! Ask when you have fought for something and cannot win it. Ask when you have toiled for it and cannot gain itask and have it! Come before your God in all the rags of your sinfulness and conscious ill-desert and ask, for that is all you have to do. Ask, and you shall receive, is the message that shines out with heavenly radiance over the Mercy Seat. Read it and obey itopen your mouth wide, for God will fill it.   
Our Lord told His disciples that in addition to asking, they were to ask in His nameIn that day you will ask in My name. That is the most delightful way of asking. We often say, at the end of our petition, Lord, grant it, for Jesus sake, and that is a very proper plea. It means, Because of what Jesus did, will You not deal well with me? I have done nothing that can ensure a favorable answer to my supplication, but will You not give it to me because Jesus deserves it? For His sake, hear me, O Lord! That is a good way to pray, but it is a still better way if you can use the name of Christ and ask in His name. You know what you do at a shop when another bids you go there and purchase goods in his name and charge them to his account. Or suppose that you have authorized your servant to go to a certain shop and you have said to the trader, Whatever he comes for in my name, let him have it. Perhaps he has no money of his own. Possibly he is a very poor person, but, armed with your authority, he can get from that trader as much as you could get if you were to go. His warrant carries him as far as your name has weight. So, Jesus says to us, Use My name when you are speaking to My Father. And how far may I go in using that name? As far as Christ Himself can go! Whatever power there is about the name of Jesus, whatever influence it has in His Fathers heart, that power and that influence we are permitted to exercise in prayer! My Lord, I used to ask You to do certain things for Your Sons sake, but now I come with a still stronger plea, for He has bid me use His name and ask that You will do for me even as You would do for Him. My Father, if You can refuse your First-Born, then you can refuse me. And if I am asking for such a thing as He could not ask for, neither would I wish to ask for itI desire to make this the gauge of my prayer, both for its extent and for its acceptance. If He would have refused to pray it, so also would I. And if that which I ask at Your hands seems a blessing to me, but would not have seemed a blessing to Him, I would say, Not as I will, but as You will, that I may still be able to use His name. No right-minded man would use another persons name improperlyand if you are asking God for something for yourself merely with a selfish motive, you must not defile that blessed name of His by linking it with such a prayer as that! But, using His name aright, you have great liberty and a high privilege in being permitted to come and pray, not only for the sake of Jesus, but also in the name of Jesus!

Our text tells us that this asking in the name of Christ is to be the constant exercise of Christians in that day. What is that day? According to the context, it is the time of persecutionThey shall put you out of the synagogues, yes, the time comes that whoever kills you will think that he does God a service. At such a time as that, Christians are sure to pray. We have not, perhaps, in England, at the present day, a tenth of the prayer that used to go up in the dark days of Queen Mary. Ah, Beloved, when Brothers and Sisters are in prison for the faithwhen they are likely to be laid on the rackwhen the little church has to be called together because the pastor is to be burned tomorrow morning and the young people all want to be up early to stand round and to cheer him with their weeping eyes if they cannot do anything more for him. And when the youngsters come home and their fathers ask them why they went there, they say they went to learn the way if they should have to die in the same manner themselvesah, then, prayer is a reality! And when they gather together in out-of-the-way corners and in lonely caverns when they dare not raise their voices lest the watchers should hear them and take them to prisonyet, in solemn undertones they cry unto the Lordthen it is real prayer! It is that effectual fervent prayer of righteous men that avails much. Then it is, if ever, that the Church of God does really pray! If any of you are, in your little way, at all subject to persecution, be sure to pray, for our Savior said, In that day you will ask in My name. Let that persecution be a sort of reminder to you of your duty and privilege! If you have been at all slack in prayer and somebody treats you ill for Christs sake, say, Now is the time for me to pray more earnestly than ever, for Jesus said, especially of the time of persecution, In that day you will ask in My name.   
If you read further on in the chapter, you will find that that day is when the Spirit of God has instructed the followers of Christ. In that day, He said, you shall ask Me nothing. That is, You shall put no questions to Me, for the Spirit of God shall instruct you. He shall glorify Me, for He shall receive of Mine and shall show it unto you. Now, the more Light of God and understanding a man gets from Heaven, the more he will pray. If there is any so-called light that makes a man lax in prayer, that light is darkness. Some time ago, when there were a great many people about who professed to be perfect, I heard of one who had grown so conceited that she said her mind was so conformed to the will of God that there was no need for her to pray because her mind and Gods mind were so perfectly at one. Yes, and when a person imagines that he is so good that he need not pray, he had better begin by crying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I daresay you have heard of those people who climb so high up the ladder that they fall down the other sideand that is exactly what people do when they begin to carry any Truth of God to extravagance and push a point beyond its legitimate issues. That which makes you cease to pray is of the devil, so say to him, Get you behind me, Satan. The very suggestion that you can do without prayer must have come from beneathit cannot have come from above. The more the Spirit of God teaches a Christian the things of God, the more it makes him ask in the name of Jesus Christ.   
Once again, that day is a day of great joyyour sorrow shall be turned into joy...In that day you will ask in My name. Perhaps someone says, But sorrowful times are good time for prayer, are they not? I grant you that they are, but, oh, when sorrow is turned to joy, doubt gives place to faith and Hope, herself, becomes eclipsed by a measure of delightful fruitionthen is the time to pray! When your heart is ready to dance and your mouth is full of sweetness, then draw near to God in prayer. When He has given you most, then ask all the more from Him! Suppose this is a good day with youa day of glad tidingsthen seize such a good opportunity to pray! There is a high tide in your affairs just nowthen take it at the flood, that it may lead you on to spiritual wealth and wash you up high and near to your God! O Beloved, if ever in your lives you pray, let it be especially when the Lord reveals Himself so graciously to you that your heart is glad and your glory rejoices! Let that be a day of asking in the name of Jesus Christ!   
Brothers and Sisters, I wish I could speak even more impressively upon this most delightful theme. For if there is one point, more than others, that touches the very vitals of Christian existence, it is this prayerfulnessthis asking of God and receiving from Him in answer to our earnest believing supplication. Is prayer a reality with you, dear Friends, or is it a mere mockery? Is it a sort of religious rite that you feel bound to perform, or has it become as essential to your spiritual being as breathing is to your natural being? Is it now to you a matter of course that you should pray? Is it as natural for you to ask of your Father who is in Heaven as it is for your little children to ask of you who are fathers on earth? I feel that it must be so with menot praying merely because I ought, but because I love the sacred exercisenot praying at a certain hour because it is the set time for prayer, but praying because I want to pray, praying because I must pray! A man scarcely needs to be reminded that he must breathe. It is essential to his very life that he should breathe and it is essential to our spiritual life that we should pray. I never thought it necessary to prepare a discourse to exhort you to eat, neither ought it to be necessary to exhort Christians to pray. It should be to you an instinct of your new nature, as natural to your spiritual being as a good appetite is to a man in health. There should be a holy hunger and thirst to pray. And the soul never prays so well as when it is reminded, not by the hour of the day or night, but by its real needsand when it resorts to its place of private prayer, not because it thinks it ought, but because it feels that it must, and shall, and will go thereand is delighted at the privilege of having communion with its God!   
My objective, in the second part of my sermon, will be to stir you up to such a feeling as that, so I will say no more upon this first portion of my theme, the Believers daily exerciseIn that day you will ask in My name.   
II. Well now, secondly, we have THE BELIEVERS PRIVILEGED POSITION with regard to praying.   
Believers ought to be abundant in prayer because, first, they have the holy Spirit to prompt them. Is that in the text? Yes, or, at least it is implied in the text, for Jesus says, In that day you will ask. But how could He affirm so positively that we should ask unless He intended to send His Spirit to lead us to ask? The promise is, itself, a guarantee that He will see it fulfilled! So we have the Holy Spirit to prompt us to praybut not merely to prompt us to pray, but to tell us for what we should pray, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought until He teaches us! Someone perhaps asks, Why do you pray, when everything is settled by the Divine decree? It is true that everything is so settled and it is for that very reason that we pray! The Spirit of God leads us to desire exactly what God has decreed and though we cannot open and read the book of His decrees, the Holy Spirit can read that book, so He guides us to pray in accordance with its secret recordsand He also makes intercession for us according to the will of God. For what man knows the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so, no man knows the things of God, but the Spirit of God.And what the Spirit of God knows to be the mind of God, He makes our mind to be, also, and thus we also pray according to the will of God. A true prayer is the echo of the eternal purpose of God. We say that coming events cast their shadows before them and our prayers are the shadows before Gods mercies. Who would not pray when prayer becomes to him a consecrated mystery in which one Person of the Sacred Trinity operates upon his mind and excites his desires? It ought to lead us to be much in prayer because our prayers are prompted by the Holy Spirit   
*Pray, always pray, the Holy Spirit pleads Within you all your daily, hourly needs.*   
Next, we ought to be much in prayer because we have the high honor of being allowed to use the name of Christ in our prayerIn that day you will ask in My name. If a king were to entrust us with his seal, or if that king had the power to make money as fast as he willed it simply by his signatureand he allowed us the use of that signatureI do not think many of us would remain poor. If he would only give us that privilege, we would take care to make considerable drafts before we had finished with his seal and signature! And our Lord Jesus does, as it were, take off the signet ring from His finger and says to His servants, Ask in My name. And, therefore, we issue drafts upon the Infinity of God! There is no limit put to our requests except this, All things, whatever you shall ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive. Oh, how this ought to encourage us to pray! Shall we allow such a golden opportunity as this to pass by unused? O Believers, with the Holy Spirit to tell you what to ask and the Lord Jesus to endorse your asking, will you not pray without ceasing?   
But, beyond all this, there is the great encouragement to constant prayer which we derive from the fact that our Lord Jesus Christ is continually making intercession for us. Our poor prayers are blotted, blurred and stained with sin. But our Great High Priest sprinkles them with His own most precious blood and so purifies them, and then, with His own dear hands, He lays them before the Mercy Seatand for His sake they are sure to be accepted! If any man sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He is always pleading for us. So, as we have a Divine Intercessor within the veil who never forgets to present our prayers before His Fathers Throne of Grace, how boldly ought we to come to the Mercy Seat! And what large things we ought to ask of God in Christs name!

Our text, however, seems to me to suggest that our Lord Jesus wished to prevent His disciples from making a mistake concerning His intercession, so, on this occasion, He said, I do not say to you, that I will pray the Father for you. There was no need that He should say that just then, for He had already said it a great many times, so He needed not to repeat it. But, at that time, He seemed as if He meant to say, I do not want you to exaggerate even My intercession at My Fathers expense. I will intercede for you, but you must not imagine that I do so because My Father is unwilling to hear you when you come to Him in My name. You must not get into your minds the strange idea that, by My pleading, I shall make My Father willing to bless you, for the Father Himself loves you. This brings us to a very precious point which is that we should be greatly encouraged to pray, not only because the Spirit prompts us and the Son intercedes for us, but because the Father Himself loves us.   
Oh, how we ought to pray now that we have the earno, more, the very heart of the King! To have such a Teacher as the Holy Spirit and such an Advocate as our Lord Jesus Christ ought to be a great encouragement to usbut to have the heart of the King, Himself, is best of all! The Father Himself loves you. You know, dear Brothers and Sisters, that shallow thinkers often make mistakes concerning the Father and the Son in relation to the Atonement. They think that the Atonement of Christ was necessary to make the Father love His people, whereas the Truth of God is that the Father, because He loved His people, gave His only-begotten Son to make propitiation for them! God was always love, as truly love as the Son was and iswe must make no mistake about that matter. So, concerning Christs intercession, there is a tendency, in certain quarters, to fall into the error of supposing that the Father is difficult to please and that Jesus must pacify Him before He will grant our requests. It is not so, for the Father Himself loves you. I think that when a sinner is coming to God, he had better, at first, fix his eyes wholly upon Jesus the Mediator, but as for those of us who have believed in Jesus, we are forgiven, we are in a totally different position from that in which the unbeliever stands. We have had our sins blotted out and we may come to the Father Himselfof course, always coming through the Mediatoryet all the while rejoicing in His gracious assurance, The Father Himself loves you.   
*Pray, always pray, though weary, faint, and lone, Prayer nestles by the Fathers sheltering Throne.*   
The text says that the Father loves us because we have loved Jesus, and have believed that He came forth from the Father. Do not make the mistake of imagining that the love of God to us is caused by our love to Christ. Oh, no! We love Him because He first loved us. The first love of God is a love of benevolencea love of compassiona love towards the unworthy and the undeserving. God, out of love, forgives us and saves us, but there is another love, besides that, which we must never forget. When He has brought us to love His dear Sonwhen He has brought us to trust in Him because we believe that He came forth from the Father, then the Father has a love of complacency and delight toward us. You can easily see the difference between the two kinds of love, for it is often illustrated in human history. A man finds a poor child in the street and he takes pity upon it, carries it into his house, clothes it and cares for it. That is one kind of lovethe love of benevolence. But suppose that child should develop into a beautiful boy, or a lovely girl, who, with engaging manners, should ingratiate himself or herself into the very heart of the one who was so kind to it in earlier days? Then there springs up a second sort of love.   
The man says, I loved that child when I picked it up, a bundle of rags and filth, and misery, but look at its loveliness now! See how this little one takes to the rest of the familysee how grateful it ishow it loves me! I cannot help loving it more than I did at the first. That is another kind of love altogether, and the Lord has just such a love as that, only of an infinitely higher kind, toward all who trust and love His Son! You know that the Father loves Jesus Christ so much that when He sees that you, also, love Him, He loves you all the more for that reason. He had unbounded confidence in Christ when He sent Him into the worldand when He sees that you, also, have confidence in Him, He loves you, too, for you two are agreed upon that matter. Nothing binds people together so much as a common love to the same object. If there is some one person who is dear to both, there is at once a tie between the two. How often a husbands heart is held firmly by the wife because, between the two, there is a little one who is dear to both of them! Perhaps, in some foolish fit of anger, they might have parted from one another, but their child is the bond that holds them together. And between us and our God, in a sense infinitely above my poor comparison, there is a wonderful union because He confides in Jesus, and we confide in Him, too. He loves Jesus, and we love Him, too, and now, because of this, our Savior says to us, The Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God.   
I cannot explain this marvelous mystery, but I want you who know that you do love Christ, and believe that He came forth from God, to open your whole souls and try to take in this sublime Truth of God, The Father Himself loves you. Not, pities you. Not, promises to help you. Not, considers you, but, the Father Himself loves you. It is no use attempting to explain what love isyou must feel it if you would realize what it is. You did not doubt your mothers words when you were little and she caught you in her arms and said, I love you. You believed her, you rested in her love and you returned it as far as you could. So the great God says to you, I love you because you love My Son. There are many faults and failings in you, but you love My Son, so I love you. Did you not say, just now, Lord, you know all things, you know that I love You? You said that to the Lord Jesus and, because it is true, the Father Himself loves you! I remember when one of the sweet passages in Solomons Song came home to my heart with absolutely ravishing powerit seemed to carry me right out of myselfit was that verse in which the Heavenly Bridegroom says to His spouse, You are all fair, My love; there is no spot in you. That is what the Lord says to His people as He sees them in Christ. When He perceives that they love Christ, He calls them His Hephzibah, that is, My delight is in her. The Father Himself loves you. This little sentence is not so much a theme for preaching as for quiet meditation! You need to get alone into your chamber, sit down and just ring that silver bell again, and again, and again, the Father Himself loves you. Do you love me? Why should He love me? How can He love me? Yet Jesus knows and, as He says it is so, then so it is, glory be to His holy name!   
III. I have little time left to speak of THE BELIEVERS NATURAL CONCLUSION which he is to draw from these words of Christ.   
He says, first, If all this is true, then, what power I have! What power I have at the Mercy Seat with the Spirit to prompt me, Christ to plead for me and the Father, Himself, smiling at me as I comeand saying to me, Come and welcome, for I love you; none can be more welcome than you are. Come, My child, ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you. But, Beloved, have you ever really believed that you have this power? Have you not asked and hoped when you ought to have asked and believed? Have you not asked as if there was just a bare possibility that you might be heard? Have you not prayed as though your many pleadings and your abundant tears might move the hard heart of God? Has not your supplication often been presented on some such theory as that? If so, I hope that in future you will be able to rise to the Believers true position and say, I am Gods child and He loves meand coming to Him through Jesus Christ His Son, and moved by His Holy Spirit, I will ask of Him whatever I need, for I know that I shall receive that which I have asked of Him in the name of Jesus and for His sake.   
If you ever realize that you have that power, (and I earnestly hope that you will), take care that you use it. Use it for your children, use it for all your relatives, use it for any of the seat-holders who sit near you and are unconverted. Pick them out and pray for them by nameand be not content till you hear that they are saved! May I ask you also to use this power in prayer on my behalf? I shall be so rich if you who have power with God will pray for me! My preaching will be poverty-stricken if you cease to pray for me. You who can pray, I beg you to plead with God for His Church, for His Truth, for His cause on the earth. These are dark days, but you can bring on a spiritual summertime if you know how to pray that effectual fervent prayer of the righteous man that avails much. The Truth of God seems, for a while, to be suffering defeat, and the battle for the right waxes hotter and fiercer, but the banner of victory will soon float in the breeze if you know how to pray aright! The praying legion is the conquering legion! Bring to the front the men and women who can prayand the devil will tremble and flee, for well he knows that those who are mighty with God are mightier even than he is. The history of the future depends very largely upon the prayers of the present. If you and other Believers restrain prayer, you may help to bring on long, dark, chilly winters for the Church of Godbut if you and they are aroused to go up, as Elijah went to Carmel and if, with your face between your knees, you cry mightily unto the Lord God of Israel, surely, as the Lord lives, you shall see the skies covered with clouds and there shall be a sound of abundance of rain.

I speak reverently, yet truthfully, when I say that the keys of Heaven swing at the belt of the man who knows how to pray. I mean not commonplace praying, such as some practice, but such prayer as I have been speaking ofprompted by the Spirit of Godfirst purified and then presented by the Saviorand offered by a man who knows that the Father Himself loves him. I am awestruck as I think of the tremendous power of which prayer is capable. It is not Omnipotent, yet it commands Omnipotence. It is not Omniscient, yet prayer is as the very eyes of God! He who can truly pray has first read the heart of God and then spoken out what is there. Prayer overcomes the Eternal! What more can I say of it? When Israel sinned against the Lord, Moses pleaded for the guilty nation even after God had said to him, Let Me alone, that My wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of you a great nation. But the prevailing prayer won the day, for, the Lord repented of the evil which He thought to do unto His people. May God teach you, who are loved of the Father because you love the Son, to pray such a prayer as that of Moses!   
In a specially-careful manner, my Brothers and Sisters in Christ, we ought to mention the answers to prayer which we have received. It would not be prudent, proper, or even possible, to mention all of them, for there are love passages in prayer between Christ and the soul which never must be told unless it is in choice company, and on rare occasions. Some of our communing with the Lord Jesus are too sacred, too spiritual, too heavenly ever to be spoken of this side the gates of pearlbut the bulk of the Lords replies to our petitions are such as might be written across the skies, that every eye might read them. Make sure that you do not bury these gracious facts in the lead of ingratitude. Imitate David, who tells us in Psalm 118:5, I called upon the Lord in distress: the Lord answered me, and set me in a large place.   
Yes, and do not only declare how God answers prayer, but tell of the power of faith in all the ways in which it moves itself. Sit down at the fireside and talk of faiths doings to your children, that they may tell them to their children and to the generations yet to followthat all men may know that all things are possible to him that believes. Recount the fulfillment of promises to faith, deliverance from trouble through faith and the enjoyment of supreme happiness through faith. Sound it forth in all your neighborhoods that, It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes. Ring out clearly such words as theseTrust you in the Lord forever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. Tell everybody why you know that it is so, for you have turned to friends in the time of trouble and they have given you the cold shoulder. You have even been foolish enough to hope for help from great men who had it in their power to aid you, but they have looked down upon you with disdain and wondered how you dared to ask such aid from their high mightiness!   
Let all men know that the Majesty of Heaven has never thus treated your humble appeals. From the Throne of the Highest there has never come a harsh reply, or a contemptuous rejection of your lowly suit. No, the Lord has been better to you than even your hope expected or your faith believed! God has answered you richly, helped you efficiently, gladdened you abundantly and filled your spirit with a sweet content. Truly, God is good to Israel! It is no vain thing to wait upon the Lord. The path of faith is the path of strength and safety!   
How unhappy is the lot of some here present who never pray! It matters little what other power you possessif you have no power with God, you are powerless! To those who never pray, or who insult God with an empty form of prayer in which there is no heart, there will come a day when they will pray. As surely as they live and die as they now are, they will pray! But their prayers will not be answered. Dives prayed for a drop of water to cool his burning tongue, but his request was refused, for it was too late to pray, thenyet he might have had the Water of Life to drink had he prayed while he was upon the earth! It is in Hell that prayer, of a sort, abounds, but the answer to such petitions is, Because I have called, and you refused; I have stretched out My hand, and no man regarded; but you have set at nothing all My counsel, and would none of My reproof; I, also, will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear comes. Ask now, I entreat you, for God will hear you if you call upon Him now. But when once the Master of the house is risen up, and has shut the door, no knocking at that day will avail to get it open again! No pleading, moaning, groaning, crying or wailing will then prevail, for prayer will have had its day, and Justice, with drawn sword, will stand before the Mercy Seat, barring the way to it forever.   
The Lord bring you all to believe in Jesus, and to fervently love Him with a pure heart before it be too late, for His dear names sake! Amen.

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ALONE, YET NOT ALONE   
NO. 2271

**INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, AUGUST 28, 1892. DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, MARCH 2, 1900.

**Jesus answered them, Do you now believe? Behold, the hour comes, yes, is now come, that you shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me.   
John 16:31, 32.**

OUR Lord looks for faith as the result of His teaching and I think that I hear Him say, at the end of every service, Do you now believe? You have listened. You have made remarks about the speakerdo you now believe? You have been made to feel, you have brushed the tears away, but do you now believe? For anything short of believing leaves you short of salvation. I would like to put the question of my text to every hearer in this great house tonight. You have listened, now, to years of sermonsDo you now believe? You are getting gray. The Gospel is very familiar to youyou have heard it preached for many, many yearsbut, do you now believe? This is the crucial point. According to your answer truthfully given to this question, you may decide as to your condition before God, Do you now believe?

Christ loves faith wherever He sees it. It is to Him a precious thing. To you who believe, He is precious, He is an honor. And upon Him you who believe confer all the honor it is possible for you to confer. Your trust adorns Him with jewels, your confidence in Him puts the crown on His head! But our Lord is very discriminating. He distinguishes between faith and presumption, and between faith and our idea of faith. These disciples now said that they were sureNow are we sure that You know all things, and need not that any man should ask You. Yes! Yes! the Savior seemed to say, That is your measure of your own faith. But I do not measure it in the same way that you do. If there are any here who say, As to the matter of faith, I need no caution, I scarcely need admonition, I believe! Oh, you cannot tell how firmly. No, my dear Friend, and perhaps you cannot tell how weakly you believe. At any rate, do not mistake your belief in your own faith for faith in Christ, for belief in your own faith may be only self-conceit, while faith in Christ gives glory to God and brings salvation to the Believer!

To take the disciples down a notch, the Savior reminds them that whatever faith they had, they were a long while coming to it. Do you now believe? Three years have I been teaching you. Three years have I worked miracles in your midst. Three years have you seen Me and you might have seen the Father in Me, but after all this time have you at last come to a little faith? Oh, Friends, we have never any reason to boast of our faith, for we have been very long coming to it! We now trust ChristI hope that many of us can sincerely say that we lean all our weight on Him. We believe in God, we believe also in His Son, Jesus Christbut it took months to drive us out of our self-confidence! It took years to lift us out of despair! It has taken all this time for the Lord, in the power of His own Spirit, to work out what little faith we have!

Then our Lord reminded them of another thing still more humbling that as their faith was long in coming, it might be very quick in going. Do you now believe? He asks. Behold, the hour comes, yes, is now come, that you shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone. O Beloved, a little trouble arisesan unforeseen difficulty occurs and where is your faith? A little persecution, the idle banter of an unbeliever, the sarcasm of an agnosticand where is your faith? Is it not so with many, that while in good company they can almost brag of their faith, but if the company is changed, they certainly have no faith to brag of? The men who were so glib of tongue are now quiet and though, before, they wore their helmets bedight with plumes, they would now hide them away, and hide their heads, too, if they could! They are ashamed of Him, now, in whom, once, they gloried! O Friends, let him that glories, glory only in the Lord! Let the Believer never boast of his believing, lest he be reminded how long he was in coming to it, and how soon he may be parted from it!

Our Lords disciples did not very readily take this caution. I do not suppose any of them took it. Certainly Peter did not, and the rest of them were very much like he. When Peter said to Jesus, Though all men shall be offended because of You, yet will I never be offended. And, Though I should die with You, yet will I not deny You. Then we read, Likewise also said all the disciples. We may say, tonight, There is no man among us who will ever be a traitor to Christ! There is no woman here who will ever grow cold of heart! That is our self-flattery. What others have done, however base and mean, we, too, are capable of doing. If we think we are not, it is our

pride, and our pride, alone, that makes us think so. Our Savior, therefore, to call the particular attention of His disciples to their danger, said, not merely, the hour comes, but, Behold, the hour comes. He puts in a, Behold! An, Ecce! As the old writers used to put a hand in the margin, or an N.B., note bene, to call attention to something special, so the Savior puts, here, a, Behold! Look here! See this! You who have just put on your armor think that you have won the victory Behold, the hour comes, yes, is now come, that you shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone.

I pray you, therefore, Brothers and Sisters, and I speak to myself as well as to you, let us learn the lesson of our frailty. And though we are honestly trusting in Christ, tonight, let each one cry, Hold You me up and I shall be safe. Let the prayer go up from all of you who are in these galleries, and from all who are sitting downstairs in those pews, from the most experienced and established of you, as well as from those who have but recently been brought to know the Lordlet each one cry, Lord, keep me, for I cannot keep myself! Alas! Alas! We have seen even the standardbearers fall! And when that is the case, how sadly do the common soldiers mourn! They who stood like rocks have been made to totter. God keep us! Christ of God, keep us by Your eternal Spirit! Amen.

Now I am going to take you away from that prefatory consideration, still keeping, however, much in the same vein. Let us learn, tonight, from our Lord, first, His trialYou shall be scattered every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone. Secondly, His confidenceAnd yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. And then, thirdly, His example, for in all this, we are to follow His steps. May we, if we have our Lords trial, also have His confidence because we imitate His example!

I. First, then, notice OUR LORDS TRIAL, for the same may happen to you.   
He was left alone. Why, those 11 Apostles that are around Him, and to whom He is talking, surely they will not leave their Lord! They are so sure that they will stand any fire that may be directed against themand yet not one of them will stand firm. They will all forsake Him and flee. In the Garden, the three who are His bodyguards will fall asleep and the rest of the disciples will do the same! And when He stands before Pilate and Herod, none of them will be there to defend Himnot a solitary voice will be lifted up for Him.   
The sure ones left Him whom they so certainly believedand they were honest men, too, when they spoke so confidently. There was no hypocrisy about what they said. They meant it! They did, each one, verily believe that he could go to prison and to death, and that he would do so rather than deny his Lord. In their own esteem, they were not boastingthey were only saying what they really intended to do. Here is the bitterness of your trial, when, in your hour of need, your good, honest friends are goneyour real friends fainting and weary. They cannot go your pace. They cannot confront the storm that you are called upon to faceand they are gone. Alas, for our dear Lord, what grief it was to Him! They who were so confident and they who were really true, yet, nevertheless, were scatteredand He was left alone.   
They also really loved Christ. I am sure that Peters was not a new love when he said, You know all things; You know that I love You. He did love his Master. Even when he denied his Lord there was love in his heart towards Him. So was it with the other disciplesthey all loved their Lord yet all of them left Him! And poor weak things that they were, they turned their backs in the day of battle. It is a grief to our hearts to be forsaken of good friends and loving friends. I do not know, but if you were sure that they had been hypocrites, you might almost be glad that they were gone. But your very knowledge that they were true at heart, as true as such poor things could be, increases the bitterness that they should leave you. You need not think, when this occurs in your experience, that any strange thing has happened to you, for Christ was thus left alone.   
Notice, that He was left by every man. You shall be scattered, every man to his own. Every man. When the trial comes, does not John remain? Does not he remember that dear breast on which He leaned his head? Is John gone? Yes, every man. Christ looked and there was none to stand by Him. He must confront His accusers without a single witness in His favor! Every man was gone. Ah, this was a trial, indeed! But one true friend, a Damon or a Pythias, to be faithful to one another even unto death, and the trial is not so overwhelming. But, no, every man is gone to his own, and Christ is left alone! Of the people there is none with Him, not even one of those who had been His most intimate friends.   
What were they? Well, every man was looking to his own safety You shall be scattered, every man to his own. Is not that the very essence of selfishness and of meanness, Every man to his own? This is all that Christ received from the best of His followers! They left Him and went, every man, to his ownto his own house, to see to his own security, to screen his own character, to preserve his own life. Every man to his own. Are these Your friends, O Jesus? Lover of men, are these Your lovers?   
Do you wonder if, sometimes, you find that your friends would take care of you only that they must take care of themselves? They would keep you, but then you cost too muchyou are too dear a friend! The expense of your friendship has to be looked at, and their income will not bear it. Every man to his own. The Savior had also to feel this.   
And, remember this happened when Christs special hour was come. The hour comes. Christs hour, the hour of the power of darkness. It was then that they left Him. When He did not need their friendship, they were His very good friends. When they could do nothing for Him if they tried, they were His faithful followers. But the pinch has comenow might they watch with Him one hour. Now might they go with Him amid the rabble throng and interpose, at least the vote of the minority against the massesbut they are gone! Like your swallows, they have disappeared before the first frost has covered the brook. Like the green leaves of summer, where are they now in this wintry time? Alas, alas, for friendship, when it fails when most it is needed! And it failed the Savior then.   
He was left, also, in violation of every bond. These men who left Him were pledged to stand by Him. They had given Him a promise to die with Him. These were His choice companions. He had called them from the fishing spots of Galilee and made them His disciples. These were His Apostles, the chief men in His new Kingdom. They were to sit upon thrones, judging the 12 tribes of Israel. These, He had redeemed unto Himself. These were to be partakers of His Glory in the day of His appearing. Never were men bound to man as they were bound to Christand yet they left Him alone. Dear Friend, do not expect gratitude from your fellow creaturesit is a very rare thing in this world! The more you do for men, the less will be their return. I speak not, now, like one who thinks ill of my fellow men, but I know that it is so, alas, in many instances.   
And if it is not your lot, you may thank God that it is notand wonder why you are an exception to the rule. If, by-and-by, you shall come down in the world and need the help of those you helped in days gone by, they will, as a rule, be the last to help you and the first to tread you down! Certainly, with our Lord Jesus Christ, those who were nearest and who owed Him most, fled from Him, and He derived from them no succor. It was every man to his ownand they left Him alone to be bound and beaten by His unfeeling adversariesand to be taken away to prison and to death.   
There is the first division of our subjectour Lords trial. I say, again, that a like trial may happen to some here. It has happened often to bold defenders of the faith, to find themselves left to hold the bridge alone. And it is a sharp, stern trial to the man who is called to endure it.   
II. More cheery talk shall we have on our second head, which is OUR LORDS CONFIDENCE. He says, You shall leave Me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me.   
Observe, then, that Christs confidence was confidence that the Father was with Him, and this confidence kept Him to His purpose. Look at the disciples fleethey are all scattered, every man to his own. Has Christ gone? Not He! John, Peter, James, Thomas, and all the rest are gone. Has Christ gone? Not He! There He stands. They have left Him alone, but there He is, still standing to His purpose. He has come to save and He will save. He has come to redeem and He will redeem. He has come to overcome the world and He will overcome it. They have left Him alone. They have not taken Him away with them. He is no coward. From His purpose He never flees, blessed be His name! He stood fast in that dread hour when all forsook Him and fled. This was because His confidence was in God.   
Next, observe that this confidence in God not only kept Him to His purpose, but it sustained Him in the prospect of the trial. Notice how it runsYou shall leave Me alone: and yet I am not alone. Christ does not say, I shall not be alone. That was true, but He said, I am not alone. I love to read the experience of the child of God in the present tensethe gifts, graces and promises of God in the present tenseI am not alone. The Lord is my Shepherd, as well as I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. He is doing everything for me now. The blessed Christ says that the prospect of Gods being with Him all through the trouble, and the Presence of God with Him now, is His comfort in the prospect of it. You who were here this morning know what a sad discourse we had from the text, My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?

[Sermon #2133, Volume 36Read/download entire sermon at http://www.spurgeongems.org .] I took this text for my evening discourse because it is the counterpart of the one we considered this morning, for our Lord could truly say to His disciples, And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me.   
Our Lords declaration was contradicted by appearances. Did He not have to say to GodWhy have You forsaken Me? How, then, could He say, The Father is with Me? It was trueand in a part of my morning sermon I tried to show that, while God forsook Him in His official capacity as the Lawgiver and the Executive of the Law, yet in His personal relation to Him, He did not and could not forsake Him. The Father was with Him! Oh, is it not blessed on the part of Christ to stand to this? He knows that His Father is with Him, even when He feels, in another sense, that the Father has forsaken Him! Beloved, if everybody leaves you, and even God seems to leave you, still hold to your confidence in God! Do not believe that God can forsake His own. Do not even dream itit cannot be! He never did forsake His own! He never can and He never will! The Father is with Jesus Christ, even when He knows that He will have to say, Why have You forsaken Me?   
Yet, it was assuredly true that the Father was with Christ when He was left alone. How was the Father with Him, then? Beloved, even when the Father did not look on Christ, or give Him one smile, or one word of comfort, He was still with Him. How so? Well, He was with Him as to His eternal purposes and Covenant. They had entered into Covenant together for the redemption of men, for the salvation of the electthey had crossed hands and pledged each other to carry out the Divine purpose and the Everlasting Covenant. I remember that passage about Abraham going with Isaac to Mount Moriah, where Isaac was to be offered up. It is written, So they went both of them together. So did the Eternal Father and His beloved Son when God was about to give up His own Son to death. There was no divided purposethey went, both of Them, together. All the work of Christ was the work of the Fatherand the Father supported Him in it to the very fullest!   
In the design and method of the Atonement, the Father and the Son were together. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, but Jesus so loved the world that He gave Himself. The Atonement was the gift of the Father, but it was the work of the Son. In all that He suffered He could say, The Father is with Me in it. I am doing that which will glorify Him and content Him. He went not alone to prison and to death! In all things He did that which pleased the Fatherand the Father was with Him in it all.   
All the decrees of God were at the back of Christ. It is written in the sealed Book, but who shall read it except the Christ? Whatever is written there is written in support of Christ. There is not a decree in the Book of Destiny but works out for Christs Glory and according to Christs mind. It is not merely 12 legions of angels that are behind the Cross, but the God of the angels is there, too! It is not merely the forces of Providence that shall work together to achieve the purpose of the Creator, but the God of Providence, the Infinite Jehovah, is in league with Jesus and He can say it, as He goes out to die, I am not alone: because the Father is with Me. Is not this a glorious Truth of God, that our Lord Christ was not alone? So far as earthly companions were concerned, the Words of God written by Isaiah could be literally uttered by Christ, I have trodden the winepress alone. Every man was gone, but God was always with Him!   
Since then, it has been made manifest that God was with Christ. He proved it by raising Him from the dead. Did not the Father also prove that He was with the Son by sending the Holy Spirit at Pentecost with many signs and wonders? Jesus is not alone! All the work of the Holy Spirit since, in convincing men of sin and leading them to Jesus, is proof that He is not alone. Beloved, all the history of Providence, since the day when Christ was taken up into Heaven, proves that He is not alone. Alone? The Christ alone? Why, the beasts of the field are in league with Him! The stars in their courses fight for Him! Every event of history, give it but time and space, will make His Kingdom come! Every turn of yonder enormous wheels of Providence shall make His chariot of triumph come nearer and nearer over the necks of His foes. Even now, by faith, we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor.   
*Look, you saints, the sight is glorious!   
See the Man of Sorrows now,   
From the fight returned victorious,   
Every knee to Him shall bow:   
Crown Him, crown Him;   
Crowns become the Victors brow.*   
Jesus is the focus of all power and wisdom. God is with Him and the day comes when He shall appear in His Glory. In His millennial reign among the sons of God it shall be seen that He is not aloneand when He shall come in the Glory of the Father and all His holy angels with Him, then shall He be able to say with even greater emphasis, I am not alone: because the Father is with Me. And when He sits upon the Great White Throne and divides mankindHis friends to the right, His foes to the leftand pronounces eternal wrath upon rebels and opens Heaven to Believers, then shall all worlds know that the Man of Nazareth is not alone! Alone? I seem as if I must laugh at the very thought! All Heaven and earth, things present and things to come, time and eternity, life and death, are all with Him. Men may forsake Him, but He is not alone!   
III. Now, I want, in the third place, to teach the lessons of OUR LORDS EXAMPLE. As my time has nearly gone, I must speak very briefly of these lessons.   
First, learn fidelity when others fail. Are you a Christian? Do you trust Christ? Do you love Him? Then never desert Him. Oh, but, says one, the current runs the other way now. Brother, let it runit will leave off when it has run away. I believe in Him who rose again from the dead, whose righteousness does justify me, whose blood does wash me whiter than snow. But the philosophers tell us that this is not scientific. I am unscientific, then, and I delight to be unscientific! Oh, but the deep thinkers say this is inconsistent with progress! Well, let it be inconsistent with progress. Oh, but all the world denies it! So much the worse for the world. Let it deny the Truth of God if it will. That was a grand spirit of Athanasius when he said, Athanasius contra mundumthat is, Athanasius against the whole world.   
And every Christian may be of this spirit and ought to be of this spirit! Is this Book true? What matters it though every Tom Fool says that it is a lie! Let Tom Fools say that if they will, but it is true, and hold you to it! If God the Holy Spirit has taught you to trust in Christ, trust in Christ no matter what other people do. What? Do you live on the breath of other mens nostrils? Do you count heads and then jump with the larger number? Is that your way? Why, surely such a man as that is hardly worth saving! Is he a man, or is he not a cat that must look before he jumps? No, if you are a man, and you believe in Christ, stand up for Christ *Stand up! Stand up for Jesus!   
You soldiers of the Cross!   
Lift high His royal banner   
It must not suffer loss!   
From victory unto victory   
His army shall He lead,   
Till every foe is vanquished,   
And Christ is Lord, indeed!   
Stand up! Stand up for Jesus!   
The trumpet call obey.   
Forth to the mighty conflict,   
In this His glorious day!   
You that are men, now serve Him,   
Against unnumbered foes;   
Your courage rise with danger,   
And strength to strength oppose.*   
And when the many turn aside, stand the more boldly and the more confidently, for your confidence and boldness are all the more needed at such a time. Your Lord did not forsake His grand errand when all men forsook Him. Do not renounce your lifework and your faith, even though all others should renounce theirs.   
Next, with your Master, believe that God is All-Sufficient. Read this You shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone: and yet I am not alone, becausewhat? Because there will be half-adozen of you faithful? No. Because three of you will cling to Me? No. Because the Father is with Me. Oh, we do not count as we should! There is a million against you. Is God for you? Well, then, you are in the majority! What, after all, is a million, but one and so many ciphers? Trust in God and let the millions go their way. God is enough! When he that spoke in the academy found everybody leaving him in his speaking except Plato, he still kept on. Someone said, Speaker, you have no audience but Plato. No audience but Plato? he said, Plato is enough for 50 orators! So, truly, if you have no other Helper but God, stand where you arefor God is not only enough for you, but for all the faithful, weak as we may be!   
Next, learn another lesson. Rest in God, despite appearances. Are you very poor? Are you weak? Are you slandered? Are you scourged with Gods heaviest rod? Yet kick not at Him any more than your Lord did! He said, The Father is with Me, even though He had to cry, Why have You forsaken Me? Believe Him when you can not see Him! Believe Him when He smiles not! Believe Him when He frowns. Believe Him when He smites. Believe Him when He slays, for that is the climax of it all, to say like Job, Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him. It is His to do what He likes. It is mine to trust Himlet Him do as He wills! I throw my arms about my God and say, My God, my God, even when no sensible joys are feltand I am obliged to walk by faith.   
Lastly, struggling child of God, standing firm for the Truth of God and the right, expect that your trouble will not last long. Did you notice how Christ puts it, Behold, the hour comes? Only an hour! Behold, the hour comes. It is not a year, Brother, it is not a year. It is not a month. It is not a dayit is but an hour. The hour comes. To Christ it was certainly a long hour when He hung upon the Cross, but He calls the whole period from the bloody sweat to the death on the Cross, the hour. It is the part of faith to shorten days to hours. It is your part, tonight, to remember that if you have to suffer and to stand alone for Christ, it is but for an hour. How willingly have we waited when it has been but for an hour! How cheerfully have we gone on in the dark when we have known that it was only for an hour! Our trial is but for an hour! Literally, before another hour strikes, some of us may be with Godbut whether it is so with us, or not, we may still sing

*Let doubt, then, and danger my progress oppose, They only make Heaven more sweet at the close. Come joy or come sorrow, whateer may befall, An hour with my God will make up for them all.*   
But if not literally only an hour, yet certainly the longest reign of persecution is but short. It is soon over when we once get Home. I think that it will help to make a merry holiday in the land that flows with milk and honey, to sit one of these days by one of those rippling streams and say, I remember when so-and-so forsook me and I stood fast by the Truth of God as I knew it and believed it. They all forsook me and it did seem hard to bear at the time, but my loneliness did not last long, it was soon over and when the Lord said, Well done, good and faithful servantit did not seem, then, that it had been an hour, but only the blinking of an eye, or as when, in the night, the candle is blown out and lighted again by its own smoke, so short was the time of darkness.   
So it shall seem in Heaven as if we never had suffered anything for Christ. The martyr shall go in the red-hot chariot from the stakeand when he gets to Heaven, he will have forgotten that he burned to death, in the exceeding joy of beholding his Master! It is but an hour and we shall meet before the golden Throne of God and stand upon the sea of glass, and sing forever, Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests unto God and His Fatherto Him be Glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON **JOHN 16:16-33.**

Verse 16. A little while and you shall not see Me: and again, a little while, and you shall see Me, because I go to the Father. Remember that the disciples were on the verge of great trouble. Their Leader and Friend was about to be taken away from them by a cruel death. They were to be tried as they had never been tried before. The Savior, therefore, prepared their minds for the trial. I have often noticed that before a great trouble comes, the Spirit of God secretly comforts in a very remarkable manner those who are to be tried. Perhaps, tonight, without knowing it, we may be near some great affliction or sorrow. If so, may the Lord store us with comfort and strength for the coming hour of need!

17, 18. There said some of His disciples among themselves, What is this that He says unto us, A little while, and you shall not see Me: and again, a little while, and you shall see Me: and, Because I go to the Father? They said, therefore, What is this that He says, A little while? We cannot tell what He says. It was only too plain. We often do not understand our Master because we imagine that there is some deep significance in His Words when their meaning lies upon the very surface. If you would understand the Gospel as you understand the common talk of life, it would be wise. If we could but bring men to believe God as a child believes its mother practically and reallythen their salvation would be a very simple and speedy matter.

19, 20. Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask Him, and said unto them, Do you enquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and you shall not see Me: and again, a little while, and you shall see Me? Verily, verily, I say unto you, That you shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice. Sometimes the world appears to have the best of it. Its mouth is full of laughter while the child of God cannot speak for sorrow. Ah, well, there is time enough for a change. We may very well let those laugh today who will have to gnash their teeth forever! Judge not God by your present circumstances. Take the rough with the smooth. Be willing to go to Heaven up the bleak side of the hill.

20. And you shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. So, the more of it the better! If your sorrow is to be turned into joy, then the more sorrow, the more joy! Happy is he who endures trial, since his trial is to be turned into happiness!

21, 22. A woman when she is in travail has sorrow because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembers no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. And you now therefore have sorrow. But your sorrow is the pang of life.

22. But I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man takes from you. The joy that comes by sorrow in connection with Christ is the joy of which we shall never be bereaved. Let us thank God that there is a joy which no man can take away. Happy are they who have it!

23. And in that day you shall ask Me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatever you shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you.

This is a grand promise! If we dare ask in the name of Christ and it is not everything that we could ask for in His nameif our petition is such that we honestly judge that we may put Christs name to it, if it is a thing that Christ would have asked, if it is a thing that Christ could have askedlet us ask in Christs name, and the Father will give it!

24. Until now you have asked nothing in My name. You have not been bold enough. You have asked a few petty things, but you have never fully made use of Christs name. How many Christians have never learned to pray in the name of Christ! They say at the end of their petition, For Christs sake. That is good as far as it goes. I may ask a man to give me such and such a thing for the sake of anotherthat is good pleading so far as it goes. But if I dare to use the authority that my friend gives me to put his name at the bottom of my request, that is another and a higher thing! To ask in the name of Christ, to plead under His authoritythis is to pray, indeed!

24. Ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may be full. That your joy may be fulla ripe joy, a joy that fills your being, that sparkles in your eyes, dances in your feet, leaps in your heartan unutterable, inexpressible joy! That your joy may be full.

25, 26. These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time comes when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall show you plainly of the Father. At that day you shall ask in My name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you. Though that is true,

27. For the Father Himself loves you. What a delightful little sentence! The Father Himself loves you.   
27. Because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came out from God. Gods first love to us is from Himself. There is another love that grows in His heart because of our love to His Son. You love your child. The reason lies in your own heart. After a while, that dear, loving, affectionate child has won a farther place in your affection, and you love him because of his choice and special love to you. Remember that Psalm, Because He has set His love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he has known My name. Our love of God wins from Him another love of a different sort, although it comes from the same Fountain as the firstFor the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came out from God.   
28-30. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father. His disciples said unto Him, Lo, now speak You plainly, and speak no proverb. Now are we sure that You know all things and need not that any more should ask You: by this we believe that You came forth from God. One does not see any reason why they should have been made so strong in faith just then. But we were not there to hear Christs words. There is many a message which depends upon the tone and manner of the speaker for its influence over the people who hear it. When you read the story, afterwards, without the earnest manner and the living tone of the speaker, you do not see why it had such a strange effect upon his hearers. So we do not quite see here, by the calm reading of this narrative, why the disciples leaped, all of a sudden, into such confidence.   
31. Jesus answered them, Do you now believe? He did not feel so sure of their faith as they did. We often think we have great heaps of the gold of faith, and it glitters very brightly, but it is not the precious metal, after all. So Jesus said, Do you now believe?   
32. Behold, the hour comes, yes, is now come, that you shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. These poor creatures, who were so bold and so over sure, would all be runaways! If persecution were to arise in our day, I wonder how many of us would be found true men? Ah, you think you are true blue, but you would run at the first touch of water, not to mention fire! Are there not many of us who are but poor Believers? If our faith were sharply tried, would it stand the test?   
33. These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me you might have peace. In the world you shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world. Christ wants His disciples to have peace. Are you fretting tonight? Are you afraid of Monday? Are you fearful about the trials of the week? Christ wants you to be at peace! Be quiet. Be quiet. Let all be still within your heart and wait your Fathers will. In the world you shall have tribulation. On Gods threshing floor the flail will be kept going. If you are a child of God, you will have to suffer. The Captain of our salvation was made perfect through sufferingsand good soldiers of Jesus Christ must expect to pass through the same experience. As long as you are here, you will be triedIn the world you shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world. Think of that! The Christ who is about to sweat great drops of blood and to die on the Cross of Calvary, says, I have overcome. It is not Julius Caesars, Veni, vidi, vici, but it is Christs, Veni, vidi, viciI came, I saw, I conquered. I have overcome. And as He has overcome, so shall you, if you are His true follower!

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CHRISTS LONELINESS AND OURS   
NO. 3052

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, AUGUST 8, 1907.   
DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

*Jesus answered them, Do you now believe? Behold, the hour comes, yes, is now come, that you shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. John 16:31, 32.*

[Another sermon by Mr. Spurgeon upon the same text is #2271, Volume 38ALONE , YET NOT ALONE Read/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.]

Do you now believe? Then it seems that faith held them fast to Christ, but as soon as fear prevailed they were scattered and left their Master alone. Faith has an attracting and upholding power. It is the root of constancy and the source of perseverance under the power of Gods Spirit. While we believe, we remain faithful to our Lord. When we are unbelieving, we are scattered, every man to his own. While we trust, we follow closely. When we give way to fear, we ungratefully forsake our Lord. May the Holy Spirit maintain our faith in full vigor that it may nourish all our other Graces! Faith being strong, no faculty of the inner man will languish, but if faith declines, the energy of our spiritual nature speedily decays. If you believe not, you shall not be established, but the just shall live by faith to the fullest force of life.

This being noted, our meditation shall now be fixed alone upon the Saviors loneliness and the measure in which the Believer is brought into the same condition.

I. THE LONELINESS OF THE SAVIOR.   
Note the fact of it. He was left alonealone just when most, as Man, He needed human sympathy. Solitude to Him, during His earthly life, was often the cause of strength. He was strong in public ministry because of the hours spent in secret wrestling with God on the lone mountainside. But when He came to the hour of His agony, His perfect Humanity pined after human sympathy, yet it was denied Him. He was alone in the Garden of Gethsemane though He took the eleven with Him. Yet must He leave eight of them outside at the garden gateand the three, the choice, the élite of them allthough they were brought somewhat nearer to the scene of His passion, yet even they must remain at a stones cast distance. None could enter into the inner circle of His sufferings where the furnace was heated seven times hotter than it was known to be heated. In the bloody sweat and the agony of Gethsemane, the Savior trod the winepress alone. [See Sermon #2567, Volume 44THE SINGLE

HANDED CONQUESTRead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at

http://www.spurgeongems.org.] His specially-favored disciples might have watched with Him, wept with Him and prayed for Himbut they did not. They left His lone prayer to ascend to Heaven unattended by sympathetic cries.

He was alone, too, when put upon His trial. False witnesses were found to bear lying testimony against Him, but no man stood forward to attest the honesty, quietness and goodness of His life. Surely one of the many who had been healed by Him, or of the crowds that had been fed by His bountiful hands or, still likelier, some of those who had received the pardon of their sins and enlightenment of their minds by His teaching might have come forward to defend Him! But no, His coward followers are silent when their Lord is slandered. He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter and no pitying voice entreats that He may be delivered. True, His judges wife tries to persuade her husband to have nothing to do with Him and her vacillating husband offers to liberate Him if the mob will have it sobut none will raise the shout of loose Him and let Him go. He was not literally alone upon the Cross, yet He was really so in a deep spiritual sense. Though a few loving ones gathered at the foot of the Cross, yet these could offer Him no assistance and probably dared not utter more than a tearful protest. Perhaps the boldest there was that dying thief who called Him, Lord, and expostulated with his brother-malefactor, saying, This Man has done nothing amiss. [See Sermon

#1881, Volume 32THE DYING THIEF IN A NEW LIGHT Read/download the entire sermon, free of

charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] Few, indeed, were the voices that were lifted up on behalf of the Man of Sorrows. From the time when He bowed in agony amid the deep shades of the Mount of Olives, till the moment when He entered the thicker darkness of the valley of death-shade, He was left to suffer alone.

Here was the fact. What was the reason for it? We conclude that fear overcame the hearts of His disciples. It is natural that men should care for their lives, but these men pushed this instinct of self-preservation beyond its legitimate sphere. And when they found that the Master was taken and that probably the disciples might share His fate, they each one, in the panic of the moment, fled in haste! They were not all traitors, but they were all cowards for the time being. They meant not to desert their Lordthey even scorned the thought when it was put to them in calmer momentsbut they were taken by surprise and, like a flock of sheep, they fled from the wolf. They rallied after a little while and mustered courage enough to follow Him from afar off. They did not quite forget Himthey watched Him to His latter end, they kept together after He was deadthey united to bury Him and they came together instinctively on the first day of the week. They had not altogether cast off their loyalty to their Lord and Master, for He was still keeping those whom the Father had given Him that none of them might be lostyet fear had, for awhile, defeated their faith and they had left Him alone.

There was a deeper reason, however, for the Saviors loneliness. It was a condition of His sufferings that He should be forsaken. Desertion was a necessary ingredient in that cup of vicarious suffering which He had covenanted to drink for us. We deserved to be forsaken and, therefore, He must be. Since our sins against man, as well as our sins against God deserved that we should be forsaken of men, He, bearing our sins against God and man, is forsaken. It cannot be that a sinner should enjoy true friendship. Sin is a separating thing and so, when Christ is made the Sin-Bearer, His friends must leave Him. Besides, this was one jewel in the crown of His Glory. It was said, in triumph, by the great hero of old who typified our Lord, I have trodden the winepress alone and of the people there was none with me. To make that true in the severest sense, it was necessary that the Captain of our salvation should, by His single arm, defeat the whole of Hells battalions! His are the sole laurels of the war, for, His right hand and His holy arm have gotten Him the victory.

Can you, for a moment, enter into the sorrow of that loneliness? There are men to whom it is a small matter to be friendless. Their coarse minds scorn the gentle joys of fellowship. Sterner virtues may tread beneath their iron heel the sweet flowers of friendship and men may be so defiantly self-reliant that, like lions, they are most at home amid congenial solitudes. Sympathy they scorn as womanish and fellowship as a superfluity. But our Savior was not like theyHe was too perfect a Man to become isolated and misanthropical. His grand gentle Nature was full of sympathy towards others and, therefore, sought it in return. You hear the voice of grief at the loss of brotherly sympathy in the mournful accents of that gentle rebuke, What? Could you not watch with Me one hour? How could they sleep while He must sweat? How could they repose while His soul was exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death? He showed the greatness of His soul even in its depression when He lovingly excused them by saying, The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

How sad to Him it was that they should desert Him! The brave Peter and all the rest of them, all taking to their heels! Worse still was it to receive the traitors kiss with the word, Hail, Master, as the son of perdition betrayed his Friend to win the blood-money! David lamented the villainy of Ahithophel, but the Savior, inasmuch as He was of a more tender spirit than the son of Jesse, even more keenly felt the treachery of Judas. For Peter to say that he knew Him not and, with cursing and swearing to deny Him three times in succession was terribly cruel. There was such an element of deliberation about that denial that it must have cut the Savior to the very quick. But where was JohnJohn who leaned on His bosomthat disciple whom Jesus lovedwhere was John? Did not he say a word, nor even interject a single syllable for his dear Friend? Has Jonathan forgotten his David? The Master might have said to John, Your love to Me was wonderful, passing the love of women, but, alas, John is gone with the rest! He has nothing to say for his Master! Though he remains at the foot of the Cross to the last, yet even he cannot defend Him! Jesus is all aloneall alone and none of us can fully fathom the sorrow of His lonely heart.

This is a painful meditation and, therefore, let us notice the result of our Saviors loneliness. Did it destroy Him? Did it overwhelm Him? It pained Him but it did not dismay Him. You shall leave Me alone: and yet I am not alone, says He, because the Father is with Me. The effect of that solace in His soul was wonderful. Our Savior did not turn aside from the purpose of redeeming His people though they proved so unworthy of being redeemed. Might He not well have said, You have forsaken Me, so I will forsake you? It would have seemed but natural for Him to have exclaimed, You are types of all My people, you care little enough for Me: I have come into this world to save you, but you do not try to rescue Me; you have deserted Me, so I leave you to your fate. But no, having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end. And although they forsook Him, yet He fulfilled to each one of them His ancient promise, I will never leave you, nor forsake you. The Baptism wherewith He was to be baptized He would still accomplish and be immersed in the floods of death for their sake!

Nor did He merely exhibit constancy to His purpose. He displayed great courageousness of spirit. He was all alone, but yet how peaceful He was! The calmness of the Savior is amazing. When He was brought before Herod, He would not utter one hasty or complaining word. His perfect silence was the fittest eloquence and, therefore, He was majestically mute. Before Pilate, until it was necessary for Him to speak, not a syllable could be extorted from Him. All along He possessed His soul in patience. In the Garden and afterwards, He was quiet as a lamb, surrendering Himself to the Sacrifice without a struggle. His solemn, deliberate self-surrender, in His loneliness, has an awfulness of love in itmore fit for thought than words. His brave spirit was not to be cowed, though it stood at bay alone and all the dogs of Hell raged around Him!

Mark too not only the constancy and the courageousness of our Savior, but His matchless unselfishness, for, while His disciples forsook Him and fled, He forgave them in His inmost heart and cherished no resentment against them. When He rose again His conduct to these runaways was that of a loving shepherd or a tender friendHe fully forgave them all. If He did mention it, it was only in that gentle way in which He inquired of Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, do you love Me? reminding him of his failure for his lasting improvement and benefit and giving him an honorable commission as the token that it was all condoned.

Inquire awhile the reason for this result. Why was it that our Savior, in His loneliness, thus stood so constant, courageous and forgiving? Was it not because He fell back into the arms of His Father when He was forsaken by His friends? It was even soThe Father is with Me. Look carefully at that word. As the Savior uttered it, it was true that the Fathers Presence was with Him, but I beg you to remember that it was not true, in every sense, all the way through His passion. The Father was not with Him on the Cross in the sense of manifested personal favor. His cry, My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? shows that our Savior did not, at that time, derive comfort from any present revelation of

the love of God to Him as Man. [See Sermon #2133, Volume 36MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?Read/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at   
http://www.spurgeongems.org.] The conscious Presence and display of love were taken away.

There is, therefore, another meaning in these words, Because the Father is with Me and surely it is thisthe Father was always with Him in His design. The enterprise He had undertaken was the salvation of His peopleand the Father was wholly and always with Him in that respect. In that sense He was with Him even where He deserted Himit was but a form of the Fathers being with Christ that He should be forsaken of God. I am not quite stating a paradox and if it should sound like one to any here, let me expound it. It was in pursuance of Their united great design that the Father forsook the Son. Both were resolved upon the same gracious purpose and, therefore, the Father must forsake the Son, that the Sons purpose and the Fathers purpose in our redemption might be achieved! He was with Him when He forsook Himwith Him in design when He was not with Him in the smiles of His face.

Furthermore, the Father was always with our Lord in His co-working. When Jesus was in Gethsemane and the staves and lanterns were being prepared, the God of Providence was permitting or arranging it all. When Jesus was taken before Caiaphas, Herod, Pilate and Annas, God was allowing all this to be donethe Father was with Christ fulfilling the prophecies, answering the types and accomplishing their Covenant engagements. Through the whole sad chapter it might be said, My Father works. Even amid the thick darkness and the dire suffering of Christ, the Father was with Christ, working those very sufferings in Him, for it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. Into this fact Christ sinks as into a sea of comfortThe Father is with Me. It is enough, He says, My own chosen friends forsake Me and My dearest earthly friends leave me. Those whom I have purchased with My blood deny Me, but My Father is with Me. By a matchless exercise of faith, our Redeemer realized this and was sustained even in that dread hour!

II. We shall make practical use of our subject by considering THE CHRISTIAN IN HIS LONELINESS.   
No Believer traverses all the road to Heaven in company. There must be lonely spots here and there, though the greater part of our heavenward pilgrimage is made cheerful by the society of fellow travelers. They go from company to company; every one of them in Zion appears before God. Christs sheep love to go in flocks. They that feared the Lord spoke often one to another. We take sweet counsel together and walk to the House of God in company. Yet somewhere or other on the road, every Christian will find narrow paths and close places where pilgrims must march in single file.   
Sometimes the child of God endures loneliness arising from the absence of godly society. It may be that in his early days as a Christian, he mixed much with gracious persons, was able to attend many of their meetings and to converse in private with the excellent of the earth. But now his lot is cast where he is as a sparrow alone on the housetop. No others in the family think as he does. He enjoys no familiar converse concerning his Lord and has no one to counsel or console him. He often wishes he could find friends to whom he could open his mind. He would rejoice to see a Christian minister or an advanced Believer but, like Joseph in Egypt, he is a stranger in a strange land. This is a very great trial to the Christian, an ordeal of the most severe character. Even the strong may dread it and the weak are sorely shaken by it. To such lonely ones, our Lords words, now before us, are commended with the prayer that they may make them their ownI am alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. When Jacob was alone at Bethel, he laid down to sleep and soon was in a region peopled by innumerable spirits, above whom was God Himself! That vision made the night at Bethel the least lonely season that Jacob ever spent! [See Sermon #402, Volume 7JACOBS

WAKING EXCLAMATIONRead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at

http://www.spurgeongems.org.] Your meditations, O solitary ones, as you read the Bible in secret, and your prayers, as you draw near to God in your lonely room, and your Savior Himself in His blessed Person, will be to you what the ladder was to Jacob! The words of Gods Book, made living to you, shall be to your mind the angels and God Himself shall have fellowship with you! If you lament your loneliness, cure it by seeking heavenly company. If you have no companions below who are holy, seek all the more to commune with those who are in Heaven where Christ sits at the right hand of God!

Gods people are frequently made lonely through obedience to honest convictions. It may happen that you live in the midst of professing Christians and you have received Light upon a part of Gods Word which you had formerly neglected, either a Doctrine, or an ordinance, or some other matterand having received that Light, if you are as you should beyou are at once obedient to it. It will frequently result, from this action on your part, that you will greatly vex many good people whom you love and respect, but to whose wishes you cannot yield. Your Masters will once known, father or mother may not stand in your way you do not wish to be singular, or obstinate, or offensivebut you must do the Lords will even if it should sever every fond connection! Perhaps, for a time, prejudiced persons may almost deny you Christian fellowship. Many a baptized Believer has been made to know what it means to be almost tabooed and shut out because he cannot see as others see, but is resolved to follow his conscience at all hazards. Under such circumstances, even in a godly household, a Christian who fully carries out his convictions may find himself treading a separated path. Be bold, my dear Brothers and Sisters, and do not flinch! Your Savior walked alone and you must do so too.

Perhaps this lone obedience is to be a test of your faith. Persevere! Yield not a particle of the Truth of God! These very friends who now turn their backs on you, if they are good for anything, will respect you all the more for having the courage to be honestand perhaps the day will come when, through your example, they will be led in the same obedient way. At any rate, do not mar your testimony by hesitancy or wavering, but follow the Lamb wherever He goes. Fall back upon this Truth of God you may displease and alienate friends and be charged with bigotry, selfwill and obstinacy, but you are not alone when you follow the path of obedience, for the Father is with you! If what you hold is Gods Truth, God is with you in maintaining it. If the ordinance to which you submit was ordained by Christ, Jesus is with you in it. Care not how either the Church or the world reviles you! Serve your Master and He will not desert you! With all due deference to others, pay yet greater deference to the Lord who bought you with His blood! Where He leads, follow without delaythe Father will be with you in so doing.

The solitary way is appointed to Believers who rise to eminence of faith. In these days the common run of Christians have but struggling faith. Should you sift the great mountain of visible Christianity very carefully, will you find so much as ten grains of faith in the whole? When the Son of Man comes, keen as His eyes are to discover faith, shall He find it on the earth? Here and there we meet a man to whom it is given to believe in God with mighty faith. As soon as such a man strikes out on a project and sets about a work which none but men of his mold would venture upon, straightway there arises a clamor, The man is overzealous! Or he will be charged with an innovating spirit, rashness, fanaticism, or absurdity. Should the work go on, the opposers whisper together, Wait a little while and youll see the end of all this wildfire. Have we not heard them criticize an earnest Evangelist by saying, His preaching is mere excitement, the result of it is spasmodic? At another time, The enterprise which he carries out is Quixotic. His designs are Utopian? What said the sober semi-faith of men to Luther? Luther had read this passage, By the deeds of the Law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight. He went to a venerable Divine about it and complained of the enormities of Rome. What was the good but weak brothers reply? Go you to your cell and pray and study for yourself, and leave these weighty matters alone. Here it would have ended had the brave Reformer continued to consult with flesh and blood! But his faith enabled him to go alone, if none would accompany him! He nailed up his theses on the church door and showed that one man, at least, had faith in the Gospel and in its God! Then trouble came, but Luther minded it not because the Father was with him! We also must be prepared, if God gives us strong faith, to ride far ahead like spiritual Uhlans who bravely pioneer the way for the rank and file of the army. It were well if the Church of God had more sons swifter than eagles and bolder than lions in Gods service men who can do and dare alonetill laggards gain courage from them and follow in their track. These Valiant-for-Truths full often pursue a solitary path, but let them console themselves with this word of the solitary Savior, Yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. If we can but believe in God, He will never desert us! If we can dare, God will do! If we can trust, God will never allow us to be confounded, world without end! It is sweet beyond expression to climb where only God can lead and plant the standard on the highest towers of the foe!

Another form of loneliness is the portion of Christians when they come into deep soul-conflict. My Brothers and Sisters, some of you understand what I mean by that. Our faith, at times, has to fight for very existence! The old Adam within us rages mightily and the new spirit within us, like a young lion, disdains to be vanquished and so these two mighty ones contend till our spirit is full of agony! Some of us know what it is to be tempted with blasphemies we would not dare repeat, to be vexed with horrid temptations which we have grappled with and overcome, but which have almost cost us resistance unto blood. In such inward conflicts, saints must be alone. They cannot tell their feelings to others they would not dare to do so. And if they did, their own brethren would despise or upbraid them, for the most of professors would not even know what they meantand even those who have trodden other fiery ways would not be able to sympathize in all, but would answer them thus, Those are points in which I cannot go with you. Christ alone was tempted in all points like as we are, though without sin. No one man is tempted in all points exactly like another man and each man has certain trials in which he must stand alone amid the rage of war, with not even a book to help him, or a biography to assist himno man ever having gone that way before except that one Man whose trail reveals His nail-pierced feet. He alone knows all the devious paths of sorrow. Yet, even in such by-ways, the Father is with us, helping, sustaining and giving us Grace to conquer at the close.

We will not, however, dwell on this aspect of solitary walking, for we have three others to mention. Many dear Brothers and Sisters have to endure the solitude of unnoticed labor. They are serving God in a way which is exceedingly useful, but not at all noticeable. How very sweet to many workers are those little corners of the newspapers and magazines which describe their labors and successes. Yet some who are doing what God will think a great deal more of at the last never see their names in print. Yonder beloved Brother is plodding away in a little country villagenobody knows anything about him, but he is bringing souls to God. Unknown to fame, the angels are acquainted with him and a few precious ones whom he has led to Jesus know him well. Perhaps yonder Sister has a little class in the Sunday school. There is nothing striking in her or in her class. Now and then a little child ascends to Heaven to report her success and occasionally another comes into the Churchbut nobody thinks of her as a very remarkable worker. She is a flower that blooms almost unseen, but she is none the less fragrant! Or shall we think of the humble City Missionary? The Superintendent of the District knows that he goes his regular rounds, but he has no idea of the earnest prayers and deep devotedness of that obscure lover of Jesus. The City Mission Magazine puts him down as trying to do his duty, but nobody knows what it costs him to cry and sigh over souls. There is a Biblewomanshe is mentioned in the Report as making so many visits a week, but nobody reports all that she is doing for the poor and needy and how many are saved in the Lord through her instrumentality. Hundreds of Gods dear servants are serving Him without the encouragement of mans approving eyeyet God is with them!

Never mind where you workcare more about how you work! Never mind who sees or does not see you as long as God approves your efforts! If He smiles, be content. We cannot be always sure when we are most useful. A certain minister with very great difficulty reached a place where he had promised to preach. There was deep snow upon the ground, therefore only one hearer came. However, he preached as zealously as if there had been a thousand! Years later, when he was travelling in that same part of the country, he met a man who had been the founder of a Church in the village and from it, scores of other Churches had been established. The man came to see him and said, I have good reason to remember you, Sir, for I was once your only hearer. And what has been done here has been brought about instrumentally through my conversion under that sermon. We cannot estimate our success. One child in the Sunday school, converted, may turn out to be worth 500 others because he may be the means of bringing 10,000 to Christ! It is not the acreage you sow, it is the multiplication which God gives to the Seed which will make up the harvest! You have less to do with being successful than with being faithful! Your main comfort is that, in your labor, you are not alone, for God, the Eternal One, who guides the marches of the stars, is with you!

There is such a thingI would that we might reach itas the solitude of elevated piety. In the plain everything is in company, but the higher you ascend, the more lonely is the mountain path. At this moment there must be an awful solitude on the top of Mont Blanc. Where the stars look silently on the monarch of mountains, how deep the silence above the untrodden snows! How lonely is the summit of the Matterhorn, or the peak of Monte Rosa! When a man grows in Grace, he rises out of the fellowship of the many and draws nearer to God. Unless placed in very happy circumstances, he will find very few who understand the higher life and can thoroughly commune with him. But then the man will be as humble as he is high and he will fall back, necessarily and naturally, upon the eternal fellowship of God. As the mountain pierces the skies and offers its massive peak to be the footstool of the Throne of God, so the good man passes within the veil, unseen by mortal eyes, into the secret place of the tabernacle of the Most High where he abides under the shadow of the Almighty.

The last solitude will come to us all in the hour of death. Down to the rivers brink they may go with us, a weeping companywife, children and friends. Their kind looks will mean the help they cannot give. To that rivers brink they may go in fond companionship, but then, as with our Lord, the cloud received Him out of His disciples sight, so must we be received out of sight of our beloved ones. The chariot of fire must take Elijah away from Elisha. We must ascend alone. Bunyan may picture Christian and Hopeful together in the stream, but it is not sothey pass, each one, alone through the river. Yet we shall not be alone, my Brothers and Sisterswe correct our speechthe Father will be with us! Jesus will be with us! The Eternal Comforter will be with us! The everlasting Godhead in the Trinity of Persons shall be with us! And the angels of God shall be our convoy. Let us go our way, rejoicing that when we shall be alone, we shall not be alone because the Father will be with usas He is with us even now!

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON:   
**JOHN 16:1-22.**

Verse 1. These things have I spoken unto you, that you should not be offended. That you should not be scandalized when you see Me put to death, and when you miss My bodily Presence from your midst. I want to prepare you for the shame and death that lie before Me and also prepare you for all that lies before you, for many of you will have to drink of My cup and to be baptized with My Baptism. These things have I spoken unto you, that you should not be offended, or ashamed, or scandalized, or caused to stumble when they come to pass.

2. They shall put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time comes that whoever kills you will think that he does God service. That terrible time did come very soonand the Jewish and other persecutors hunted down the Christians in almost every place where they could be found. Nothing would satisfy their cruel foes but the blood of multitudes of martyrs! And many of the persecutors actually thought that they were doing God service while they were putting His children to torture and death!

3, 4. And these things will they do unto you because they have not known the Father, nor Me. But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, you may remember that I told you of them. To be forewarned is to be forearmed, especially when the Lord Jesus Christ gives the forewarning. And His disciples were thus to be forearmed and braced up for the coming conflict.

4. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you. I needed not, at the beginning of My ministry, to trouble you about these things. Even then you and I were hated by evil men, but I was with you, so I was able to protect you from them. The persecutors could not slay Christs sheep, as they desired to do, as long as their Shepherd was still with them, so His warning words were not needed while He was in their midst. Christ does not teach us everything at onceif He did, we might be so confused that we should not learn anything! Perhaps we have sometimes wished that our ears could hear more than they now do, but it is most probable that if we could hear more, we would really understand less than we do now. Have you, at any time, had your hearing more than usually acute? If so, you must then have heard a thousand sounds which it would have been better for you not to have heard, for they so confused and confounded one another that you did not hear anything distinctly. It is just so with the mindit is capable of receiving a certain quantity of the Truth of God, but if too much Truth is placed before it at once, it produces confusion in the minds ears and in the minds eyes and we really hear less, see less and understand less than we would do if less were set before us! The Master knew that His disciples were like narrow-necked bottles which must be gradually filled. So He only revealed the Truth to them as they were able to receive it.

5, 6. But now I go My way to Him that sent Me; and none of you asks Me, Where are You going? But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow has filled your heart. Sorrow sometimes prevents us from learning the lessons that Christ wishes to teach us. You remember that in the Garden of Gethsemane, Christs disciples were sleeping for sorrow, and so they lost some of the lessons that they might otherwise have learned. Those who are in great trouble are often in that dazed condition in which half-awakened persons are. And there is a measure of sleepiness about us all in times of sorrow. It was so with the disciples on this occasion and, therefore, they did not ask their Lord what they might have asked Him if sorrow had not filled their heartsNone of you asks Me, Where are You going?

7-9. Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you. And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on Me. Which is the head of all sin, the root of all sin, the sin which lies in front of the door of Mercy and blocks the sinners way! Oh, that the Spirit of God would convince all here who are not Believers on the Lord Jesus Christ, that they are living in the greatest of all sins, because they believe not on Christ!

10. Of righteousness, because I go to My Father, and you see Me no more. Of course Christ would not have been received back by His Father if He had not completed the work of righteousness which His Father gave Him the commission to perform. The risen and glorified Savior is the great testimony to the righteousness both of Christ and of His Gospel!

11. Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. Christ has already judged the prince of the powers of evil, so you may depend upon it that He will also judge all those who are under the dominion of the traitor prince who has usurped his Masters position and authority. Christ has summoned the dread lord of evil to His bar and judged him. Think not, O you who are his servants, that any of you will be able to elude the vigilance of the great Judge of All! Judgment will assuredly come to the common soldiers of the Prince of Darkness since their captain, himself, has been judged and condemned!

12. I have yet many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now. Here again observe the reticence of the Savior for His disciples goodstill graciously keeping from them what they could not bear to hear. And are not you, Beloved, thankful that you do not, at this moment, know what is to happen to you in the future? It is wise for each one of us to say

*My God, I would not wish to read   
My fate with curious eyes   
What gloomy lines are writ for me,   
Or what bright scenes arise.*

It is best for you, at present, to know but little. Prize what you do know and be content to leave all that is not yet revealed, for the secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever.

13. Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all Truth. All that you need to know and may know, He will teach you. If you cannot find your way into the heart of any Truth of God, the Spirit of God has the clue to it, so ask Him to guide you into it. There is such a thing as seeing the outside of a Truththat is good as far as it goes, but the blessedness lies in getting to the inside of the Truth of Godthe very kernel and core of it.

13, 14. For He shall not speak of Himself; but whatever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come. He shall glorify Me. That is the distinctive mark of the Spirit of God. If any man says that he speaks by the Spirit, you can test him in this waydoes what he say glorify Christ? If not, away with him, for he is not speaking as the Holy Spirit speaks!

14-18. For He shall receive of Mine and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father has are Mine: therefore said I, that He shall take of Mine, and shall show it unto you. A little while, and you shall not see Me: and again, a little while, and you shall see Me, because I go to the Father. Then said some of His disciples among themselves, What is this that He says unto us, A little while, and you shall not see Me: and again, a little while, and you shall see Me: and, Because I go to the Father? They said therefore, What is this that He says, A little while? We cannot tell what He says. These disciples of Christ were almost as ignorant as the rank outsiders were! Though they had been with Jesus for three years, they had not learned what is clear enough to every Sunday school child, today, and what is certainly perfectly understood by all who are taught of God! They said, What is this that He says unto us, A little while, and you shall not see Me: and again, a little while, and you shall see Me: and, because I go to the Father? They said therefore, What is this that He says, A little while? We cannot tell what He says.

19-22. Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask Him, and said unto them, Do you inquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and you shall not see Me: and again, a little while, and you shall see Me? Verily, verily, I say unto you, That you shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and you shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. A woman when she is in travail has sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembers no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. And you now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man takes from you.

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #1327 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

CHRIST THE OVERCOMER OF THE WORLD   
NO. 1327

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS DAY MORNING, DECEMBER 3, 1876, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE NEWINGTON.

**Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.   
John 16:33.**

WHEN these words were spoken, our Savior was about to leave His disciples to go to His death for their sakes. His great anxiety was that they might not be too much cast down by the trials which would come upon them. He desired to prepare their minds for the heavy sorrows which awaited them, while the powers of darkness and the men of the world worked their will upon Him. Now observe, Beloved, that our Lord Jesus, in whom dwells infinite wisdom, knew all the secret springs of comfort and all the hallowed sources of consolation in Heaven and under Heaven, and yet in order to console His disciples He spoke not of heavenly mysteries nor of secrets hidden in the breast of God, but He spoke concerning Himself.

Does He not teach us, then, that there is no balm for the heart like Himself, no consolation of Israel comparable to His Person and His work? If even such a Divine Barnabas, such a first-born Son of consolation as the Lord, Himself, must point to what He, Himself, has done, so He can make His followers be of good cheer, then how wise it must be in ministers to preach much of Jesus by way of encouragement to the Lords afflicted and how prudent it is for mourners to look to Him for the comfort they need. Be of good cheer, He said, Isomething about HimselfI have overcome the world.

So then, Beloved, in all times of depression of spirit hasten away to the Lord Jesus Christ! Whenever the cares of this life burden you and your way seems hard for your weary feet, fly to your Lord! There may be other sources of consolation, but they will not, at all times, serve your turn. But in Him there dwells such a fullness of comfort that whether it is in summer or in winter, the streams of comfort are always flowing! In your high estate or in your low estate and from whatever quarter your trouble may arise, you can resort at once to Him and you shall find that He strengthens the hands that hang down and confirms the feeble knees.

A further remark suggests itself that the Lord Jesus must be more than man from the tone which He assumed. There are certain persons who deny the Godhead of our Lord and yet think well of Jesus as a man. Indeed, they have uttered many highly complimentary things with regard to His Character. But I wonder why it does not strike them that there is a great deal of assumption, presumption, pride, egotism and all that style of folly in this Man if He is nothing more than a man! For what good man whom you would wish to imitate would say to others, Be of good cheer: I have overcome the world? This is altogether too much for a mere man to

say!   
The Lord Jesus Christ frequently spoke about Himself, and about what  
He had done, and commended Himself to His disciples as one could never   
have done who was only a man and of a lowly mind. The Lord was certainly meek and lowly in heart, but no man of that character would have   
told others so. There is an inconsistency here which none can account for  
but those who believe Him to be the Son of God! Understand Him to be   
Divineput Him in His true position as speaking down out of the excellency of His Deity to His disciplesand then you can comprehend His so   
speaking, Yes, it becomes infinitely seemly and beautiful!   
Deny His Godhead and I, for one, am quite unable to understand how  
the words before us, and others like them, could ever have fallen from His   
lipsfor none will dare to say that He was boastful! Blessed are You, O,  
Son of Man, You are also Son of God and, therefore, you not only speak to   
us with the sympathizing tenderness of a brother man, but with the majestic authority of the Only-Begotten of the Father! Divinely condescending  
are Your words, I have overcome the world.   
If you look at this claim of Jesus without the eyes of faith, does it not  
wear an extraordinary appearance? How could the betrayed Man of Nazareth say, I have overcome the world? We can imagine Napoleon speaking thus when he had crushed the nations beneath his feet and shaped   
the map of Europe to his will. We can imagine Alexander speaking thus   
when he had rifled the palaces of Persia and led her ancient monarchs   
captive. But who is this that speaks this way? It is a Galilean who wears a   
peasants garment and consorts with the poor and the fallen! He has neither wealth nor worldly rank nor honor among men and yet speaks of  
having overcome the world!   
He is about to be betrayed by His own base follower into the hands of  
His enemies and to be led out to judgment and to death, and yet He says,   
I have overcome the world. He is casting an eye to His Cross with all its

shame and to the death which ensued from it, and yet He says, I have   
overcome the world. He had not where to lay His head. He had not a disciple that would stand up for Him, for He had just said, You shall be  
scattered, every man to His own, and shall leave Me alone. He was to be   
charged with blasphemy and sedition and brought before the judgeand   
find no man to declare His generation. He was to be given up to brutal  
soldiers to be mocked and despitefully used and spat upon! His hands and feet were to be nailed to the Cross that He might die a   
felons deathand yet He said, I have overcome the world. How marvelous and yet how true! He spoke not after the manner of the flesh nor after   
the sight of the eyes. We must use faiths optics here and look within the   
veilthen we shall see not only the despised bodily Person of the Son of  
Man, but the indwelling, noble, all-conquering Soul which transformed  
shame into honor and death into glory!   
May God the Holy Spirit enable us to look through the external to the   
internal and see how marvelously the ignominious death was the rough  
garment which concealed the matchless victory from the purblind eyes of carnal man! During the last two Sabbath mornings I have spoken of our Lord Jesus Christfirst, as the end of the Law and, secondly, as the conqueror over the old serpent. Now we come to speak of Him as the Overcomer of the worldaddressing His disciples He said, Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world. Now, what is this world that He speaks about? And how has He overcome it? And what good cheer is there in the fact for   
us?   
I. WHAT IS THIS WORLD TO WHICH HE IS REFERRING? I scarcely   
know a word which is used with so many senses as this word, world. If   
you will turn to your Bibles you will find the word, world, used in widely   
different ways, for there is a world which Christ made, He was in the   
world and the world was made by Himthat is, the physical world. There   
is a world which God so loved that He gave His only-begotten Son that   
whoever believes in Him might not perish. There are several forms of this   
favorable use.   
Then there is a world, the world here meant, which lies in the Wicked  
Onea world which knows not Christ but which is ever more opposed to  
Hima world for which He says that He does not pray and a world which  
He would not have us loveLove not the world, neither the things which   
are in the world. Without going into these various meanings and shades   
of meaning, which are very abundant, let us just say that we scarcely  
know how to define what is meant here in so many words, though we  
know well enough what is meant. Scripture does not give us definitions,  
but uses language in a popular manner, since it speaks to common people.   
The world is very much the equivalent of the seed of the serpent, of   
which we spoke last Sunday. The world here means the visible embodiment of that spirit of evil which was in the serpent and which now works   
in the children of disobedience. It is the human form of the same evil force   
with which our Lord contended when He overcame the devil. It means the   
power of evil in the unregenerate mass of mankind, the energy and power   
of sin as it dwells in that portion of the world which abides in death and   
lies in the Wicked One. The devil is the god of this world and the prince of  
this world and, therefore, he who is the friend of this world is the enemy  
of God!   
The world is the opposite of the Church. There is a Church which  
Christ has redeemed and chosen out of the world and separated unto  
Himself from among men. And of these as renewed by the power of Divine  
Grace, He says, You are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.   
And again, Because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out  
of the world, therefore the world hates you. Now, the rest of mankind not  
comprehended among the chosen, the redeemed, the called, the saved, are   
called the world. Of these our Lord said, O, righteous Father, the world   
has not known You. And John said, The world knows us not because it   
knew Him not.   
This is the power which displays a deadly enmity against Christ and   
against His chosentherefore it is called, this present evil world, while   
the kingdom of Grace is spoken of as, the world to come. This is the world of which it is said, He that is born of God overcomes the world. You will see that the world includes the ungodly themselves, as well as the force of evil in them. But it marks them out not as creatures nor even as men who have sinned, but as unregenerate, carnal and rebellious and, therefore, as the living embodiments of an evil power which works against  
Godand so we read of the world of the ungodly.   
Perhaps I ought to add that there has grown up out of the existence of  
unconverted men and the prevalence of sin in them, certain customs,   
fashions, maxims, rules, modes, manners, forcesall of which go to make   
up what is called, the world, and there are also certain principles, desires, lusts, governments and powers which also make up a part of the  
evil thing called, the world. Jesus says, My kingdom is not of this   
world. James speaks of keeping ourselves unspotted from the world.  
John says, the world passes away and the lust thereof. And Paul says,  
not conformed to this world, but be you transformed.   
Moreover, I may say that the present constitution and arrangement of   
all things in this fallen state may be comprehended in the term, world,   
for everything has come under vanity by reason of sin and things are not,   
today, according to the original plan of the Most High as designed for man   
in His innocence. Behold there are trials and troubles springing out of our  
very existence in this life of which it is said, in the world you shall have   
tribulation. To many a child of God there have befallen hunger and disease and sufferingand unkindness and various forms of evil which belong not to the world to come, nor to the kingdom which Christ has set  
upbut which come to them because they are in this present evil world   
which has become so because the race of men have fallen under the curse  
and consequence of sin.   
Now the world is all these matters put togetherthis great conglomeration of mischief among men, this evil which dwells here and there and   
everywhere men are scatteredthis is the thing which we call the world.   
Every one of us know what it is better than we can tell to anybody else   
and, perhaps, while I am explaining, I am rather confusing than expounding. You know just what the world is to some of youit is not more than   
your own little family, as to outward form, but much more as to influence.   
Your actual world may be confined to your own house, but the same principles enter into the domestic circle which pervade kingdoms and states. To others the world takes a wide sweep as they necessarily meet with   
ungodly men in business and this we must do unless we are to go altogether out of the world, which is no part of our Lords plan, for He says, I   
pray not that You should take them out of the world. To some who look   
at the whole mass of mankind and are called, thoughtfully, to consider  
them all because they have to be Gods messengers to them, the tendencies and outgoings of the human mind towards that which is evil, and the   
spirit of mens actions as done against God in all nations and agesall  
these go to make up to them, the world.   
But be it what it may, it is a thing out of which tribulation will be sure   
to come to us. Christ tells us so. It may come in the form of temporal trial  
of some shape or other. It may come in the form of temptation which will alight upon us from our fellow men. It may come in the form of persecution to a greater or less extent according to our position, but it will come! In the world you shall have tribulation. We are sojourners in an enemys country and the people of the land where we tarry are not our friends and will not help us on our pilgrimage to Heaven. All spiritual men in the world are our friends, but then, like ourselves, they are in the world but they are not of it. From the kingdom of this world of which Satan is lord we must expect fierce opposition against which we must contend even  
unto victory if we are to enter into everlasting rest.   
II. Now this brings me to the more interesting topic in the second place,   
of HOW HAS CHRIST OVERCOME THE WORLD? And we answer, first He   
did so in His life, then in His death, and then in His rising and His reigning. First, Christ overcame the world in His life. This is a wonderful study,   
the overcoming of the world in the life of Christ! I reckon that those first   
30 years of which we know so little were a wonderful preparation for His   
conflict with the world and that though only in the carpenters shop, obscure and unknown to the great outside world, yet in fact He was not  
merely preparing for the battle, but He was, then, beginning to overcome   
it.   
In the patience which made Him bide His time we see the dawn of the   
victory. When we are intent upon doing good and we see mischief and sin   
triumphant everywhere, we are eager to begin. But suppose it were not   
the great Fathers will that we should be immediately engaged in the fray?   
How strongly would the world, then, tempt us to go forward before our  
time? A transgression of discipline may be caused by too much zeal and   
this as much breaks through the law of obedience as dullness or sloth  
would do!   
The Roman soldier was accounted guilty who, when the army was left   
with the orders that no man should strike a blow in the leaders absence,  
nevertheless stepped forward and slew a Gaul. The act was one of valor,  
but it was contrary to military discipline and might have had most baleful   
resultsand so it was condemned. Thus is it, sometimes, with us. Before   
we are ready, before we have received our commission, we are in a hurry  
to step forward and smite the foe. That temptation must have come to   
Christ from the worldmany a timeas He heard what was going on in  
the reign of error and hypocrisy. His benevolent impulses might have suggested to Him to be up and doing, had it not been that He was incapable

of wrong desires.  
Doubtless He was willing to be healing the sick. Was not the land full of   
sufferers? He would gladly be saving soulswere they not going down to  
the Pit by thousands? He would gladly have confuted error, for falsehood   
was doing deadly workbut His hour was not yet come. Our Lord and  
Master had nothing to say till His Father bade Him speak. We know He  
was under a strong impulse to be at work, for when He went up to the   
temple, He said, Know you not that I must be about My Fathers business? That utterance revealed the fire that burned within His soul and   
yet He was not preaching nor healing, nor disputing, but still remained in  
obscurity all those 30 years because God would have it so.   
When the Lord would have us quiet, we are doing His will best by being quiet. But yet to be still and calm for so long a time was a wonderful instance of how all His surroundings could not master Himnot even when they seemed to work with His philanthropyHe still remained obedient to God and thus proved Himself the Overcomer of the world. When He appears upon the scene of public action you know how He overcomes the world in many ways. First, by remaining always faithful to His testimony. He never modified it, not even by so much as a solitary word to please the sons of men. From the first day in which He began to preach, even to the closing sentence which He uttered, it was all the Truth of God   
and nothing but the Truth of God!   
It was the Truth of God uncolored by prevailing sentiment, untainted   
by popular error. He did not, after the manner of the Jesuit, disguise His   
doctrine by so shaping it that men would hardly know but what it was the   
very error in which they had been brought up! Jesus came out with plain   
speaking and set Himself in opposition to all the powers which ruled the   
thought and creed of the age. He was no guarder of Truth. He allowed   
Truth to fight her own battles in her own way. And you know how she  
bares her breast to her antagonists darts and finds in her own immutable, immortal, and invulnerable life her shield and her spear. His speech  
was confident, for He knew that Truth would conquer in the long run and,  
therefore, He gave forth His doctrine without respect to the age or its   
prejudices.   
I do not think that you can say that of anybody elses ministry, not even  
of the best and bravest of His servants. We can see, in looking at Luther,   
great and glorious Luther, how Romanism tinged all that he did, more or  
less. And the darkness of the age cast some gloom, even over the serene   
and steadfast soul of Calvin. Of each one of the Reformers we must say   
the samebright stars as all of these wereyet they kept not themselves   
untarnished by the sphere in which they shone. Every man is more or less   
affected by his age and we are obliged, as we read history, to make continual allowances, for we all admit that it would not be fair to judge the   
men of former times by the standard of the 19th Century.   
But, Sirs, you may test Christ Jesus, if you will, by the 19th Century  
light, if light it is! You may judge Him by any century, yes, you may try   
Him by the bright light of the Throne of God! His teaching is pure Truth of   
God without any mixture. It will stand the test of time and of eternity! His   
teaching was not affected by the fact of His being born a Jew, nor by the   
prevalence of the Rabbinical traditions, nor by the growth of the Greek   
philosophy, nor by any other of the peculiar influences which were then   
abroad. His teaching was in the world, but it was not of it, nor tinged by   
it! It was the Truth of God as He had received it from the Fatherand the   
world could not make Him add to it, or take from it, or change it in the  
least degree and, thereforein this respect He overcame the world. Observe Him, next, in the deep calm which pervaded His spirit at times   
when He received the approbation of men. Our Lord was popular to a very  
high degree at certain times. How the people thronged around Him as His   
benevolent hands scattered healing on all sides! How they approved of Him when He fed them! But how clearly He saw through that selfish approbation and said, You seek Me because of the loaves and fishes. He never lost His self-possession. You never find Him elated by the multitudes following Him. There is not an expression that He ever used which  
even contains a suspicion of self-glorification.   
Amid their hosannas His mind is quietly reposing in God. He leaves   
their acclamations and applause to refresh Himself by prayer upon the   
cold mountains, in the midnight air. He communed with God and so lived  
above the praises of men. He walked among them holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinnerseven when they would have taken Him   
by force and made Him a king! Once He rides in triumph, as He might often have done if He had pleased, but then it was in such humble style   
that His pomp was far other than that of kings! It was a manifestation of  
lowliness rather than a display of majesty. Amid the willing hosannas of   
little children and of those whom He had blessed, He rides along, but you   
can see that He indulges none of the thoughts of a worldly conqueror,   
none of the proud ideas of the warrior who returns from the battle stained   
with blood.   
No, He is still as meek and as gentle and as kindly as ever He was! His   
triumph has not a grain of self-exaltation in it. He had overcome the   
world. What could the world give Him, Brothers and Sisters? An imperial  
Nature like His, in which the Manhood held such close communion with   
Deity is not readily to be imagined! What was there, here below, to cause   
pride in Him? If the trumpet of fame had sounded out its loudest note,   
what could it have been compared with the songs of cherubim and seraphim to which His ear had been accustomed throughout all ages? No, allied with His Deity, His Manhood was superior to all the arts of flattery   
and to all the honors which mankind could offer Him. He overcame the  
world.   
He was the same when the world tried the other plan upon Him. It   
frowned at Him but He was still calm. He had scarcely commenced to  
preach before they would have cast Him headlong from the brow of the   
hill! Do you not expect, as they are hurrying Him to the precipice, to see   
Him turn round upon them and denounce them at least with burning  
words such as Elijah used? But no, He speaks not an angry word! He   
slips away and is gone out of their midst. In the synagogue they often   
gnashed their teeth at Him in their malice, but if ever He was moved to  
indignation it was not because of anything directed against Himself. He   
always bore all and scarcely ever spoke a word by way of reply to merely   
personal attacks.  
If calumnies were heaped upon Him, He went on as calmly as if they   
had not abused Him, nor desired to slay Him. When He is brought before   
His judges, what a difference there is between the Master and His servant,   
Paul. He is smitten, but He does not say like Paul, God shall smite you,   
you white-washed wall! No, but like a lamb before her shearers, He is   
dumb and opens not His mouth. If they could have made Him angry, they   
would have overcome Himbut He was still loving. He was gentle, quiet,   
patienthowever much they provoked Him. Point me to an impatient wordthere is not even a tradition of an angry look that He gave on ac  
count of any offense rendered to Himself.   
They could not drive Him from His purposes of love, nor could they   
make Him say anything or do anything that was contrary to perfect love!  
He calls down no fire from Heavenno she bears come out of the woods to   
devour those who have mocked Him. No, He can say, I have overcome the   
world, for whether it smiles or whether it frowns, in the perfect peace and   
quiet of His spirit, in the delicious calm of communion with God, the Man  
of Sorrows holds on His conquering way! His victory will be seen in another form. He overcame the world as to the unselfishness of His aims.   
When men find themselves in a world like this they generally say, What is   
our market? What can we make out of it?   
This is how they are trained from childhood. Boy, you have to fight   
your own way! Mind you look to your own interests and rise in the world.   
The book which is commended to the young man shows him how to make   
the best use of all things for himself. He must take care of, Number One,   
and mind the main chance. The boy is told by his wise instructors, you   
must look to yourself or nobody else will look to you. And whatever you   
may do for others, be doubly sure to guard your own interests. That is the worlds prudence, the essence of all her politics, the basis of  
her political economyevery man and every nation must take care of   
themselves. If you wish for any other politics or economics you will be   
considered to be foolish theorists and probably a little touched in the   
head! Self is the man! The worlds law of self-preservation is the sovereign   
rule and nothing can go on rightly if you interfere with the gospel of selfishnessso the commercial and political Solomons assure us. Now, look at the Lord Jesus Christ when He was in the world and you   
will learn nothing of such principles except their condemnation! The world   
could not overcome Him by leading Him into a selfish mode of action. Did   
it ever enter into His soul, even for a moment, what He could do for Himself? There were riches, but He had not where to lay His head. The little   
store He had, He committed to the trust of Judasand as long as there   
were any poor in the land they were sure to share in what was in the bag.  
He set so little account by estate, stock and funds that no mention is   
made of such things by either of His four biographers! He had wholly and   
altogether risen above the world in that respect, for with whatever evil the   
most spiteful infidels have ever charged our Lord, they have never, to my   
knowledge, accused Him of avarice, greed, or selfishness in any form. He  
had overcome the world.   
Then, again, the Master overcame the world in that

He did not stoop to  
use its power. He did not use that form of power which is peculiar to the   
world even for unselfish purposes. I can conceive a man, even apart from   
the Spirit of God, rising superior to riches and desiring only the promotion  
of some great principle which has possessed his heart. But you will usually notice that when men have done so, they have been ready to promote   
good by evil, or at least they have judged that great principles might be   
pushed on by force of arms, or bribes, or policy. Mahomet had grasped a   
grand truth when he said, There is no God but God.   
The unity of the Godhead is a truth of the utmost valuebut then here   
comes the means to be used for the propagation of this grand truththe   
scimitar! Off with the infidels heads! If they have false gods, or will not  
acknowledge the unity of the Godhead, they are not fit to live. Can you   
imagine our Lord Jesus Christ doing this? Why, then the world would   
have conquered Him. But He conquered the world in that He would not   
employ, in the slightest degree, this form of power. He might have gathered troops about Himand His heroic example, together with His miraculous powers must soon have swept away the Roman empire and  
converted the Jew!   
And then across Europe and Asia and Africa His victorious legions   
might have gone trampling down all manner of evil. And with the Cross for   
His banner and the sword for His weapon, the idols would have fallen and   
the whole world must have been made to bow at His feet! But no, when   
Peter takes out the sword, He says, Put up your sword into its sheath.  
They that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Well did He say,  
My kingdom is not of this world, else would My servants fight. And He   
might, if He had pleased, have allied His Church with the State, as His   
mistaken friends have done in these degenerate timesand then there   
might have been penal laws against those who dared dissentand there   
might have been forced contributions for the support of His Church and   
such like things.   
You have read, I dare say, of such things being done, but not in the   
Gospels, nor in the Acts of the Apostles! These things are done by those   
who forget the Christ of God, for He uses no instrument but love, no  
sword but the Truth, no power but the Eternal Spirit and, in the very fact  
that He put all the worldly forces aside, He overcame the world! So, Brothers and Sisters, He overcame the world by His fearlessness of the worlds  
elite, for many a man who has braved the frowns of the multitude cannot  
bear the criticism of the few who think they have monopolized all wisdom! But Christ meets the Pharisee and pays no honor to his phylactery. He   
confronts the Sadducee and yields not to his cold philosophy. Neither  
does He conceal the difficulties of the faith to escape his sneer. And He  
braves, also, the Herodian, who is the worldly politician, and He gives him   
an unanswerable reply. He is the same before them all! He is Master in all   
positions, overcoming the worlds wisdom and supposed intelligence by   
His own simple testimony to the Truth of God! And He overcame the world   
in His life, best of all, by the constancy of His love. He loved the most   
unlovely men. He loved those who hated Him. He loved those who despised Him.   
You and I are readily turned aside from loving when we receive ungrateful treatment and thus we are conquered by the world. But He kept to His  
great objectiveHe saved others, Himself He could not save. And He   
died with this prayer on His lips, Father, forgive them, for they know not   
what they do. Not soured in the least, blessed Savior, You are, at the last,   
just as tender as at the first! We have seen fine spirits, full of generosity,  
who have had to deal with a crooked and perverse generation until they  
have, at last, grown hard and cold. Nero, who weeps when he signs the first death warrant of a criminal, at last comes to gloat in the blood of his subjects! Thus do sweet flowers wither into noxious corruption. As for You, precious Savior, You are always fragrant with love! No spot comes upon Your lovely Character, though You traverse a miry road. You are as kind to men at Your departure as You were at Your coming, for You have   
overcome the world!   
I can only say on the next point that Christ, by His death, overcame the   
world because, by a wondrous act of self-sacrifice, the Son of God smote   
to the heart the principle of selfishness which is the very soul and lifeblood of the world. There, too, by redeeming fallen man, He lifted man up   
from the power which the world exercises over him, for He taught men  
that they are redeemed, that they are no longer their own but bought with  
a price, and thus redemption became the note of liberty from the bondage   
of self-love and the hammer which breaks the fetters of the world and its   
lusts. By reconciling men unto God through His great Atonement, He also   
has removed them from the despair which otherwise had kept them down   
in sin and made them the willing slaves of the world. Now are they pardoned, and, being justified, they are made to be the friends of God! And   
being the friends of God they become enemies to Gods enemies and are   
separated from the worldand so the world, by Christs death, is overcome.   
But chiefly has He overcome by His rising and His reigning, for when He   
rose He bruised the serpents head and that serpent is the Prince of this  
world and has dominion over it. Christ has conquered the worlds Prince   
and led him in chainsand now has Christ assumed the Sovereignty over  
all things here below. God has put all things under His feet. At His belt   
are the keys of Providence. He rules among the multitude and in the   
council chambers of kings. As Joseph governed Egypt for the good of Israel, so does Jehovah Jesus govern all things for the good of His people.   
Now the world can go no further in persecuting His people than He permits!   
Not a martyr can burn, nor a confessor be imprisoned without the permit of Jesus Christ who is the Lord of all! The government is upon His   
shoulders and His kingdom rules over all. Brothers and Sisters, this is a   
great joy to us, to think of the reigning power of Christ as having overcome the world! There is yet this other thought that He has overcome the   
world by the gift of the Holy Spirit. That gift was practically the worlds   
conquest. Jesus has set up a rival kingdom nowa kingdom of love and   
righteousness! Already the world feels its power by the Spirit. I do not believe that there is a dark place in the center of Africa which is not, to some   
extent, improved by the influence of Christianity. Even the wilderness rejoices and is glad for Him.   
No barbarous power dares to do what once it did, or if it does, there is  
such a clamor raised against its cruelty that very soon it has to say peccavi, and confess its faults. This moment the stone cut out of the mountain without hands has begun to smite old Dagon! It is breaking his head  
and breaking his hands. And the very stump of him shall yet be dashed in  
pieces! There is no power in this world so vital, so potent as the power of Christ at this day! I say nothing just now of heavenly or spiritual things. I speak only of temporal and moral influenceseven in these, the Cross is to the front! He of whom Voltaire said that He lived in the twilight of His   
day, is going from strength to strength!   
It was true it was the twilight, but it was the twilight of the morning   
and the full noon is coming! Every year the name of Jesus brings more  
light to this poor world! Every year hastens on the time when the Cross   
which is the lighthouse of humanitythe worlds lighthouse amid the   
stormshall shine forth more and more brightly over the troubled waters  
till the great calm shall come! The words shall become more and more   
universally true, I, if I am lifted up, will draw all men unto Me. Thus has   
He overcome the world.   
III. Now, lastly, WHAT CHEER IS THERE HERE FOR US? Why, first,   
that if the Man, Christ Jesus, has overcome the world at its worst, we,   
who are in Him, shall overcome the world, too, through the same power  
which dwelt in Him! He has put His life into His people! He has given His   
Spirit to dwell in them and they shall be more than conquerors! He overcame the world when it attacked Him in the worst possible shape, for He   
was poorer than any of you! He was more sick and sad than any of you!  
He was more despised and persecuted than any of you! And He was deprived of certain Divine consolations which God has promised never to   
take away from His saintsand yet, with all possible disadvantages  
Christ overcame the world! Therefore be assured we shall conquer, also,   
in His strength.   
Besides, He overcame the world when nobody else had overcome it. It   
was as it were a young lion which had never been defeated in fight. It   
roared upon Him out of the thicket and leaped upon Him in the fullness of  
its strength. Now, if our greater Samson did tear this young lion as  
though it were a kid, and fling it down as a vanquished thing, you may  
depend upon it that now it is an old lionand gray and covered with the   
wounds which He gave it of oldwe, having the Lords life and power in   
us, will overcome it, too! Blessed be His name! What good cheer there is in   
His victory. He does as good as say to us, I have overcome the world, and   
you, in whom I dwell, who are clothed with My Spirit, must overcome it,   
too.   
But then, next, remember He overcame the world as our Head and Representative, and it may truly be said that if the members do not overcome,  
then the head has not perfectly gained the victory. If it were possible for  
the members to be defeated, why then, the head, itself, could not claim a   
complete victory, since it is one with the members. So Jesus Christ, our  
Covenant Head and Representative, in whose loins lay all the spiritual  
seed, conquered the world for us and we conquered the world in Him! He   
is our Adam and what was done by Him was actually done for us and virtually done

by us! Have courage then, for you must conquer! It must happen to you as unto your Headwhere the Head is, shall the members be  
and as the Head is, so must the members be!   
And now, Brothers and Sisters, I ask you whether you have not found it   
so? Is it not true, at this moment, that the world is overcome in you? Does self govern you? Are you working to acquire wealth for your own aggrandizement? Are you living to win honor and fame among men? Are you afraid of mens frowns? Are you the slave of popular opinion? Do you do things because it is the custom to do them? Are you the slaves of fashion? If you are, you know nothing about this victory! But if you are true Christians, I know what you sayLord, I am Your servant. You have loosed my bonds. From now on the world has no dominion over me and though it tempts me, and frightens me, and flatters me, yet still I rise superior to it by the power of Your Spirit, for the love of Christ constrains me, and I live not unto myself and unto things that are seen, but unto Christ and to  
things invisible.   
If it is so, who has done this for you? Who but Christ the Overcomer,  
who is formed in you the Hope of Glory? Be of good cheer, for you have  
overcome the world by virtue of His dwelling in you! So, Brothers and Sisters, let us go back to the world and its tribulations without fear! Its trials   
cannot hurt us! In the process we shall get good, as the wheat does out of   
the threshing. Let us go forth to combat the world, for it cannot overcome   
us! There was never a man, yet, with the life of God in his soul, whom the   
whole world could subdue! No, all the world and Hell together cannot conquer the smallest babe in the family of the Lord Jesus Christ! Lo, you are harnessed with salvation! You are covered with Omnipotence! Your heads are covered with the protection of the Atonement, and   
Christ, Himself, the Son of God, is your Captain! Take up your battle cry   
with courage and fear not, for more is He that is for you than all they that   
are against you! It is said of the glorified saints, They overcame through  
the blood of the Lamb, and this is the victory which overcomes the  
world, even our faith. Be steadfast even to the end, for you shall be more   
than conquerors through Him that has loved you. Amen.

**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 16:1-33.** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK326, 633, 739.   
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SWEET PEACE FOR TRIED BELIEVERS   
NO. 1994

**A SERMON INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, DECEMBER 4, 1887,   
BY C. H. SPURGEON,**

AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you might have peace. In the world you will have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.   
John 16:33.**

THIS most delightful passage occurs at the close of the last of our Saviors sermons before He went to the Father. Let us treasure it as we lay up a mans last words. Wonderfully full is that sermonit is of a piece with His last prayerand that rises above all other pleadings of men! This farewell discourse may occupy but a short space in Scripture, but the thoughts suggested by it are so many that I suppose that the world itself might hardly contain the books that might fairly be written upon it. It took our Lord but a moment to speak some of its sentencesit will take us a lifetime to fully understand them! Perhaps we never shall understand some of these gracious sayings till we have put away all childish things and shall have come to the fullness of the stature of men in Christ Jesus. We shall never see all the richness of the Grace of this sermon till we have risen beyond these mists and clouds into the clearer atmosphere of the unclouded skies. In that Happy Country, being ourselves raised to a nobler condition, we shall be better able to comprehend the deep things of God, concerning which our Savior spoke in His supreme discourse. Meanwhile, let us apply our heart and mind to the consideration of these last Words of the greatest of all Preachers, the dearest of all Teachers and, may the Spirit of our God open them up to us!

Observe concerning the preaching of our Lord Jesus how eminently practical it is. You never find in the Masters speaking a single sentence spoken for what orators use to call, effect. He never introduces a pretty bit here and there to let men see how poetical His mind could be. He never goes a little aside to introduce a something which was quite unnecessary to the display of the subject, but very necessary to the display of the orator. Nothing so little, so self-seeking, ever governs the mind of Jesus. Far from it! His soul goes with His subject and He has no second objective He would convey His meaning to His hearers and His mind is concentrated on that aim. He keeps hard at it, steadily driving at His point and He always speaks with the one desire, that the Truth should go home to the heart and should be blessed to the hearer. Hence He adopted the method in this instance of summing up and doing what the old divines used to call making the improvement at the end, when the Truths of God which they had spoken was turned to practical account and the uses of the topic were enlarged upon. We might have found out, perhaps, by diligent study, what the practical drift of the Saviors discourse was, for it is never difficult for a spiritual mind to perceive His drift, but He meant not only that we might possibly see what He was aiming at, but that we should be sure of seeing itand so He puts it into the plainest language and says, These things have I spoken to you, that in Me you might have peace.

If this was our Lords objective, I do not doubt that He had fully accomplished it! All that He had said tended to produce peace in His disciples hearts, but He knew that their minds were darkthat they had but slight capacity as yet, and so, in His infinite tenderness, He told then, as one might tell a child, what He intended His address to produce. We thank Him for this and herein would we endeavor to emulate Him. We hope that our friends will always bear with us when we try to be very plain and simpleand spend much of our strength in pointing out what is the practical bearing of the Truth which we are teaching. It will be better to be considered needlessly explicit than to miss the end we have in view.

Let us greatly prize this conclusion of the Saviors ministry! It is all the more endeared to some of us by the fact that our Lord finished as He began. He is our peace. He came to bring it and He left it behind Him as He went away. Even before He had commenced His life-work, it was announced of Him that He came to bring peace on earth, good will toward men. And before He is taken up, His last Words must necessarily be, Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you. It was meet that He should close the service of His life wherein He had preached peace, by pronouncing this as His benediction. These things have I spoken to you, that in Me you might have peace.

In trying to handle this text, tonight, aiming at the same practical end as my Divine Lord and Master, I shall notice, first of all, the Believer in Christ, and in Christ he is at peace. Secondly, the Believer in the world, and in the world he has tribulation. And, thirdly, the Believer in the world and in Christ, and in that condition he has victory! Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world. May the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of peace, bless the word which I may now speak to you!

I. First, you have THE BELIEVER IN CHRIST spoken of in reference to his peace. Jesus saysThat in Me you might have peace. It is worthy of careful consideration that in Jesus, Himself, there was always an abiding peace present. He had peace. If He had not, Himself, possessed peace, we could not have had peace in Him. But what a holy calm there was upon the spirit of our Divine Master! Read His life through and dwell upon any one, delightful characteristic, and you will find Him perfect. But if you study it carefully in order to remark upon His manliness, His selfpossession, His calm and peaceful bearing in the midst of turmoil and provocation, you will find Him to be a master of the art of peace. Truly in patience He possessed His soul! Never man had more to disturb Him, but never man was less disturbed! He could not be turned aside from anything which He had resolved to do, for He set His face like a flint and, in the doing of it, He could not be excited or discouraged, for His spirit was not of this changing world. Men might oppose Him, but He endured great contradiction of sinners against Himself with marvelous long-suffering. When His eager and foolish disciples would push Him forward, or would hold Him back, He was moved neither in the one direction nor in the other by any of them. He steadfastly held to the even tenor of His way, His soul abiding in God, giving glory to God and resting in the eternal Power and Godhead which He knew to be always at His side. The background of the life of Christ is the Omnipresence of the Father. Wherever you see Himif you see Him quite alone when every disciple has forsaken Himyou see this text expounded, You will leave Me alone, and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me.

Now this fact that He felt the Presence of the Father and did not occasionally speak to God, but dwelt with Himthat He did not resort to God as a make-shift in time of trouble, but abode with God at all times and so kept His spirit above everything that would draw it downthis it was that filled Him with an unbroken peace. Even Gethsemane did not break that peace! Covered with the bloody sweat, He still cries, Not as I will, but as You will. When His soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death, yet He knows where His Father is and He keeps His hold upon Him and maintains His intimacy with Him. He feels that one word from Him would presently bring more than 12 legions of angels to His rescue. Such is the position of favor which He still occupies with God, even when the sin of man is laid upon Him!

O Friends, Christ has peace enough and to spare! He is, Himself, personally, the deep well-spring of an endless peace and, therefore, we can understand why we always find peace in Him. One calm and quiet man has sometimes spread peace through what otherwise would have been terrified company. One Paul standing in the sinking ship saves all from ruin by the majesty of His immovable courage. And one Christsuch a Christ as oursin the midst of a Church turns a horde of cowards into an army of heroes! His infinite peace breathes peace into our vacillating spirits. We rest because we see how He rests.

Now, as the Master had peace in Himself, He had a strong desire that all His disciples should have peace. I was about to say that it was with our Lord, the ruling passion strong in death. It was strong within Him when He was coming very near His passion and was about to go into Gethsemaneand then to Golgotha. Quietly He said, These things have I spoken to you, that in Me you might have peace. Our Lord Jesus Christ delights to see His people firm, calm, happy! I do not think that He is so pleased to see them excited, although we have those around us who seem to think that great Grace can only display itself by raving and raging. The religion of the quiet Jesus was never intended to drive us to the verge of insanity. He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear His voice in the streets. His Holy Spirit is no raven or eagle, but a doveHis holy influences are powerful and, therefore, calm. Weakness hurries, rages, shoutsfor it has need to do so. Strength moves with its own deliberate serenity and effects its purpose. To those who think that saints should be maniacs, Jesus says, Peace! Peace!

On the other hand, we are quite certain that our Lord Jesus does not desire His disciples to be depressed. To some the fit color for piety seems to be gray, drab, or full mourning. But it is not sothe saints are arrayed in white linen, which is the emblem of gladness as well as of purity. The Savior does not wish His disciples to go through the world as through a twilight of sadness, whispering in fear because of judgments to come and suppressing all joy because of the evils with which they are surrounded. No, Brothers and Sisters, Jesus wishes us all to be happy in Himself, with a quiet peacefulness like His own. He was no laughing maker of merriment, but still He was serenely confident and He would have us keep to His pitch and be at peace. These things have I spoken to you, that in Me you might have peace.

We have a great end to serve. We have a grand life to live. We have a grand Helper ready to help us if we will but believe in Him! Therefore, we need not blow a trumpet before we begin and we need not make a fuss when we are in the midst of our service, nor need we lie down on the ground as if we were the most wretched of men because of our heavenly calling. No, but we may feel, The Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge, and walk with God through life in that holy quiet which springs of conscious strength. Let us enjoy the calm of heart which comes of knowing that the reserves of God are infinite and that at any moment they can come to the front and deliver us should an emergency occur. Oh, that we could learn the art of peace from Christ! He desires that we should have it. Then we should not be so often up and so speedily downtoday so brimming over and tomorrow so emptyone moment so fast and another so slowunduly exhilarated at one moment and at the next so needlessly depressed. We ought not to be movable as waves, but fixed as stars! We ought not to be as thistledown, the sport of every wind, but as yonder granite peak which defies the storms of the ages! These things have I spoken to you, that in Me you might have peacepeace oh, to get it and to keep it, through Jesus Christ our Lord!

Thus I have noticed that He had peace and He wished us to have it. But now notice again that in order to their having peace He spoke to them certain wordsThese things have I spoken to you, that in Me you might have peace. It will do you good, when you are at home, to read over the preceding chapter and note with diligence what the Lord Jesus said in order to give His disciples peace, for that same thing will give us peace. If you please, you may go back to the 15th chapter and even to the 14th, where you readLet not your heart be troubled. When you are at it, you may, if you like, go all through the Book, backward or forward, searching for peace as for a pearland you will not err, even thenfor the great objective of all these Scriptures which, in the deepest sense, were all spoken by Jesus Christ, is that you may have peace! But especially let us dwell upon these particular words in this 16th chapter of John, for to these He chiefly alludes.   
Now, what did He say to them that they might have peace? One thing was that He foretold their trials. He said to them, They shall put you out of the synagogues: yes, the time comes, that whoever kills you will think that he does God service. Learn, then, that one way for you to gain peace is to reflect upon that trial is promised you, that trial is in the Covenant, that persecution and the ill-will of an ungodly world are evils which you are bound to endure! They are guaranteed to you by the very fact of your being of the seed of the woman whose heel must be bruisedand they will come to you in your measure. Expect trials as you look for clouds and rain in the English climate. If this island is your dwelling place, you cannot look for the climate of India! Neither ought you to complain of winter and frost for these are a part of a Britons inheritance. You must take the rough with the smooth.   
When exceedingly severe persecutions and afflictions happen to you, they will seem to the adversary to be evident tokens of perdition, but to you they will be evident tokens of the Truth of Gods Word and of your being, yourself, a true lineal descendant of that persecuted Savior who told you, If they persecute Me, they will also persecute you. The disciple is not above His Master, nor the servant above His Lord. Do, then, make yourself familiar with trial. Wonder when it does not come! And when it does come, say, Ah, you are an old acquaintance of mine. There is such a thing as carrying your cross till you are so accustomed to it that you would be almost uneasy without it. You may bear a burden on your back so long that if that burden were taken away, you would miss it. The Lord has made some of His children fond of their cross. It was so with Rutherford. He said at last that he was half afraid lest his cross, which had become so sweet to him, might rival Christ, Himself! I never feel any fear of that myself, for pain is very much dreaded by my coward flesh, but I suppose that there are saints who have come to feel that the bitter is so beneficial that they would prefer its tonic to the sweetest cup that was ever mingled. It is an acquired taste, no doubt, but he that has it will be at peace about trouble. It shall help you greatly to attain peace if you expect rough treatment while you are a sojourner in this present evil world.   
The next thing He did to comfort them was that He told them why He was going away. It is often a choice blessing, when you have a great trial, to know why it is sent. That is a wise petition if not pressed too far Show me why You contend with me. The Savior was going because it was expedient for them that He should go. Does it not take away the sting of a trial when you know by faith that it is expedient that such and such a grief should happen to you? If it is expedient that the dear child should be taken from your armsexpedient that the business should not prosper expedient that you, yourself, should be struck with a sickness which no faith will remove so that you bow to Divine Wisdom. The God who is better to you than all your fears, yes, better than your hopes, intends, perhaps, the affliction to remain with you until it lifts the latch of Heaven for you and lets you into your eternal rest! Now, when the Savior told them why He was going, the condescending information was meant to produce peace in their hearts. He has also told you why your trials are sent to youthey work your lasting good! Therefore rest concerning them.   
Further, to give them peace, the Savior went on to speak to them of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, and what the Comforter would do. He enlarged upon that theme since it was so cheering. Beloved, if you want peace, think much of the Divine Comforter. You are not left alone. You are not left without the most tender sympathy of One who knows how to cheer the heaviest heart! You are not left without a Friend more able than all other friends to enter into your secret griefs and administer to you the most potent consolations. Think much of the Holy Spirit in His office as Comforter and the meditation will foster peace within your spirit. How ill we treat the Holy Spirit by our few and superficial thoughts of Him! Let us henceforth adore Him with deeper love and reverence.   
Then He told them about the power of prayer. He said, Whatever you shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it to you. And again, If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you. What a breath of peace cools the forehead of the man who remembers that he may pray and that prayer is heard in Heaven! There is a noise in the streets. There is a disturbance within doorseven your own heart is perturbedwhat then? Let us pray! The known remedy for unknown evils is prayer. Oh, the peace that comes from the Mercy Seat! You that are familiar with it will bear me witness that it is wonderful what storms it will quell, what cyclones it will quiet! Only pray and you are master of the situation! Like your Master, you may walk the waves of the sea when you have but the power in His name to speak to those waves and bid them be still! And He gives you that power when you draw near to Him in believing prayer!

All this must have greatly tended to produce peace, but as if this might not be enough, our tender Lord let slip a precious Word that ought to give peace to all our mindsThe Father Himself loves you. The love of God the Father is a treasure-house of peace! The Father Himselfnot moved by the importunities of His pleading Son, but Himself, of His own accord, loves you! O Father God, how have You sometimes been slandered, as though You were hesitant to love us and Your Son must necessarily persuade You! No, it is not so! God loved His people and, therefore, He sent His Son to redeem them. He so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son. Christ is not the cause of Divine Love, but the sweetest and best Fruit of it. The Father Himself loves you. Therefore, be of good cheer, and let your peace be like a river!   
And then, dear Friends, He confirmed their faith in Himself. He so spoke to them that they, at last, said, Now are we sure. By this we believe, and so on. This is the way to get peace! Peace comes by the way of faith. Those of you who are very fond of doubts, can, perhaps, tell me whether you ever derived any peace from them. Time is but ill-used when we pore over books which are calculated to shake our faithas well eat food which is sure to make us ill! There are certain men who are always busy with the Scriptures to try and find difficulties in themand if they cannot find them in the English version then, straightway, they will sooner have a new translation than miss their precious difficulty! This is as foolish as if we should refuse to eat our Christmas pudding because we could not find any stones in the plums, or any hard lumps in the sugar upon which to break our teeth! The great objective of some men seems to be to find in the Bible something which they cannot believe. For my part, I am delighted with what I do believe! They cultivate doubts while a wise man regards them as weeds, and burns them in a heap!   
The Lord knows there is sorrow enough in this world without laboring to make more. And I should like to ask all such critics and great discoverers whether they believe that their discoveries tend at all to the creation of peace in their own minds, or in the minds of others? I believe, and then I get peace. I believe and am surethen is my peace like a river and my righteousness like the waves of the sea! Luther tells us how he found peace when one said to him, I believe in the forgiveness of sins. Oh, if one did but believe what he professes to believe! I mean believed it fully! That way lies peacein believing up to the hilt. The child-like way of sitting at Jesus feet and receiving His Words this is the path of peace. All the outgrowth of quibbling and caviling may be summed up as thorns and briers, tearing the flesh and rending the spirit. These things had Christ spoken, that they might believe in Him, for well He knew that the victory which overcomes trial is faith and not doubt. Believingnot questioning, is the Kings Highway!   
I must notice that our Masters wish that we might have peace was qualified by those two words, in MeThat in Me you might have peace. Remember, then, you may not expect to derive peace from yourselves. You will turn that dunghill over a long while before you find the jewel of peace in it! Our Lord did not even intend that we should find peace in outward ordinances, or religious exercises. No doubt it is very quieting to read a chapter, or to attend a service, or to come to the Lords Tablebut it is not the Lords intent that these should, of themselves, yield us peace. These are to be means to peace, but the peace must always be in Himself, in His own blessed Person! We must get to Him, for this is His wish, that in Me you might have peacepeace only in Him, but peace always in Him. Peace of the deepest, truest, most constant, most emphatic kind is only found in Jesus! Peace in all seasons, and in all difficulties. Peace foreverall this is in Himand only in Him. Outside of Him it is all tossing to and fro, questions, fog, haze and fear. But in Him we dwell as in a sheepfold, where the sheep lie down and rest. In Him we are in a home where all is love and comfort. Brothers and Sisters, let us not wander from this sacred center of serene repose lest we wander from peace! It is this Man who shall be the peace, this Son of God who shall give us rest! Let us then come to Him at once in every case. Yes, let us always abide in Him. His wish is that His joy may be in us and, therefore, He says, These things have I spoken to you, that in Me you might have peace.   
Thus have I said well-near enough to you upon this first point of the Believer in Christ and His peace.   
II. I have been a long while on that head so I need to be all the shorter on the secondTHE BELIEVER IN THE WORLD finds himself like wheat under the flail, for so the text puts it, In the world you will have tribulation.   
That is, first, you are not screened from any kind of trouble. You are in Christ and the Savior saves you from your sins, but He has not promised that you will have no sorrow. He has not promised to screen you from either poverty, or toil, or sickness, or slander, or any of the common ills of mankind. Some of the very best of His beloved have been enriched and indulged by being permitted to undergo much secret discipline of pain, sorrow and need. Your Lord, among the treasures that He gives you, grants a cross. You start back and say, Not that, Lord! but He answers, Yes, this, My child. This and no other. The cross is the best piece of furniture in your house, though you have sometimes wished it was not there. It shall always work your goodit works it now. Some of the comforts allotted to you in Providence will be questionable in their effect upon you, by reason of your sinfulness and weakness. But the cross which the Lord appoints you has no result but your good! It is a bitter tree, apparently, but it is a healthful medicine. Take it, child of God! Plant it and let it growand its fruit shall be sweet. We are not guarded from tribulation, but we are promised itand we are benefited by it.   
We are not favored by being promised the admiration of the ungodly. In the worldnot merely in this present state, but in this ungodly world we shall have tribulation. Worldlings will not gather round you to admire your excellence and assist your piety. If they did, I should think that either the world had changed, or else it had made a mistake about you. Which of the two it is, I do not say. I do not think that it can be that the world has changed. Worldlings may like a Christian for certain externals. They may admire him for certain advantages they get from him. But as a Christian, they cannot love him. That is impossible! There is an enmity between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the womanand you had better understand that it is so because the serpent has not changed his naturebut is still a vile deceiver and destroyer! He still exhibits his glittering scales and speaks as craftily and flatteringly to us as he did to mother Eve and, perhaps, to you. He says that he loves you more than he can tell, only you are so unfriendly and suspicious that he has never been able to show his affection. Yes, he sees in you so much to admire that he wishes you were not quite so strait-laced, for then he could introduce you to his dear friends and children, for you would do them no end of good! Hit him across the head if you get an opportunity, for he means no good to you.   
Of all the devils in the world, I hate a roaring devil least, but a flattering devil is the worst devil that ever a man meets! When the world pretends to love, understand that it now hates you more cordially than ever and is carefully baiting its trap to catch you and ruin you! Beware of the Judas kiss with which the Christ was betrayed and with which you will be betrayed unless you are well upon your guard. In the world and from the world you will have tribulation!   
The text puts this in such a broad way that it gives a hint that in the world you will have tribulation often. Affliction is not with us always, but it is well to be always prepared for it. There are times in which we enjoy prosperitysome Christians enjoy much of itand do not let them be much alarmed because they do so, for what the Lords Providence sends us is not harmful, in itself, and is to be accepted without suspicion. I remember that a person came to me, once, and told me that she had prayed for affliction. I replied, Dear Soul, dear Soul, do not be so foolish! You will have quite enough trouble without asking for it. If a child were to ask his father to let him be whipped, he would be a strange sort of child! And I should think he would not be likely to repeat the experiment if he had a practical man for a father! No, no, no! That is not our path of duty. If God spares us tribulation, let us be thankful to Him. But if He does not spare us, let us be equally thankful. This last is a hard lesson to learn, but we ought to learn it. We shall frequently endure tribulation, for we are born to it at our first birth, as the sparks fly upward. It is also certain that our second birth introduces us to a second set of tribulations. He sang a true song who gave us this verse   
*Poor and afflicted, tis their lot.   
They know it and they murmur not.   
It would ill become them to refuse   
The state their Master deigned to choose.*   
Again, in the world you will emphatically have tribulation. If anybody else has it, you will. And if nobody else has it, yet you will have it. You will have it, perhaps, where you least wish it or reckon on it. A mans foes shall be they of his own household. Any cross but the one I have, cried one. Surely it would not be a cross if you had the choosing of it, for it is of the essence of a cross that it should run counter to our liking! It must be something from which the flesh shrinks, which is not for the present, joyous, but grievous. So our Lord puts it, In the world you will have tribulation. I wonder how many Christians here could say that they have

not found it so. I think that the most of usat least, all I know ofwould say that the prophecy of our Lord has been abundantly verified. And must it not be so in the nature of things? Has not this world been a place of sorrow ever since Adam broke his Makers command? Did not the mandate then go forth, Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to you. Dust you are, and unto dust shall you return?   
To a Christian man must not the world bring tribulation and anguish because it is a world which lies in the Wicked One? The Christian is not of the world, even as Christ is not of the world. He is out of his element. He is an alien. He is a pilgrim. Can he expect the comforts of home while he tarries here? It is an uncongenial world to his spiritual nature. There is nothing in it to help him. This world is a foe to Gracenot a friend to it and, therefore, the gracious man must have tribulation. If he is to be like his Lord, he certainly will have it. And if he is to be like the Lords people, he will have it, for they are a line of cross-bearers. There is no exception to this rule if you take the whole of any Believers life, though for a while certain favored men may seem to be the darlings of Providence. Job multiplied his riches and dwelt at ease with a hedge about him. He thought, perhaps, that he would have no tribulation to bear, but the flail seemed made of iron when at last it fell! So may the most prosperous have all the greater trial when the day of adversity arrives.   
Brethren, I was thinking, as I turned over this subject, that though there is tribulation in the world, we still get far too fond of the world. We are always trying to pluck handfuls of its flowersand if its roses had no thorns we would bury ourselves in heaps of them! We would never quit the nest and learn to fly if the Lord did not stir up our nest even as does the eagle. We should want to tarry here forever and say, Lo, this is my home, if it were not that an unkind world gives us aliens treatment and forces us to feel that we are in exile here. One said to a great man, as he looked over his gardens, These are the things that make it hard to die. As we are not to live here, but must soon be up and away to the better land where our life can far better develop, it is meet that in the world we should have tribulation, that we may turn our thoughts and our desires towards that dear City of our God where alone is our dwelling place! Thanks be unto God for the tribulation which weans our thoughts from earth and wins them for Heaven! And let all the people say, Amen.   
III. But now, lastly, let us view THE BELIEVER IN THE WORLD AND IN CHRISTand this means victory! I will occupy but a moment or two to say that if we dwell in Christ, though we also have to dwell in the world, yet we shall overcome the world.   
I call your special attention to the words of our Lord Jesus in the text Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world. Our Lord was, all that time, still in the world. Do you know where Christ was when He said that? Why, He was on the edge of Gethsemane! He was at the foot, so to speak, of Golgothawhere He was to die! He had not then borne the scourge and the Cross. But I dare not lay my hand upon my Master and say, Good Lord, You have made a mistake. You have not yet overcome, for the worst part of the battle has not come to You. He knew what He said and made no error in saying it. Oh, but it was bravely spoken! The faith which abode in Him made Him say, I have overcome. On the verge of the fight, He said, I have overcome. John caught up this word when he, afterwards, said, This is the victory which overcomes the world, even our faith, because it was by faith that our blessed Lord said at this moment, I have overcome the world. He spoke in the Prescience of faith. He took for granted that He would overcome the world, for the Father was with Him!   
But up to that point it was assuredly true, as it was even to the end, that He had really overcome the world. Its blandishments He had overcome. Its temptations He had overcome. Its terrors He had overcome. Its errors He had overcome. Everything in the world that had assailed Him, He had put to the rout. He was tempted in all points like as we are, but He remained without sin. He had overcome everything that had come to attack His holiness, His patience, His self-sacrificeHe had been victor at every point!   
Now, here is a matter of joyful considerationour Lord says, Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world. But what cheer is there in that? Well, the cheer lies in the fact which He does not here state, but which He had stated before, namely, that He is one with us and we are one with

Him . He does as good as say, I have overcome the world and you are in Me, your Head. My overcoming of the world belongs to you. I, your Leader, have overcome the world for you. I have led the way in this dread fight and conquered the adversaries which you have now to fight with. And thus I have virtually won the battle before you begin it.

*Hell and your sins obstruct your course   
But Hell and sins are vanquished foes.   
Your Jesus nailed them to His Cross,   
And sang the triumph when He rose.*

I have, Myself, says Jesus, overcome for you that you may overcome in Me. Now, go to the fight, to rout the already worsted enemy, and triumph over a serpent whose head I have already broken.

We derive, then, from the fact that Christ has overcome, the assurance that we shall overcome, since we are one with Him, members of His body and parts of Himself! O Brothers and Sisters, you must fight your way through. You cannot quit this conflict. You have to cut your way through a solid wall of difficultiesthere is no other course! But you are going to do it. You will do it! A great commander commences a campaign. Does he desire that there shall be no battle? If so, how is it a war? How is he a soldier? He certainly can send home no reports of victory if there is no fighting. He can never come to be a great commander if he never distinguishes himself in the field. So let us consider that every battle-field to which God calls us is only another opportunity of victory and, Christ being with us, another certainty of victory! Onward, then, you Christian soldiers!

*Let your drooping hearts be glad;*

*March in heavenly armor clad.*   
Let not the brightness of your armor be stained by the rust of fear! You shall overcome as surely as your Lord has overcome. If you commit yourself to His keeping and abide in Him who is All in All to you, no defeat can possibly befall you.

I have this last word to add. There may be some here who will say, Look, look. These Christian people have plenty of trouble. That is quite true, but they are not the only ones to be pitiedMany sorrows shall be to the wicked. Those who are not in Christ Jesus shall also find tribulation in this world, for thorns and thistles spring up more numerously in the field of the sluggard than anywhere else. The wicked shall find that there are special sorrows for themwhips of scorpions for them, especially when they get farther on in lifeand their youthful fires burn down to a black ash. Woe unto sinners when they have to reap the fruits of their evil deeds! O Sirs, I would not go through life without a Savior, as you do, no, not if I might be made an emperor! To have to fight this life-battle without Christ is sure defeat! What a discovery it will be when, having struggled through one life of sorrow, you shall find yourself beginning another life of greater sorrow which will never come to an end!

It is an awful thing for a man to go from Hell to Hellto make this world a Hell and then find another Hell in the next world! But it were a blessed thing to go through 50 hells to Heaven, if such a thing could be. It is glorious to struggle on through poverty, sickness, persecution and to hear, at last, the word, Well done! That will be glorious! Who aspires to it? God help each one of us to labor after it and give us strength to carry on the holy war and fight it through, even to the end!

But if you are wrapping yourselves up in these poor joys, these wretched rags of earthand are living to make money, or to get drink, or to enjoy yourselves in the hurtful luxuries of lustGod have mercy upon you and save you! Hear the Gospel, each one of you! Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved. The Lord lead you to do so, for His names sake! Amen.

**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 16.** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK734, 744, 779.

A POSTSCRIPT TO THE SERMON FROM MR. SPURGEON: At this time I am compelled by fervent gratitude to acknowledge, in the mass, a vast amount of loving encouragement for which it is impossible for me to tender individual thanks. The Down Grade controversy has cost me dearly in several ways and the pain of heart I have endured, I would not wish any other man to bear. But the floods of enthusiastic sympathy have washed out the footprints of sorrow and left many precious things upon the shores of my memory. I had cast myself upon the Lord, alone, willing to be forsaken of all for the Truth of Gods sakeand, therefore, it is an extra joy to find so many unlooked-for-friends and helpers in every part of the Christian Church. Human sympathy is, in this case, the basket of silver to bear to me the golden apples of Divine consolation! I now know of a surety that there are tens of thousands that have not bowed the knee to modern thought.

I have felt some little fear lest my orphans should be made to suffer through my actions. They, at least, are innocent of any controversy, yet it is within the possibilities of unhallowed anger that subscriptions to their support should be withheld because of my protest and secession. Those who maintain error are not always very choice in their arguments. I can bear anything, myself, God helping me, but I hope I shall not see the Orphanage, or any other of the Institutions under my care, suffering through this solemn debate. Will not my faithful friends see that it is not so? I have no great alarm about it, but it is sometimes well to stir up pure minds by way of remembrance.

During my absence, letters containing aid for the Orphanage had better be directed to Mr. F. G. Ladds, Stockwell Orphanage, Clapham Road, Londonand he will report them to me.

Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #3285 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

GOOD CHEER FROM CHRISTS VICTORY OVER THE WORLD   
NO. 3285

**A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, JANUARY 18, 1912. DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

*These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me you might have peace. In the world you shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.   
John 16:33*

[Other Sermons by Mr. Spurgeon upon the same text are #1327, Volume 22 CHRIST THE OVERCOMER OF THE WORLD and #1994, Volume 33 SWEET PEACE FOR TRIED BELIEVERS   
read/download both sermons free of charge at http://www.spurgeongems.org.]

The Believer is in two places, and he lives two lives. In the text there are two places spoken ofin Me and, in the world.   
The saints noblest life is hid with Christ in God. This is his new life, his spiritual life, his incorruptible life, his everlasting life. Rejoice, Beloved, if you are in Christ, and enjoy the privilege which belongs to that conditionthat in Me you might have peace. Do not be satisfied without it! It is your right through your relationship to the Prince of Peace. Because you are in Christ, your life of lives is always safe and should be always restful. Your greatest interests are all secure, for they are guaranteed by the Covenant of which Jesus is the Surety. Your treasure, your eternal portion, is laid up with Him in Heaven where neither rust nor robber can enter. Therefore, be of good cheer! Be restful and happy, for you are in Christ and He has said, These things have I spoken unto you, that in Me you might have peace.   
You are sorrowfully conscience that you also live another life, for you dwell in the midst of evil men, or, as the text puts it, you are in the world. I need not enlarge upon that fact, for probably, dear Friend, every time you go out to business or to daily labor, you find by the ungodly speeches of graceless men, that you are in the world which lies in the Wicked One. Even while you dwell in the sweet seclusion of domestic life, though your family has been graciously visited, and your dear ones are all Believers, yet even there matters occur which make you feel that you are in the worlda world of sin and sorrow. You are not yet in Heaven do not dream that you are. It would be a pity for a sailor to expect the sea to be as stable as the land, for the sea will be the sea to the end and the world will be the world to you as long you are in it.   
The Savior warns His people, In the world you shall have tribulation. That is to say, your condition will at times be as unpleasant as that of wheat under the flail, for the Latin word, tribulation, signifies threshing. Many blows of the flail are needed to separate your chaff from your wheat and, therefore, while you are in this world, you are on the threshing-floor. The Greek word which Jesus used is not quite of the same import as our English-Latin word, but it means pressing grief and searching trial. You must at times experience trial while you are in the world, though not always to the same degree, for God gives some of His people much rest even while here belowbut this does not arise out of the worldit is His own special gift. In the world you shall have tribulation is as sure a fact as that in Christ you shall have peace!   
Now, because of this tribulation and the sorrow which is likely to come of it, our Savior gives us the words of good cheer to which our attention is directed in the text. We have first to show what sorrow the comfort is aimed at and, secondly, what is the actual comfort here bestowed.   
I. WHAT IS THIS TRIBULATION IN THE WORLD AT WHICH THE SAVIORS WORDS OF COMFORT ARE AIMED?   
It includes the afflictions which come upon us because we are men living among men and not yet at Home among angels and glorified saints. We dwell among beings who are born to trouble as the sparks fly upward. Between other men and us there are many points of difference, but we share with them in the common infirmities, labors, sicknesses, bereavements and necessities of our fallen race. We are outside of Edens gate with the rest of Adams family. We may be greatly beloved of God and yet be poor. Gods love to Lazarus did not prevent his lying at the rich mans gate, nor hinder the dogs from licking his sores. Saints may be sick as well as other menJob and David and Hezekiah felt sore diseases. Saints go into the hospital as well as sinners, for their bodies are liable to the same accidents and ailments. Such diseases as men bring upon themselves by vice, the godly escape and, therefore, as a rule, Gods people have a great advantage over the reckless and reprobate in point of health. But, still, in this respect the best of men are only men and it will often be said, Lord, he whom You love is sick. Upon the bodies of the godly the elements have the same power as upon others upon them the hot desert wind blows, or through their garments the cold penetratesthe sun scorches them in the fierceness of its summer heat, or chilling dampness threaten the flame of life. In this respect, one event happens unto all, though not without mysterious and blessed differences. No screen is set around the godly to protect them from physical sufferingthey are not living in the land of Goshen so that light cheers their dwelling while the dense fog hangs over the rest of the land! Scant is the need to dwell up this theme, for it is well known that many are the afflictions of the righteous, because they are in a world which, for a while, is made subject to vanity.   
Nor may we forget that we endure a second set of tribulation because we are Christians. Ishmael was not mocked, but Isaac was, for he was born after the promise. Esaus posterity never suffered bondage in Egypt, but Israel must be trained by hard service. Persecution is for the righteous, wicked men are in honor among their ungodly associates. Slander shoots her poisoned arrows, not at the vicious, but at the virtuous. Birds do not peck at sour fruit, but they wage war upon the sweet and ripe. Holy men must expect to be misrepresented, misinterpreted and often willfully malignedwhile hypocrites have their reward in undeserved homage. Carry what load you choose upon your shoulders and no one will notice it unless, indeed, they obey the good old rule and respect the burden. But if you take up Christs Cross and bravely bear it, few will respect the burden, or praise the bearer! Graceless men will add weight to your load, for the offense of the Cross has not ceased. The seed of the serpent still has enmity against the Seed of the woman, and one and another will commence biting at the heel which treads the sacred way of Christ. It is the nature of the wicked to hate the righteous, even as the wolf rages against the sheep. This world cannot be the friend of the friend of God unless, indeed, Belial can have concord with Christand this we know is impossible! In one form or another, the Egyptian will oppress the Israelite till the day of the bringing out with a high hand and an outstretched arm. If today the enmity is restrained in its manifestation, it is because the law of the land, by the good Providence of God, does not now allow the rack, the stake, or the dungeon. Our Lord said to His first disciples, In the world you shall have tribulation, and He explained it to mean that men would put them out of the synagogues. Yes, that the time would come when those that killed them would think that they did God service! Tribulation of that sort remains up to the measure in which it is not hindered by Divine Power. The spirit out of which it sprang cannot die till men are renewed. A mans foes are still they of his own household. All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.   
Nor is the opposition of the world confined to persecution. It sometimes takes the far more dangerous form of flatterypleasing baits are held out and allurements are used to decoy the Believer from his Lord. Many have been grievously wounded by the world when it has met them with the kiss of Judas on its lips and a dagger in its right hand wherewith to slay the soul! Woe unto those who are ignorant of its devices! This is a sore trouble under the sun, that men are falsetheir words are softer than butter, but inwardly they are drawn swords! This has often surprised young Christians. They imagined that since the godly were charmed at the sight of their early graces, all others would be equally pleased. They are dumbfounded when they find that their good is evilly spoken of. Is any hearer of mine one of these raw recruits? Let him learn that to be a soldier of the Cross means real warnot a sham fight! He is in an enemys country and the time will yet come when, as a veteran warrior, he will be surprised if he lives a day without a conflict, or is able for an hour to sheathe his sword   
*Must I be carried to the skies,   
On flowery beds of ease,   
While others fought to win the prize   
And sailed through bloody seas?   
Are there no foes for me to face?   
Must I not stem the flood   
To help me on to God?   
Surely I must fight if I would reign   
Increase my courage, Lord!   
Ill bear the toil, endure the pains,   
Supported by Your Word*   
Certain tender hearts are not only surprised, but they are daunted and grieved by the worlds opposition. Gentle, loving spirits who would not oppose anybody if they could help it, keenly feel the wanton assaults of those whom they would rather please than provoke. The sensitiveness of love renders the choicest characters the most susceptible of pain under cruel oppositionespecially when it comes from beloved kinsfolk. To those who love God and man, it is at times an agony to be compelled to appear as the cause of strife, even for Christs sake. We would gladly follow peace with all men, yet are we often forced to cry

*My soul with him that hates peace   
Has long a dweller been!   
I am for peace, but when I speak,   
For battle they are keen.   
My soul distracted mourns and pines   
To reach that peaceful shore   
Where all the weary are at rest,   
And troubles vex no more.*   
We are sent forth as sheep among wolvesand this jars upon our gentleness which loves far better to lie down in the green pastures near the Shepherd and in the midst of flock.   
We are most of all grieved to think that men should not love Christ. It makes us deeply sorrowful that they should not see the beauties of the Man of Sorrows. In our inmost hearts we are wounded when they wound our Well-Beloved. That they oppose us is littlebut that they stumble at the great Foundation Stone upon which they will surely be broken, is terrible to perceive! They sin against light and love. They sin against their own soulsand this is a tribulation which bruises every holy heart and causes every loving spirit to bleed.   
This calls for constant watchfulness, since our very love to men might become, unless salted by the Grace of God, a cause of decay to our purity. Some spirits love fighting and are never more happy than when they can denounce, resist, secede and contend. These are members of the Church Militant in another than the best sense. When the Grace of God enters their hearts and consecrates their obstinacy into firmness, they make fine men in a way, but if we measure them by the scale of love, and that, I take it, is the standard of the sanctuaryfor he is most like God who loves most and he has come nearest to the image of Christ whose heart is fullest of tendernessthese rougher spirits turn out to be rather dwarfs than giants in the Kingdom of God. We must have backbone and must be prepared to contend earnestly for the faith, but yet the more love we exhibit, the better! And, therefore, the more pain it will cost us to be continually at war with unloving spirits. This is a part of the tribulation which we must endureand the more bravely we face it, the more thoroughly shall we win the battles of peace and purity!   
Is not this enough upon the darker side of the picture?   
II. Let us now consider WHAT THE COMFORT IS WHICH JESUS GRACIOUSLY OFFERS US. Be of good cheer, He says, I have overcome the world. This is a glorious sentence spoken by the greatest Conqueror that ever livedin whom all His people shall yet be more than conquerors.   
Here let us view our Lord in His blessed Person, for there is much of good cheer in the contemplation. Remember, first, that our blessed Lord was a Man. Believe all that this means, for many are apt to think that because He was God as well as Man, therefore He was not so fully a Man. The tendency is to separate Him from the race and so from ourselves, but I pray you, Friend, to respect that Jesus was in some respects more a Man than any of us!   
There are some points in which no one man is all that manhood is but Jesus was the summary of all manhood. I might almost venture to say that He had about Him the whole Nature of mankind as it respects to the mental conformation of both man and woman, for He was as tender as woman though as strong as man. Holy women, as much as godly men, find in Jesus all that is in their own souls. There is nothing effeminate in Him and yet all the loveliness which is feminineread His life story and see. He was Man in the broadest sense of the term, taking up in one the whole genus. Men are of certain ranks and grades, but Christ is without limit, save only that in Him was no sin. Though a Jew, He bore no special national peculiarity, for Gentiles find in Him their next of kin. You apply no descriptive word to the Son of Man, except that you call Him the Man of Sorrows. He was a Man who greatly suffered in body and in mind, and displayed His Manhood by the bravery of His endurancea Man rejoicing in mans joy, depressed in mans griefa Man who ran up the entire scale of humanity, from its deepest to its highest tone. Now, if a typical man has overcome the world, then man has done it and man can be enabled to do it again! This inspires courage and vanishes despair. It was the mighty power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in Him by which Jesus overcame the worldand that same quiet power, if it dwells in us, will make us win the same victory by faith. The arch enemy has been conquered by Man and our hearts may be comforted by the conviction that by God working in us, we, too, shall bruise Satan under our feet shortly!   
It is cheering to remember that wherein our Lords was a special case, it is to our comfort, for He, as Man, entered into the conflict under serious disadvantages which we cannot labor under. He was weighted with a care unique and unexampled. Be our charge what it may, it cannot be comparable to His heavy burden as the Shepherd of Souls. We think ourselves overburdened and speak of life as though it were rendered too stern a conflict by the load of our cares and responsibilities. But what comparison is there between our load and that of Jesus? A pastor with a great flock is not without his hourly anxieties, but what are those to the cares of the Chief Shepherd? He watched over the great multitude which no man can numberwho were committed to Him by the Fatherand for these He carried all their grief! Here was a burden such as you and I, dear Friend, cannot even imagine! And yet, without laying aside the weight, He fought the world and overcame it! Let His name be praised and let His victory be the comfort of all that labor and are heavy ladened  
*His is the victors name,   
Who fought our fight alone!   
Triumphant saints no honor claim   
His conquest was His own.*   
Remember, next, that He was loaded with substitutionary sorrows which He bore for us. These are not ours. He came into the world to suffer griefs that were not His own. He had human guilt laid upon Him to bear and, because of that, He was bowed down till He was exceedingly sorrowful even unto death. Some seem to think we are to imitate Christ in being men of sorrows as He was. No, no! The argument is the other way! Because Jesus took our sorrows, we may leave them all with Him, rolling our burden upon the Lord. Because He was grieved for me and in my place, it is my privilege to rejoice with unspeakable joy in full redemption! No weight of sin remains to press us to the dust! Christ has carried it all awayand in His sepulcher He has buried it forever! Yet never let us forget what an inconceivable pressure our sin put upon Him, for remembering this, it becomes the more a comfort to us that, notwithstanding all, He could say, I have overcome the world.   
Remember, again, that our Lord in the battle with the world, was the center of the attack. When the whole host marches to the fight, we, each one, take our place in the ranks and the war goes on against us all. But where, do you think, the arrows fly most thickly? Where were the javelins hurled one after the other, thick as hail? The Standard-Bearer among ten thousand was the chief target! It seems to me as if the Prince of Darkness had said to his armies, Fight neither with small nor great, save only with the King of Israel, for He was tempted in all points like as we are. You and I encounter some temptations, but He endured them all! I have mine and you have yours, but He had mine and yours, and such as are common to all His saintsand yet, standing in the thick of the fray, He remained unwounded and cried aloudI have overcome the world. Divine Grace, then, can also clothe us with triumph, for against us no such supreme charges of hosts upon hosts will ever be led. The whole band has gathered together against Himbut never against any one of His feeble followers!   
Remember, also, that the Redeemer was, in many respects, a lonely Man. If we need spiritual succor, we know someone to whom we can go. If we need converse with a superior mind, we can find such an one among our Brothers and Sisters. But our blessed Master could scarcely find a kindred spirit, and never an adviser. Like some lone mountaintop which towers above all surrounding heights, He stood alone where winters snowstorms beat full upon Him, spending all their fury on His unshielded height! We are but valley dwellers and rise not to His loftiness. To whom could He tell His secret grief? To Peter, James or John? As well might a mother whisper to her babe the throes that rend her heart! He did once, in deep distress, resort to the three noblest spirits among the 12 Apostles, but they slept for sorrow and could not watch with Him one hour! O lonely Christ, if You did overcome this world alone, how surely shall Your warrior Brothers and Sisters overcome it when they stand shoulder to shoulder, cheering each man his fellow and, above all, when You are in the field communicating Your victorious valor to the whole host!   
I have not finished this setting forth of the disadvantage under which the Savior lay, for I beg you to notice that there were possibilities about our Lord that were never ours. A man who does not know his letters is little tempted to be proud of his learning. And the man who lives from hand to mouth and never has a penny to lay by can hardly be tempted to be purse proud! We poor creatures could not be tempted to the same degree as our great Lord. The multitude would have taken Him by force and made Him a kingno, moreall the kingdoms of the earth were proffered Him and instead of suffering poverty and yielding Himself up to death, He might have pushed Caesar from his throne! The world with all its honors, the cattle on a thousand hills and secret mines, and rocks of gold and silver were all Hisand He might have left His life-work to be the greatest, richest, mightiest monarch that ever reignedhad He not been Jesus, to whom such things are the dirt beneath His feet! But none of us have such great offers and brilliant opportunities and, therefore, we have not such a battle to fight as He had. Shall we not, by His help, overcome the lesser temptations, since He went on to victory over the greatest that can be imagined?

Remember, too, that the intense zeal that burned in His spirit, had He been capable of ever yielding to a temptation, might have suggested to Him in a hundred ways, a turning aside from His own line of action by which He had resolved to conquer the world. He came to vanquish evil by the force of love and truth through His Spirit. If some of His followers had been girt with His power, they would not have kept to His order of battle! I stood in Rome, one day, at the bottom of the Santa Scala, and watched the poor votaries of superstition creeping up those so-called sacred steps upon their knees, imagining them to be the very stairs which our Lord descended when Pilate said, Behold the Man. As I saw certain priests watching their dupes, I longed for a thunder bolt or two with which to make a clearance of Pope, cardinals, and priests! But the spirit our Lord Jesus was not so hotfor when James and John asked, Lord, will You that we command fire to come down from Heaven and consume them? their Lord replied, You know not what manner of spirit you are of. We may never have been tempted to ask fire from Heaven because we knew that we could not get itbut our Lord had only to ask His Father and He would presently have sent Him legions of angels! See with grief what a part of the Church has donecertain professors easily fell into the snare which their Lord avoided!   
Suppose the Lord Jesus had been made a king and had marshaled an army? He might have set up an established Church and have maintained it by the power and wealth of the State. A temple might have been built in every parish in the Roman empire and the heathen might have been compelled to pay tithes for the support of the ministry and Apostleship. By the help of imperial prestige and patronage, nominal professors of the faith would have been multiplied by millions and, outwardly, religion would have prevailed! Would it not have been as great a blessing as our Established Church is to us? But the Lord Jesus Christ did not choose this method, for His Kingdom is not to be set up by any force than by that of truth and love! It was His purpose to die for men, but not to lift the mailed hand of power, or even the jeweled finger of rank to bring them into subjection. Jesus loves men to HimselfLove and Truth are His battle-ax and weapons of war. Thus He overcame the world which was in that most insidious form of worldlinessthe suggestion to make alliance with it and set up a mongrel society, a kingdom at once earthly and heavenly, a State Church, a society loyal both to God and Mammon, fearing the Lord and serving the High Court of Parliament! It might have appeared to us to be the readiest means to bless the worldbut it was not His Fathers way, nor the way of holinessand, therefore, He would not follow it, but overcame it! No force may be put on conscience. The altar of God must not be polluted by forced offerings. Caesar must not step beyond his province. However great the proffered benefit, the Lord never did evil that good might come!   
Let us now observe that the main point of the comfort lies in the fact that not only did our Lord overcome the world as an individual, but He vanquished it as the Representative Man. Clear a space! Clear a space! A deadly fight is to be fought! Here comes into the battle, stalking along, a monster man towering high above his fellows. He is for Philistia! Here comes the champion of Israel, a ruddy youth. These two are to decide the day. Anxious eyes are turned towards the field of duel. Philistia, look to your champion! Israel, watch your stripling with beating heart! O maids of Judah, lift up your prayers for the son of Jesse, that he may play the man this day! As we watch that fight and see the stone sink into the champions brow, and behold the youth taking off the giants head and bringing it to the camp, we are ready to join in the dances of the jubilant women, for David has won the victory! See the result of his deedthe victory of David is the triumph of every man in Israels land! It was a representative conflictIsrael against Philistiaand when Philistias hero fell, Israel was the conqueror. Up to the spoil, O sons of Jacob! The uncircumcised are utterly routed! They fly! Pursue them and scatter them as dust before the whirlwind! Even so, when Christ overcame the world, the victory was won on the behalf of all His people and today we face a vanquished foe. Up and spoil the enemy! Let your infirmities become the subject of your glorying! Let your tribulations become the themes of your thanksgivings! And if you are persecuted for righteousness sake, do not whine and whimper as though some dread calamity had come upon you, but rejoice that you are made participators of the honors of Prophets and saintsand of your great Leader who won the battle as your Champion!   
In closing, let us remember that here we have not merely representation, but also union. I have overcome the world, means more than, I overcame in your name. All Believers have virtually overcome the world, for they are one with Christ! Did my hands win the victory? Then my feet triumph! Did my head achieve the conquest? Then my heart shares the honor! The soles of my feet are victorious when my head is crowned. When Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, was victorious over the foe, every member of His Mystical Body, even the most uncomely, was, virtually, a conqueror in the conquering Head! So let us shout the victory and wave the palm branch, for we are more than conquerors through Him that has loved us! Said He not well when He bade us be of good cheer, for He had overcome the world? Therefore, struggling Brothers and Sisters, obey His word, and   
*BE OF GOOD CHEER!*

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 12:20-50.**

Our Lord had gained a sudden popularity through raising Lazarus from the dead. And the people had attended Him with great enthusiasm as He rode through the streets of Jerusalem. For the time, things looked very bright with Him, but He knew that He was soon to suffer and to die. And the overshadowing of that great eclipse was already upon His heart. Note how He looked forward to it and how He spoke concerning it.

Verses 20-22 And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast: the same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and entreated him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus. Philip came and told Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip told Jesus. Probably these persons were proselytes to the Jewish faith. They had renounced their idols and they had come to worship the only true God. And now they had a wish to see Jesusnot out of idle curiosity, but because they felt a certain degree of respect for Him. They wanted to know more of His teaching and to learn whether He was, indeed, the promised Messiah. The disciples encouraged these seekersthey would not have brought mere curiosity-mongers to their Master, but they saw that there was something better in these Greeksso they consulted together and their opinion was that they must tell Jesus about them.

23. And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified. He was about to die, yet He speaks of His death as being glorified. For the joy that was set before Him, He seems to overlook the intervening humiliation in the prospect of the Glory that would come of it through the salvation of multitudes of strangers from the very ends of the earth! He looks on these Greeks as the vanguard of a great army of Gentiles who would continue to come to Him and pay Him homage. Hear what He says next

24. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone; but if it dies, it brings forth much fruit.  
[See Sermon #3024 Volume 53CHRISTS DEATH AND OURSRead/download the entire sermon,

free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] He knew that He must die, for His living, preaching and miracle-working would never produce such results as His death would accomplish! He must go down into the ground, out of sight, and there must lie like a buried grain of wheat, that out of Him there might spring a great harvest to the Glory of God! And these Greeks were like a first handful, a wave-sheaf unto God, a promise of the great harvest that would be the result of His deathIf it dies, it brings forth much fruit.

25, 26. He that loves his life shall lose it: and he that hates his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there shall also My servant be: if any man serves

Me, him will My Father honor. [See Sermons #463, Volume 8CHRISTS SERVANTHIS DUTY AND REWARD; #2449, Volume 42THE RULE AND REWARD OF SERVING CHRIST; #2651, Volume 45THE CHRISTIANS SERVICE AND HONOR and #2874, Volume 50PRECEPTS AND PROMISESRead/download all these sermons, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] It

is an honor to be allowed to serve Christ, but God will bestow still further honor upon those who faithfully serve Him!

27-29. Now is My soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour? But for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify Your name. Then came there a Voice from Heaven, saying, I have both glorified it and will glorify it again. The people, therefore, that stood by and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spoke to Him. How ready they were to find an explanation for that Voice from Heaven which they could not comprehend! Some said that it thundered: others said, An angel spoke to Him. But here is Christs own interpretation of the mystery

30, 31. Jesus answered and said, This Voice came not because of Me, but for your sakes. Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the Prince of this world be cast out. Satan may have thought that he had triumphed when Christ was crucified, but that death upon the Cross was the deathblow to the devils usurpation!

32, 33. And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me. This He said, signifying what death He should die. [See Sermons #139, Vo  
lume 3CHRIST LIFTED UP; #775, Volume 13THE GREAT ATTRACTION and #1717, Volume 29 THE MARVELOUS MAGNETRead/download all these sermons, free of charge, at

http://www.spurgeongems.org.] There is no magnet like the death of Christ! He is still able to draw men unto Him because of the attractive force of His atoning Sacrifice.

34-36. The people answered Him, We have heard from the Law that Christ abides forever: and how say You, the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man? Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walks in darkness knows not where he goes. While you have light, believe in the light, that you may be the children of light. These things spoke Jesus, and departed, and did hide Himself from them. At first sight, this may not seem to have been an answer to their question, Who is this Son of Man? Yet it was a very direct answer, for He was the Light of the world and, as the Light was soon to be withdrawn from them, there was all the greater need of Christs injunctions, Walk while you have the light, lest darkness come upon you. While you have light, believe in the light, that you may be the children of light.

37-41. But though He had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on Him: that the sayings of Isaiah the Prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke, Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Isaiah said again, He has blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Isaiah, when He saw His Glory, and spoke of Him. [See Sermon #1844, Volume

31ISRAEL AND BRITAINA NOTE OF WARNINGRead/download the entire sermon, free of charge,

at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] Isaiah was sent upon a painful errand to tell the people that they would hear, but they would not understandthat they would see, but they would not perceive. And so it happened to Israel as a nation, and to this day Israel rejects the true Messiah. Oh, that none of us may imitate their evil example by negligence and contempt of the Revelation of God, lest after playing with Scripture and trifling with the Christ of God, the Lord should at last in anger declare that we should see, but should not perceive, that we should hear, but should not understand!

42, 43. Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on Him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. Are there any here who believe in Christ, but who have never confessed Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue and lose the praise of men? Are you afraid of your family, your father, or your husband? Or is there some friend who would be angry with you if you confessed Christ? If so, be no longer such a coward, I pray you, but come out boldly and confess Him who will not be ashamed to confess you before His Father and the holy angels!

44-50. Jesus cried and said, He that believes on Me, believes not on Me, but on Him that sent Me. And he that sees Me sees Him that sent Me. I am come as a light into the world, that whoever believes on Me should not abide in darkness. And if any man hears My word and believes not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejects Me, and receives not My words, has one that judges him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken of Myself, but the Father which sent Me, He gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that His commandment is life everlasting: whatever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto Me, so I speak.

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #1465A Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE SON GLORIFIED BY THE FATHER AND THE FATHER GLORIFIED BY THE SON NO. 1465A

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

**These words spoke Jesus, and lifted up His eyes to Heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You. John 17:1.**

THIS was a prayer after a sermon . These words Jesus spoke and then He lifted up His eyes to Heaven in supplication. No discourse should be unattended by prayer, for how can we expect a blessing on what we have heard or spoken unless we ask it of the Lord? The sower should water with many a supplication the seed that he has sown and the hearer should diligently seek the favor of Him who gives bread to the eater as well as seed to the sower. It was a prayer in connection with the Lords Supper. Surely above all things, prayer should mix with every part of our attendance at the sacred table. Dare we come to the sacred feast without prayer? Can we sit there without prayer? Can we retire without prayer? If so, let us not wonder if the ordinance should be a mere form and unrefreshing to our souls. With sermon and with sacrament let us mingle the salt of supplication without prescribing how much.

Observe the attitude of the prayer. The Savior, it appears, prayed with uplifted eyes. There is much in this outward manifestation of His devotion. We have not time to enter into it fully, but this may sufficethe uplifted eyes showed to Whom He was speaking and it bore testimony that that He was not idly drawing the bow at a venture, but directing His prayer unto God and looking up as the arrow ascended to His Fathers Throne. It showed, also, that He was looking away from and above His disciples and their sympathy, above all the world and its enmity and even above Himself. His outlook was towards the Invisiblethis is for our instruction. He could have prayed with eyes closed if it had so pleased Him, but His were the opened eyes of faith and love which could look into the face of God and could yet look upon all things round without distraction and, therefore, it was not necessary for Him to draw down the curtains of His eyelids, but He gazed into the opened Heaven.

Notice the commencement of His prayer, for it furnishes our text. He began by saying, Father. He did not say, Our Father. Our Father is for us, for we, in the filial relationship which we sustain, are many. But, Father, is for Him, for He is one and He is such a Son as, in some respects, we can never be. Into the mysterious doctrine of the eternal filiation it is not ours to enter, but we know it to be a Truth of God. Father, is a word appropriate to our Lords lips, alone, in its highest conceivable sense and how grandly it comes from Him! It shows His love to God, His confidence

in God, His complete resignation to the Divine will and His sweet acquiescence in it. He is about to be broken in pieces with the iron rod of His Fathers vengeance, but He calls Him, Father. He is about to drink that cup of wormwood and gall which would have been Hell to us if He had not drained it dry, but He says, Father.

And herein He sets us an examplein all times of tribulation let us fall back upon our sonship, our adoption and the fatherhood of our great God! To our Father let us go, for to whom else should a child so naturally fly? Where else can we go but to our Father who knows what we have need of before we ask Him and who will never desert His own, but, like a father pities his children, will pity them that fear Him? The prayer itself the very fact of the prayershows us His manhood. Jesus pleadsHe must be Man. He lifts His eyes to Heaven and He cries, FatherHe must be like ourselves, a Man.

But the prayer, in some respects, speaks of the Deity which it scarcely veils. As in some statues which you must often have looked upon with admiration, you seem to see the face of the figure through the marble veil, so it is here in the prayer of Christ that the God shines through the Man. It is such a prayer as only He might offer who is God as well as Man. Dare you say, Father, glorify me, that I may glorify You? That would be a presumptuous expression for creature lips to utter! Only He who counted it not robbery to be equal with God, though He made Himself of no reputation, might thus pray! Though He cries to God, Father, glorify Your Son, yet may He add and put no explanatory sentence with it, that Your Son also may glorify You. He is able to return all the Glory God may give and has the power as much to magnify the Fathers name as the Father may magnify His name. Here I see the Humanity, but I admire and adore the Deity of our blessed Lord.

The first sentence of His prayer reveals His foresightFather, the hour is comethe hour ordained in the eternal purpose. The hour prophesied of which Daniel sought to know. The hour towards which all hours had pointed. The central hourthe hour up to which men dated and from which they shall date again if they read time right. The hinge, pivot and turning point of all human history! The dark, yet delivering hour! The hour of vengeance and of acceptance. The hour is come. He knew it. His inward Infallible foresight made Him know that now was the time for Him to offer up Himself a Sacrifice for sin. His expression is, however, very choice. The hour is come. His faith thinks it but an hourthe midnight of Gethsemane, the morning of the scourging, the day of the crucifixion all are but an hour, a short space.

Now is He in trouble, for His time of travail is come. But He counts it as an hour for joy of that which shall be born into the world by His grievous pangs! Thus His love and patience make Him despise the time of shame and reckon it but a brief interval. The foresight of which we have spoken makes Him look beyond the hour. You and I look into the hour of darkness, as a frequent rule, and see no further, for our eyes are dim through unbelief. But He goes on beyond the hour and His prayer is, Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You. He fixes His eyes upon the Glory that was yet to be revealed and for joy of that He counts even His death to be but an hourlooking upon it as soon to be over and lost in the Glory of His Father!

In all this, Brothers and Sisters, let us imitate our Lord and let us keep our eyes not on the present, but on the future; not on this light affliction, which is but for a moment, but on the far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory which will come of it. And let us with holy confidence, whenever our hour of darkness arrives, resort to our God in secret. The best preparation for the worst hour is prayer! The best remedy for a depressed spirit is nearness to God! In this, then, let us follow our Master and may the Holy Spirit help us to do so. Let us now consider the essential words of the prayer. They are twofold and in them we find first a petition for HimselfFather, glorify Your Son. And, secondly, the motive of that petitionthat Your Son also may glorify You.

I. Begin, then, with THE PETITION FOR HIMSELF and I invite you to observe it as an answered petition. More than 1,800 years have rolled away since those Divine Words fell from our blessed Masters lips and they have been answered and are still being answered! We shall not look upon them from the standpoint of the Apostles, but from our own, and regard the prayer as one which is granted. And, first, it was answered in and during His sufferings. Some of the early fathers confined the sense of these words to the passion of our Lord and I like their strong expressions when they say that His Cross was His Throne and Gethsemane was as glorious as Olivet, if not more sofor the glory of the Cross would be a wonderful theme if man had mind and words enough to expound upon it.

Do we speak of ignominy? Doubtless He died a felons death. Do we speak of shame? No doubt they spat upon Him and derided Him. Do we speak of weakness? No doubt He slept in a grave. But in His ignominy, shame and weakness, Jesus is most honorable, adorable and strong! Faith sees a moral and spiritual splendor about her crucified Lord which outshines all the previous glories of His eternal Throne. I shall not so confine the sense of the words, but yet that sense must be included. The Son of God was glorified while He was dying and it was one part of His Glory that He should be able to bear the enormous load of human guilt. As a race we lay crushed beneath it.

A thousand Samsons could not relieve us! Angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim could never lift the stupendous mass! But this one Man, alone, with no helpin weakness of body and in death pangs bore away the enormous load of human guilt! The chastisement of our peace was upon Himthe Lord laid on Him the iniquity of us all! What a load it was! And that He could bear it was, indeed, a display of His Glory. The lost in Hell cannot bear the wrath of God! An eternity of suffering will not have discharged the dreadful penalty and yet He bore that burden in an hour! Oh, marvelous strength of the Incarnate God! Glorious are You, indeed, O Christ, upon Your Cross! More glorious, even, than in that moment when, with a word, you shall shake not only earth, but also Heaven, for now the weight of angry Heaven rests on You and You stand fast beneath it. Glorify Him, Beloved, you for whom He bore that weight! Glorify Him that He was able to endure it!

He was glorified, also, in the manner in which He bore it, in that He sustained it without shrinking or starting back. There was no guilt or guile in Him, though questioned again and again before Caiaphas, Herod and Pilate. There were no angry speeches when He was brow-beaten, buffeted, blindfolded and spit upon. He displayed nothing but gentleness, even when His enemies had pierced His hands and His feetnothing but triumphant pity and almighty love even when they mocked His agonies. They could not anger Him with all their reviling and when they cried, Let Him come down from the Cross and we will believe on Him, yet He did not loosen a hand from the cruel tree to smite the scorners nor shake His feet free from the nail to spurn the blasphemers.

When you think of His physical agonies, of His mental torture, of His spiritual darknesswhen you consider that all the powers of earth and Hell were let loose upon Him. And when, worst of all, you remember that the Fathers face was hidden from Him till He cried, Why have You forsaken Me? and yet consider that our Champion, having begun the redeeming work, went through with it and never drew back His hands from the Covenant which He had made, nor flinched under the strokes He boreI say He was glorious in His passion and His prayer was heard! The Father did glorify His Son even on the tree! It was an hour of Glory that might dazzle angels eyesthat hour when He said, It is finished, and gave up the ghost. What had He finished? He had finished that which saved His people! He had peopled Heaven with immortal spirits who shall delight in Him forever and had shaken the gates of Hell! God indeed glorified His Son in enabling Him to bear and bear so well, all the weight of sin and the penalty that was due to it.

And now, today, Beloved, we see that God glorified His Son in His death because in dying He saved His people. I do not believe for a single moment that the result of Christs death ever was, or ever could be, uncertain. That which He intended to do by it, will be done and has been so far done to the last jot and tittle up to this moment. His great object was the redemption of His chosenChrist loved His Church and gave Himself for it. It is said of a certain company that they sing, He has redeemed us from among men. Now, when He died, He did not render the redemption of His people possible, but He ransomed them completely.

By His agonies and death He did not merely give a bare hope of the pardon of sin, but He hurled the sin of all His elect into the depths of the sea in that same moment! He did not merely make the salvation of men a possibility if they would, but He saved His people then and there! He finished the work which He came to do, in proof whereof it is written that, this Man, after He had offered one Sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God. And He would not have sat there if His work had not been done! According to the words of the Prophet, He had finished transgression, made an end of sin and brought in everlasting righteousness, for He had offered an effectual Atonement which none can deny. And so the Father glorified His Son, even when He died, since He accepted His redeeming blood on the behalf of His people.

The Father glorified His Son by making Him, even in the hour of His passion, to be victorious over all His enemies. Those nailed feet bruised the serpents head so that he could never resume his former power. Those nailed hands grasped the serpent of sin and strangled it! And that dying head, as it bowed itself, smote Death with its own sword, as David smote Goliath, for He, death by dying slew. The powers of evil were tremendous. Think of sin, of Satan and of deathbut all their hosts were defeated in that one pitched battle of which the Cross was the banner and the dying Redeemer the Champion! O glorious Lord, You have led captivity captive, making a show of Your adversaries openly even on Your Cross, and nailing to the accursed tree the handwriting of ordinances that was against us. Yes, the Father glorified You even there while yet You were in the agonies of death!

Beside this, there were some outward signs of the glory of Christ even in His death which we can scarcely stop to mention. Did not the Temple rend her veil? Did not the Sun conceal his face? Did not the rocks split and the dead arise? Was not all Jerusalem filled with tremor and did not the centurion cry, Truly, this was the Son of God? Yes, the Father glorified His Son even when it pleased Him to bruise Him and to put Him to grief! With one hand He smote and with the other hand He glorified! There was a power to crush, but there was also a power to sustain working at the same time. The Father glorified His Son.

And now, Beloved, what shall I say concerning the Father glorifying the Son after His death and as the result of it? I will not attempt to expound it, but I will simply say that the rending of the veil at the moment of His death was the glorifying of Christfor now there is a way to the Throne of God made manifest for us, which before had been closed. Then the opening of His pierced side was another glorifying of Him, for this day the double fountain is to Believers the effectual cleansing of both the guilt and the power of sin! And thus the Saviors pierced heart glorified Him in its power to bless. Then that poor body lay in the gaveI call it poor, for so it seemedwrapped in linen and the spices. But, Beloved, the Father glorified even that dead Body which men thought to be corruptible, for it saw no corruption!

During the three days and nights no worm could come near it, nor trace of decay. That crystal vase in which the rich ointment of the Saviors soul had dwelt must not be injured. Not a bone of Him shall be broken. Beautified by those scars as when a skillful artist renders an image more lovely than before by marks of the engravers tool, that body must be safely guarded by watching angels till the morning came. It barely dawned. As yet the sun was rising and lo, the Sun of Righteousness, Himself, arose! As a man arising from his couch puts on his garments, so did our Lord put on the vesture of the Body which He had laid aside and came again into the world alive as to His Body and His Soula perfect Man!

Oh, it was a grand glorifying of Christ when the Father raised Him from the dead and He was seen by His disciples once again! Death had no bands to hold Him. The sepulchers ward could not confine the unequalled Prisoner. Declared to be glorious by His Resurrection from the dead, His prayer was heard! And before long, when a few weeks had passed over Him, there came another Gloryfor from the brow of Olivet He gently ascended, floating in the air from the company of His disciples, rising up in the midst of angels till a cloud received Him out of human

sight   
*They brought His chariot from on high   
To bear Him to His Throne.   
They clapped their triumphant wings and cried, The glorious work is done!*

His Father glorified Him and now He sits at the right hand of God! Words, you are dumb things, you cannot tell of His present Glory!

Early the other morning there came to my bedside a Brother to awaken me whose face seemed to beam with joy as he said, In my sleep last night I thought I saw the Lord upon His Throne! And oh, the Glory which the Father put upon Him! I wish I could fall asleep again that I might continue to dream on. The tears were in his eyes, as he said, Oh, the Glory of Christ! Oh, the Glory of Christ! I reminded him of how Mercy laughed in her sleep and Christiana asked her why, and when she told her dream, the matron said she might well laugh if she so dreamed! Happy are those who, sleeping or wakingliving or dyingmay but get a glimpse of His Glory! Nothing ever ravishes my heart like the thought of my Lords being glorified! Oh, if I could, by some means, help to honor Him! If only I may but be the earthen vessel in which His treasure should be stored, or the trumpet by which His name might be proclaimed! That would be joy enough for me!

And you all feel the same, you who love Him. You delight to think how high His Throne is and how bright is His Countenance, and how resplendent are His courts. Have patience. You shall see Him soon, for the Father will glorify Him in the Second Advent. He tarries; He tarries long, as we think, yet He says, Behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me. He is coming to be glorified, even among the sons of men! So shall the prayer of the text be fulfilled in the golden ages yet to dawnand then throughout eternity!

II. We pause a moment and then we shall briefly think of THE MOTIVE OF HIS PRAYER. Father, glorify Your Son, that your Son also may glorify You. Do notice this. When you pray, it is a grand thing to pray with a clean heart but selfishness is uncleanness. In our blessed Lord there was no selfishness. He said, I seek not My own Glory and even in this prayer that word of His is true, for He only seeks Glory that He may glorify the Father. Beloved, the desire of our Lord is granted, for God is glorified in Jesus Christ more than in any other way.

The Glory of God in Nature is inconceivable. This round world and all that dwell therein. The open sea calmly mirroring the sky or ruffled with tempests. The wondrous expanse of Heaven, fleecy with clouds, or blue beneath a torrid sun, or lit up with innumerable stars. Yon hills with all their forests. Yon laughing valleys with their lowing herds and bleating flocksThese are Your glorious works, Parent of good, almighty, You get Glory from every flickering blade of grass or frond of fern and every flitting insect and creeping worm mean Your praise! There is nothing but what glorifies You, from leviathan to a minnow. Yet all Nature put together fails to reveal all Your glorious attributes! The Divine faithfulness, justice and truth are scarcely manifest in Nature, though traces of them may be seenbut in the face of Jesus, who is the express Image of the Father, God is glorified to the fullest!

In the death of Christ, above all things, God is glorified, for there all the attributes of God are seen. There was the power which sustained Christ beneath His more than Herculean task. There is the love which surrendered the Darling of its bosom that He might die instead of traitors. There is the justice which would not, could not forgive sin without satisfaction. There is the Truth of God which had threatened to punish and did punishwhich had promised to give a Savior and did give Him. There is the faithfulness to the Covenant which kept that Covenant at such a dread expense. There is the wisdom which planned the marvelous way! O, salvation by a Substituteno, let me put it all togetherthe wholeness, the holiness of God! Yes, all His attributes are seen, each one equally magnified in the death of Jesus Christ. He is glorious and the Triune God is glorified in Him.

And now, Beloved, God is glorified in the death of Christ by the love of all those whom Jesus saves; by the sacred awe and filial fear of all whom Jesus brings to the Fathers feet; by the ardent, patient devotion of all who are consecrated in heart and feel the sacred flame of love to Christ setting their souls on fire! Up there in Heaven, where the white-robed never cease to singand here below where martyrs were burned for their love of God; where confessors defied all adversaries to spread abroad the Glory of His name; where humble Christians suffer in patience, or labor on with diligence, or walk in holinessthe Fathers name is glorified through the passion of the Christ of God!

We had many things to say, but time fails us and, therefore, we close with these three observations which we want to leave upon your minds. The first is this. Christs motive should be ours. When you ask a blessing from God, ask it that you may glorify God by it. Do you pine to have your health back again? Be sure that you want to spend it for Him. Do you desire temporal advancement? Desire it that you may promote His Glory. Do you even long for growth in Grace? Ask it only that you may glorify Him! If there is anything that you dare wish and pray for, put it soFather, bless Your child that Your child may, in return, bless You and serve You. Those are clean prayers which have such a motiveall others have the taint of self about them. God help you to do everything for His Gloryto speak for His Glory, to live for His Glory, to die for His Gloryand then you shall rise again and live forever for His Glory! Happy, happy is the man whose lot this shall be! Let this be the desire which masters you, even that which moved your Lord!

Next, Christs theology should be ours. What is that? Why, first that He is to be glorified and, secondly, that the Father is to be glorified! Error sometimes blows one way and sometimes another. In years gone by, the difficulty was to bring men to glorify the Lord Jesusthey would worship Godbut not the Christ of God. And so there came the great Arian fight and afterwards Socinian controversies, for they would not glorify Christ. Oh, you who have been saved by Him, I am not afraid of you on that point, but nowadays there appears to be, in some minds, a forgetfulness of the Father!

Christ is loved, for He died, but many seem to look upon the Father as having no share in the wondrous work of redemption! But, Beloved, they are one in our salvation! Father, Son and Spirit agree in one in our redemption and it would be fatal, indeed, for us to set one Person of the Divine Trinity above the other two! Let all men honor the Son even as they honor the Fatherand honor the Father even as they honor the Son! It would be traitorous to Christs inmost wish if we were to glorify the Son and fail to reverence and love the Father!

Lastly, let every Believer here see His security. Is it not a most wonderful guarantee of the safety of everyone for whom Christ died, that the Glory of Christ and the Glory of the Fatherand I may add the glory of the blessed Spiritare all equally concerned in the salvation of the believing soul? Dare I say it? It would be a blot upon the everlasting Glory if one believing soul were ever lost! Then were Gods Truth no longer sure; His faithfulness no longer firm; His love no more immutable! His power might be doubtedHis changeableness would be proven. But, Beloved, it cannot be! Christ will not lose a sheep of His flock, nor will the Comforter lose a spirit in which He has once began to indwell! You can rest in this!

Abide without doubt or fear in Christ, for the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but the Covenant of His love shall not be removed from you, says the Lord that has mercy on you. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, dear Hearers and these Divine privileges shall be yours! And as I prayed just now, so I pray yet again, that these things may belong to every soul in this house without exception, through faith in Christ Jesus, by the work of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Amen!

**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 17.** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK416, 412, 233.

The Colportage Society conducted by Mr. Spurgeon supports 82 men in needy districts and does a great work in selling Bibles and healthy literature. Owing to the depression of trade and the falling off of subscriptions, this branch of holy service is, at this moment, in a difficult position and will soon be in urgent need unless the Lord should move some of His stewards to help. It seems necessary to give this announcement so that friends may know that there is a channel for their gifts and a reason for bringing them forth. Mr. Spurgeon feels confident that by some means or other the present necessity for the Lords work will be graciously supplied and furnish fresh occasion for gratitude and increased faith.

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GENERAL AND YET PARTICULAR   
NO. 566

**DELIVERED ON SUNDAY MORNING, APRIL 24, 1864, BY THE REV. C, H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**You have given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. John 17:2.**

THIS was used by our Savior as an argument why the Father should glorify Him in His dread hour of conflict. Our Lord did as much as say, You have already given Me what I now ask. Therefore, since You have virtually bestowed it upon me in the Covenant, give it Me now in very deed. So the Believer, when he prays, asks for what is already his own. And when we come before the Lord in prayer this should encourage us much, that our heavenly Father has already given us all things in giving us His Son, so that we ask for what is virtually our own.

The text itself we will try to open up briefly. It contains two statementsfirst, that Christ, as a Mediator, has received from God universal authority over all flesh. And secondly, that the object of this is special and peculiar, that He may give eternal life to as many as the Father has given to Him. You have universal power, but you have within it a special purpose. We know that our Lord Jesus Christ has all power given to Him in Heaven and in earthAngels and men before Him fall and devils fear and fly. All things, whether animate or inanimate, confess the majesty of Him who is King of kings and Lord of lords.

Our text, however, mentions the most stubborn thing in all the world flesh. Jesus has power over all flesh. That willful, wicked, disobedient thing called flesh Christ knows how to govern. He has power over all men as fallen men, for such the term, flesh, describes. I understand, then, that Christ has power over all men, to pardon all whom He wills. Christ has this day as Mediator, power to convict of sin every living soul by His Spirit, if so He wills. And power to bring all men to the footstool of His Grace and to give them pardon if so it seems good in His sight. We do not believe that there is any exception to this ruleChrist has power over every man born of Adam, to give to him the Grace of conviction and the Grace of pardon, if so it should please Him to do.

He has power also to make those who are not convicted of sin and who are not pardoned, subservient to His purpose. He has power to restrain their evil passions from running to an excess of riot. He can use them as His drudges to effect His purposes even when they proudly rebel against Himso that though they boast themselves in their own free willthey shall really be working out His own eternal purpose. He has a bit often in the mouth of His fiercest enemy and a hook in the jaw of the bloodiest persecutor.

Over all flesh He has authority whether it is crowned with royalty or wrapped in rags! Whether it curses with profanity or bows down with reverent adoration. There is not a mortal man from the equator to the poles,

of any rank or any language, or bearing any hue upon his skin who is not subject to this universal mediatorial power of the Lord Jesus Christ. If I understand my text and Scriptures parallel with it, it was ordained in order to the salvation of the chosen, that the whole world of man should be taken from under the immediate rule of God as absolute God and placed under a new form of government of which the Mediator should be King and Head.

As the result of this gracious arrangement a fallen race is permitted to exista sinful world coming into contact with an absolute God must have been instantaneously doomed to Hell. Man, while yet a rebel, lives on in virtue of the mediatorial power of Jesus! He has stepped in between avenging Justice and the sinner and so the sinner is spared. I trace to Christs Atonement the continued life of the most obdurate. All the longsuffering mercy of God seems to me to flow through the channel of the Saviors authority over all flesh.

It is in virtue of this power that the Gospel is preached to all menAll power is given unto Me in Heaven and in earth. Go you, therefore, and teach all nations. Hence the command to believe receives its Divine sanction and those are condemned who believe not in His name. On account of this universal dispensation of mediatorship, an honest, gracious, and sincere invitation is given to whomever will, to drink of the Water of Life freely. It is, I say, on account of this universal mediatorial power of Christ that I can stand upon this platform and say in the broadest possible terms, that whoever believes on the Lord Jesus shall never perish, but have eternal life! And I can preach a Gospel which, in its proclamation, is as wide as the ruin and as extensive as the Fall.

But why all this? The text tells us that the object and design of all this was not universal, but specialthat the intention of God in thus putting all men under the power of Christ was not that all men might receive eternal life, but that He might give eternal life to as many as had been given to Him. So that in all this universal dealing there is the special and peculiar design that the chosen may receive lifethat the elect may be filled with spiritual life on earth and afterwards enter into the Glory life above.

God might doubtless have acted upon another plan and have given Christ power only over His elect if He had willed, that He might give eternal life to them. But it has not so pleased God. It has, on the contrary, pleased Him to put the whole race under the mediatorial sway of Jesus in order that He might give eternal life to those who were chosen out of the world. God might have commissioned His servants to go into the world and preach the Gospel to the chosen onlyHe might have told us to present Christ only to certain persons upon whom there should be a peculiar mark. It has not so pleased Him.

He bids us go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. His high decree and Divine intent being that those whom He has ordained unto eternal life shall, through believing, enter into the life which He has ordained for them. I do not know whether I have brought before you what I am certain is the full idea of the texta general power given to the Mediator over all fleshas the result of which a proclamation of mercy is universally published to men and a general declaration of salvation through faith presented to all creatures. But this always with a special, limited, definite designthat a chosen peopleseparated from before all worlds from the rest of mankind should obtain eternal life.

I have aimed in my ministry constantly to preach, as far as I can, the whole of the Gospel rather than a fragment of it. Therefore those Brethren who are sounder than the Bible abhor me as much as if I were an Arminian. And on the other side, the enemies of the Doctrines of Grace often represent me as an Ultra-Calvinist. I am rejoiced to receive the censure of both sides! I am not ambitious to be numbered in the roll of either party. I have never cultivated the acquaintance nor desired the approbation of those men who shut their eyes to Truths of God which they do not wish to see.

I never desired to be reputed so excessively Calvinistic as to neglect one part of Scripture in order to maintain another. If I am thought to be inconsistent with myself, I am very glad to be so, so long as I am not inconsistent with Holy Scripture. Sure I am that all the Truth of God is really consistent, but equally certain am I that it is not apparently so to our poor, finite minds. In nine cases out of ten he who is nervously anxious to be manifestly consistent with himself in his theological system, if he gains his end, is merely consistent with a fool!

He who is consistent with Scripture is consistent with perfect Wisdom. He who is consistent with himself is at best consistent with imperfection, folly and insignificance. To keep to Scripture, even though it should involve a charge of personal inconsistency, is to be faithful to God and mens souls. My text seems to me to present that double aspect which so many people either cannot or will not see.

Here is the great Atonement by which the Mediator has the whole world put under His dominion. But still here is a special object for this Atonementthe ingathering, or rather out-gatheringof a chosen and peculiar people unto eternal life.

I. Let us, this morning, meditate upon the principle of the text and our first remark shall be that THE DOCTRINE OF A GENERAL DISPLAY OF POWER FOR THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF A SPECIAL OBJECT IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ANALOGY OF NATURE. In the world around us we shall find the Creator accomplishing special purposes by a far wider display of power than the immediate object appears to require. Take, for instance, yonder plant. What is the main object for which a plant lives? Every botanist and every common observer will tell you that its object in living is that it may produce seed and perpetuate its like.

Gods object, then, in yonder plant is to produce a seed from it that its species may be perpetuated. How will He do it? Will He send an angel to watch over the seed and the seed alone? No, my Brethren, there shall be a watchful care over root, stem, cells, tissues, leaves and flowers. Although when winter comes, every leaf will drop off and rot in the ground and never be heard of again, yet those leaves have been the object of a superintending care, most marvelous and wise. Though the real object of it all has been the seed alone, yet stem and leaf and cell have all been watched

over.

Just so, I think, it is in Gods dealings with His elect. He is looking to them as to the seed and substance of mankind, but those graceless ones who will perish forever like fading leaves have been the object of His tender care. If you tell me that the leaves were not absolutely necessary to the seed, I will give you another illustration still more clear. You are not to think that when God is about to accomplish a purpose He studies just how much will do it and then spends no more power than a pinching economy finds needful.

We are wanting rain. Our gardens and fields are crying out for showers. Well, our gracious God will send it to us very soon. But will He just allot a shower to that piece of ground which requires itwill He not rather send a wide range of rain? I have sometimes wondered at this, that when the shower falls it must be Gods intention to bless the field and yet He scatters the liquid blessing upon the salt and briny sea where no plants can be nourished and where it seems to be a waste to pour the cooling drops. You shall find it rain quite as heavily upon the Atlantic as upon the thirsty earth which is opening its mouth for the moisture.

Why is this? Because it is the rule of God when He is accomplishing a purpose to deal after a general fashion though still the object is specific. Here is this air about us. Why is it made up of oxygen, hydrogen and nitrogen and so on? Is it not that plants and animals may live upon it? Surely this is the Creators drift in making such a compound. But suppose you transfer yourself in imagination to the polar regions where life cannot exist, or to spots in the great desert of Sahara where even the vulture with swift wing has never flown. You will find the air composed of precisely the same particles!

Why is this? There is no animal to breathe it, no plant to bloom in it. Why then the same? Simply because God is not like finite manHe has not to stint Himself to such an expenditure as shall just accomplish His own purposeHe acts like a God and in the infinity of His Nature He gives more than is absolutely necessary for the accomplishment of His purpose. Think again, now, of nature in another aspect. We are proud enough to think that God made this world for the comfort of man and with an eye to human convenience. Suppose we grant that principle for a moment.

Here is a violet peeping out among the green leaves. Why has it that delicious perfume making glad the spring? Why, you tell me it is to gratify man. Very likely, very likely. But here are millions upon millions of violets which are never smelt by anybody which grow among the nettles at the back of the Church, or away in the woods where not even a child has wandered, or at a distance from the abodes of men where they are never seen or heard of, for

*Full many a flower is doomed to blush unseen, And waste its fragrance on the desert air.*

Why is everything so painted by the sun? Why do crystals sparkle when the sunbeams fall upon them? How is it you see the many lines of a rainbow when the sun is shining on a crystal?

Why it must be to gratify the eye. God would have this world a place of beauty and a joy forever! But crystals sparkle in the polar regions where there is not even a bear to look upon them! In that inhospitable region where life goes out and where we believe no creature having life could possibly exist, the sun still shines and still the crystal flashes back to Him the colors of the iris. Why is this? Why is this? I cannot tell you, except that I perceive that God gives to the sun a power over all things that He may give pleasure to the eye.

What multitudes of landscapes were never gazed upon by the artists eye, yet there they are, sleeping in their beauty beneath the eyes of God. How the birds are singing this morning, how they are pouring forth from their throats sweet melodious strains and yet they are singing quite as well in the deep forest glade where no man can ever hear them as in our gardens and walks. Why is this? Do we not think that the birds sing for our joy and that the landscape is spread out for mans mental delight?

It certainly is so, and yet there are landscapes and birds where there are no men to see and ears to hear. So I think I might continue all the morning giving you analogies from Nature in which God, in the accomplishment of a specific purpose adopts a general mode of action.

II. I will take another view of the question. THIS PRINCIPLE IS SEEN IN PROVIDENCE. All of you believe in a general Providence. You believe that God superintends all the affairs of the universe so that there is not a grain of dust blowing in the street today which has not its orbit ordained and fixed as much as the planets in the sky. You believe that God overrules the motions of the rush that waves by the river as much as he does the policy of kings and emperors. Do not you believe in a special Providence, too?

I do, and I believe you do. You believe that God is watching specially over His own people and that all things work together for good to them who love God, to them who are called according to His purpose. And did it ever strike you that there was any inconsistency in believing in a general and a special Providence? I do not suppose it ever didI know it never did me. I know I feel quite easy in believing the two things and I should have been very uneasy in not being able to believe both. I do not see why the Christian may not transfer the idea and believe that there is a general influence for good flowing from the mediatorial sacrifice of Christ and yet its special design and definite object is the giving of eternal life to as many as the Father gave Him.

We will take one or two instances in Providence. There is Jonah going to Tarshish. He has betrayed his Master and has fled from Nineveh. The Lord will have him back. He intends to bring him back in a strange conveyanceHe has prepared a great fish to swallow him! How is Jonah to be got out of the ship? The storm must come and when the storm comes what does it do? Does it shake Jonah? Does it expose Jonahs life to danger? It does, but it also shakes the whole ship and all who are in the ship are afraid that they shall suffer shipwreck. And what is more, if there were a thousand ships upon the sea that day they felt the storm and yet Gods special object was to have Jonah thrown into the seathough all the ships upon the sea must be tossed with the tempest, still there is the special design.

Take another thing. It is ordained according to prophecy that Christ must be born at Bethlehem. Then Mary His mother, who is great with child, must be brought to Bethlehem. How shall it be done? Why, in order to fetch Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem, every man and woman in Judea must go to the place of their pedigree and still, though Gods express design is to bring Mary there that Jesus may be born, He uses a general method in order to accomplish it and every other Jewish man and woman must go to the place of their pedigree!

Here, again, is a particular object accomplished by general means. I might continue with many, many other instances, but indeed, you have only to open your eyes and see. My Brethren, if you pray tomorrow for God to send a favorable wind to waft the missionary-ship to its haven, the same wind will waft a merchantman, or a pirate, too, if they are going the same way. It may be that you pray that rain may come to extinguish a fire, and perhaps a shower comes, but you do not expect it to fall just where the fire is, but also for miles around. If you know some poor man living in Lancashire and you pray for him, that God would deliver him from povertyif your prayer is heard, it may very likely be by quickening the trade of the whole country and conferring a blessing on the people of the whole neighborhood!

In fact, you know yourselves if you are praying to God to bless your children, it is not possible that your children should be blessed without the blessing coming down upon others, because Gods blessing any one man is the means indirectly of blessing other people. You cannot have a godly family down a court without the whole court being the better for it. You cannot have one Christian man favored by his God without his household having some portion of the favor. God sends the favor only to His servantsthat is the special intentionbut still there comes with that a wider blessing.

While thinking over this matter I could only compare it to the moon when surrounded with a halo. The interior ring was the moons own self, but round about it was a halo of brightness. Such is Gods dealing with His people. There is the central substance of eternal, immutable lovebut round about it there is a Divine haloit encompasses all the creatures of God and makes them, in some measure, to participate in the light of the great central love, which belongs peculiarly to His saints.

III. Let us for one moment show that this has been ILLUSTRATED BY MIRACLES. Joshua is fighting with the Canaanites. There has been a long battle, but he desires to see his enemy exterminated and boldly turning round he cries to the sun, Stand still upon Gibeon. And you, moon, in the valley of Ajalon. What did the sun and moon stand still for? Why to help Joshua against the Canaanites! But do you not think all the people everywhere had a longer day as the result? Did not every man who looked up wonder how it was that the sun stood still? There was a poor man with a hard task and he was afraid he should not finish it before the sun went down. How glad was he to find an extra hour added to the day!

He knew nothing about the special purpose and yet there was a special purpose in it all. Every man and woman on that side of the hemisphere enjoyed a length of light unusual for that time and yet there was no design of blessing them in Joshuas prayer. They were blessed incidentally. The real object was that the children of Israel might fight the battle and complete it. Take another miracleSennacherib has come against Jerusalemhe is about to swallow up Hezekiah and all the little kingdom of Judah. Hezekiah takes Rabshakehs letter and lays it before the Lord. As the result of this, the angel of the Lord went through the camp of Sennacherib and slew his mighty men and the power of Assyria was broken.

What was the effect of it? There was the little straggling kingdom of Babylon, then contending for existence with Assyria. That kingdom was spared and became afterwards the destroyer of Assyria. And you read that Berodachbaladan, the king, sent messengers to Hezekiah to thank him for what was done. You see Babylon gets good out of the destruction of Sennacherib, but was this the main design? Certainly not. The grand object of God in destroying Sennacherib was to deliver Hezekiah and His people and yet the whole earth rejoices and has rest when the great hammer of the Lord falls on Assyria and its empire is broken and destroyed. It was a blessing to all the East when the power of the despot was broken that nightbut the object of it was for Israel and for Israel, alone.

Come to the days of Christ and observe another miraclethere is a ship tossed within the tempest. Her mast is ready to go over the side. Her timbers crackshe will be swamped and go down. No, she will notfor there sleeps with His head upon the helm, the Master of the tempest, the Lord High Admiral of the sea, King Jesus! And when He has been awakened He stands up and rebukes the winds and waves and instantly there is a great calm. Why did He make the calm? For the preservation of His disciples and His own ship. But did the calm end there and give no blessing to others? We are informed that there were with Him many other little ships and so they all enjoyed the calm, too. The direct and definite intention was to make His disciples at peace and in safety. But the effect of it did not end with the disciples, but every ship which was out upon the sea of Nazareth that night enjoyed the calm.

One more instance and I will not multiply them, lest I fatigue you. Paul and Silas are in prisonGods object is to terrify the jailer and to bring out of prison His two servants, Paul and Silas. What does it say?The foundations of the prison were shaken and Paul and Silas had their bands loosed? No, Brethren. And every mans bands were loosed. Was it Gods object to bring every man out of prison? No one dreams of such a thing! This was merely a concurrent benefit which went with Gods special object in dealing with His poor persecuted followers, Paul and Silas.

So I believe that as it was in these miracles, so it is in that grander miracle, the great work of Grace. Jesus Christ comes into the world as a Propitiation for our sins and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world. And yet it is true He loved His Church and gave Himself for it. He laid down His life for His sheep and for His people did He die and not for the world, in one sense, and yet in that other sense which I have tried to bring out, He was a Propitiation for the sins of the whole world.

IV. Let us now LOOK AT FACTS. How do we really find the Gospel operate? I think I see this island of Great Britain covered with forests with men living in them having their naked bodies painted, dwelling in caves, feeding upon herbs and acorns. I think I see a simple-minded mansome

think it was Paullanding upon the shore and coming forward, trying to teach these savages the way of salvation. Oh, what a prolific hour was that when first the Gospel was preached in Britain! What has been the effect of it?

Brethren, let us answer another question firstWhat was the immediate design of God in sending the Gospel to Great Britain? My answer is to save as many as He had ordained to eternal life. That was His great object. But what has been the effect of it? I trace the liberty, the happiness and the prosperity of our country throughout these many centuries, to the prevalence of the Gospel in it. And though I believe Gods design in sending the GospelI mean the central designwas that He might separate unto Himself His own chosen people, yet in connection with the Gospel, innumerable and incalculable blessings have come to every Englishman.

And there does not live a man who claims the name of Briton who is not under solemn obligation to the preaching of the Gospel for ten thousand benefits. Christ has, indeed, in England, seemed to have power over all Englishmen, that He might give eternal life to as many as the Father gave Him. Look at the Reformation. What was Gods object in raising up Luther and Calvin and Zwingle to work the Reformation? Why, for this grand purposethat Christ might see of the travail of His soul and that His chosen might believe in Him. That was the purpose of the Reformation! But what did the Reformation accomplish?

Not only this, but a thousand things besides, for it was to the Reformation that arts and sciences owed their progress. The human mind was liberated and expanded. And millions of people who never obtained eternal life through Jesus Christ, nevertheless, through the glorious Reformation obtained their liberty and ten thousand other mercies beyond all price. This is a matter of fact. And if you take the Gospel to the South Seas, if you preach it to the benighted people there, you will find that it will subdue all flesh to its Divine power. But still the object is kept in viewthat as many as God gave to Christ might have eternal life.

Let us observe one self-evident truth. It is a remarkable fact that where the Gospel is not preached in its general aspect, God does not seem to work out His special object to any large extent. I mean to say that if you will go into any Chapel in London and you find a minister there who preaches nothing whatever of the Word of God, except that one part of it which is most blessedly and sweetly trueGods electing loveif you will listen to that man and hear him preach from the first of January to the end of December upon that one topicthe specialty and peculiarity of Divine Graceyou need not go into the vestry to ask the deacons if they have many conversions.

I am certain you will find there are few, indeed, and those mostly among persons who were convicted of sin and aroused elsewhere, and who obtain liberty under the gracious doctrine. But the absolute conversion of many is not a thing to be expected, and certainly not a thing found where the preacher is so restrained by his sense of electing love as to be unable to boldly preach the rest of the Gospel and say, Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved. You have only to try it, dear Friendsput your feet into the Chinese shoes and prevent their growing to the proper size, in order to keep them in ecclesiastical comelinessand you will soon find your walk of usefulness very much restricted.

Hold on to the point of being consistent! Make that the main thing banish those texts which speak about anything generalnever open your mouth with a universal invitation! Make it out that the Bible has not a word in it directed to men as men, but only to the chosen and I will undertake that unless there is an unprecedented act of Gods Sovereignty, you shall preach from one end of the year to the other and you shall not be troubled at the number of the elect people. There will be very few who will ever come forward.

But I know also, (and he who will look candidly will see it), that the most effective ministry is that one which is not ashamed of the Doctrines of Grace! The ministry which does not stutter or stammer in talking about election! Does not trim or cut the Divine Sovereignty of God, but which is equally clear upon the other point that God has declared His own solemn oath, I will not the death of a sinner, but had rather that he should turn unto Me and live. A ministry which holds Sovereignty but holds mans responsibility, too, which dares to talk about Gods special object with bold voice and yet insists upon it that He has proclaimed to every creature under Heaven this gracious proclamation, Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved.

Well, now, these are facts and facts which are not to be disputed, either. We hear people sometimes sneer and say, Ah, there are many conversions, but are they genuine? Sir, they are genuine! For we will boast this much that if there are not genuine conversions found in this Church, for instance, there are no conversions genuine under Heaven. For when I see harlots made chaste and remaining honorable women year after year. When I know drunkards who forswear the cup and who labor with their might for the reclaiming of others. When I look upon those who were once singing the song of the lascivious on the ale-bench who now for years mark you, not monthsfor years persevere in holiness, I make this my glory!

If any can find better conversions under Heaven let them find them! I am satisfied that they are such converts as Apostolic times added to the Churchsuch as honor God in their lives and glorify Christ daily by their walk and conversation. I believe you shall find most conversions where neither Truth of God is held back, but where, as in the text, the two are taught. You have given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him.

V. OUR PRINCIPLE EXPLAINS MANY SCRIPTURES and this goes very much in its favor. I like to read my Bible so as never to have to blink when I approach a text. I like to have a theology which enables me to read it right through from beginning to end and to say, I am as pleased with that text as I am with the other. You know, Brothers and Sisters, you must be conscious of it, that there are many texts of Scripture which look wonderfully like universal redemption. Wonderfully like it and if they do not intend some sort of generality, they certainly speak in a very singular manner.

Such a text as this, He is the Propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world. Who gave Himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time. I might mention more of thesebut if you get with an Arminian brother he will have them all at his fingertips, so you will spare me the trouble. These people are always dwelling upon these, and think they have quite upset the doctrine of particular redemption though that is as plain in Scripture as the nose upon a mans face! We know Scripture says, He has laid down His life for the sheep. He has redeemed us from among men. Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it. And you know that passageHusbands love your wives even as Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself for it.

How did He love the Church? He loved the Church with a special love, far above that which He gives to others, or else according to that metaphor a husband ought to love his wife, and love every other woman just as much! That is the natural inference of that text. But you clearly see there must have been a special love intended in the husband towards the wife and so there must be a special love in Christ. He loved the Church and gave Himself for it.

Now do you not think, Brethren, as there are two sets of texts in the Bible, the one of which very clearly speaks about the infinite value of the Atonement and another which very evidently speaks about the intention of that Atonement being for the chosen and for the chosen only, that the best way is to believe them both and to say, Yes, I see itas the result of Christs death all men are put under the system of mediatorial Grace, so that Christ has power over them. But the object of His doing this is not that He may save all of them, but that He may save out of these all which He now has in His own handsthose whom the Father has given Him?

The shepherd trusts me with all his sheep in order that I may sever from them twenty which he has marked. A father tells me to go into the midst of his family, his whole family, in order that I may take out of it one of his sons to be educated. So God gives to Christ all flesh, says the text, but still always with this definite and distinct purposethat He may give eternal life to those whom He has given to Him.

VI. Let us go on in the sixth place to say briefly that this seems quite CONSISTENT WITH THE NATURE OF GOD. We too often measure God after a human standard and therefore make mistakes. Remember that God has such an abundance of mercy and Grace and power, that He never has to calculate how much will be necessary for the accomplishment of His purpose. He does largely and literally like one who cannot but act in an infinitely gracious manner. If you have some chickens and you wish to feed them, you will only throw down as much barley as the fowls will want, but you do not think of feeding all the sparrows of the neighborhood!

It would be a very good thing if you could for they all need food. But you throw down as much as will accomplish your purpose. Now our God never has to stint Himself in this way, but with large handfuls He feeds the special objects of His care and the ravens and kites besides. God, again, exhibits a kingly character in His great methods of general love. At the coronation of the old kings, the fountains in Cheapside ran with red wine. Now you will say, What a waste! The gutters ran down on both sides with wine. It was not necessary, was it? The kings object was that his subjects might have wine.

Well, if that were his only object that might have been accomplished by opening the bottles one by one and stopping when there was just enough to satisfy their thirst. Why did it run down the streets? Was it a waste? Not at all, it exhibited the royal glory. The king was glad to give the people wine to drink, but he wanted also to show himself a king and as nobody but a king could make gutters run with wine, therefore he did it to illustrate his own magnificence. And our God, when He is about to exhibit mercy, does not say, So much will just accomplish My purpose and save My electthat is His main object. But behold, He makes the rivers run with wine and the floods with milk, so there is enough and to spare and yet no waste, because His grander object is His own Glory, and He is glorified even by that love which does not effectually save.

When Napoleon was at war, his favorite tactics were, we are told, always to bring crushing battalions to bear upon some one point to carry everything before him. That, my dear Friends, is the mode of procedure in which you and I have to act. If we have to accomplish a purpose, we must concentrate the whole of our might upon that one point. But suppose one greater than Napoleon, or a Napoleon with ten times ten thousand times more troops than he had? He would not need to concentrate his battalions upon one point, but simply cry to all his hosts, Advance! and they would go crushing down his foes at every point of the line.

So our God cares for the salvation of His elect. But that is not the only thing He cares aboutHis own Glory is higher than this. His Glory is the whole of the line and our God, while He effectually saves those whom He has chosen, has no need to bring all His power upon one point. He has abundance to spare after He has done all that we know of. He can, while He is blessing His people, also bless the entire universe according to His own will. And I doubt not that so He does and that Heaven and earth are full of the majesty of His Glory, because Heaven and earth, though they may not alike participate in the fullness of Divine complacency, are full of the beams of His love.

VII. I have to conclude by saying that this principle is a MODEL FOR OUR CONDUCT. I was talking the other day with a Brother. He said he did not think the conversion of the world was the legitimate object of missionary enterprise, because all that Christ intended by the Gospel was the gathering out of a people. Well now, it seems to me that my dear friend was quite right and quite wrong. As to Gods purpose in the sending of the Gospel to the world he was quite right, it is the gathering out of a people.

But as to my work he was quite wrong, for the work of Gods minister is not the gathering out of a people. Christ surely knows what His own disciple is to do. Just hear. Go you and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. That is our work. He did not say, Go you and sever out of all nations a people to be taught and to be baptized. No! Christs marching orders to His people are in these words, Preach the Gospel to every creature. What will be the result of this universal proclamation?   
The chosen will be saved. Then, Lord, why not send me to Your chosen? Why send me to all nations? What business have you to question your Masters will? Is not this the very way in which I have chosen, that My elect shall be brought, by the preaching of the Gospel to all nations? I look as the result of missionary enterprise, not for the worlds conversionI do not expect itI believe that God will gather out of all people His chosen, and that Christ will come and when He comes, then shall He reign from the river even to the ends of the earth. But all the missionary societies put together will never convert the world, nor do I believe they will do very much towards it unless they very soon alter their tactics.

We shall have to try something very different from all the societies which have ever been in operation before we see any great results. I am waiting for a good time to come. Till then we must use old vessels till we get better ones, but better ones will be found. My own impression is that the world will never be converted by missionary agencies, but that is not your businessI am not to make Gods decrees the rule of my walk. I am to make Gods revealed will my rule of action. Christ tells me to, Preach the Gospel to every creature, and if I were absolutely certain there was not one elect man upon earth, I would obey and preach the Gospel for all thatbecause if there were not a single soul saved by it, we are unto God a sweet-smelling savor.

So then, I say to you individually, talk about Christ everywhere preach Jesus Christ to every creature. Say to every man and woman you meet, There is life in a look at the Crucified One. Tell men that, Whoever comes unto Him, He will in no wise cast out, and let this be always your comfort, that all that the Father gives to Him shall come to Him! That Jesus shall see His seed. That of all that the Father has given Him He will lose none, but will present them all at His right hand at last. Fly back to Gods electing love and the decrees of God as the pillow of your rest.

But take the general command and the universal power of Christ over all flesh as the sword with which you fight and the staff upon which you lean. It is for this end that I ask you, dear Friends, to contribute as you shall see fit, to the spreading of the Gospel in foreign lands by the Missionary Society. I do not believe it is a perfect organizationI believe it is full of faults. I believe, however, it is the only way in which we can send the Gospel to the heathen just now.

We will have a better plan by-and-by, I hope, but meanwhileas this is the only onelet us use it with vigor, for, after all, it is not the instrumentality, but God. And if I have to look upon this as an ox-goadan unfit tool to strike the Philistines, yet as I have not a better I will use it till a better shall be found! Meanwhile let us pray the Lord to speed His own cause and gather out His chosen by His Grace. Amen.

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ETERNAL LIFE!   
NO. 2396

**INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS DAY, JANUARY 20, 1895, DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNAOLE, NEWINOTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 6, 1887.

**This is life eternal, that they might know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent.   
John 17:3.**

**We are in Him that is true, even in His Son, Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life. Little children, keep yourselves from idols. 1 John 5:20, 21.**

OUR subject this morning [Sermon #1946, Volume 33 Eternal Life within Present GraspRead/download entire sermon at http://www.spurgeongems.org . ] was concerning laying hold on eternal life, and I thought that I would say a little more, tonight, about eternal life. Many people, when they hear or read that expression, suppose that it means Heaven. It does mean that, but it means much more. Eternal life commences hereit begins in the Believer as soon as he is born again. Then he receives into him that same life which he will have throughout eternity! Eternal life is not a thing of changes. The river widens and deepens, as I showed you this morning, but it is always the same river of the Water of Lifeit always flows from the same Sourceit is always constituted in the same manner. The life of the new-born Christian who, only a few minutes ago began to pray, is precisely the same life which is to be found in yonder bright spirits that have now been thousands of years in perfection at the right hand of God praising His name! Death does not transport Believers into a new lifeit simply rids us of certain impediments that hamper our true life in its upward flow. The life of the Christian, here, is the triumphant life that is to be enjoyed hereafter! It is one and the same life so far as its real nature is concerned.

It was the great end of the life, death and work of Christ to give this eternal life to all Believers. He came into the world on purpose, that they should forever live through Him. He has not accomplished His design in you, my Hearer, unless He has made you live unto God. There is a Saviorthat you knowbut He is not your Savior unless He has infused into you a life infinitely superior to that which was born in you at the first. You must be born again. And by that new birth you must receive a higher and more Divine life than that which throbs in your bosom by nature. Judge for yourself whether Christ has come into the world to any purpose that affects you and especially judge whether you have received eternal life at His hands. Remember how it is written, As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. The ever-living God is not the Father of dead souls, but He is the Father of those whom He has quickenedand the power to become sons of God lies, in a great measure, in the life which is Divinely imparted to all who receive Christ and believe on His name.

It is in the power of Christ to give this eternal life. In the verse preceding our first text, the Lord Jesus, addressing His Father, says of Himself, You have given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. The Father has life in Himself and He quickens all who liveand even so, the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, has life in Himselfand this life He imparts to all who believe in Him. It is in His power to bestow that life upon every soul that trusts Him and He delights in exercising His Divine prerogative.

Our Lord Jesus bestows this eternal life only upon His elect. Speaking to His Father, in the verse I quoted just now, He says of Himself, You have given Him power over all flesh that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. God has an elect people. So long as the Bible endures, there is no way of getting that doctrine out of it unless men willfully pervert its plainest teaching. From before the foundation of the world the Lord chose a people unto Himself, according to the Sovereign purpose of His own will, even as He says, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

These people whom God has chosen are made known by their being quickened, in due time, into a higher and superior life than that of the flesh. Till then they are like the rest of mankinddead as the dry bones of Ezekiels Valley of Visionbut the Divine breath of the Eternal Spirit blows upon them and they are made to live and stand upon their feet, an exceedingly great army! By this test can all of you know whether you are the subjects upon whom Gods Grace has worked. Is there a new life within your soul? Have you been raised from death unto life? Have you been made to feel new emotions, new desires, new longings, new pains and new joys? For, if you have, then are you the people of God! But if not, I pray that in you, also, Divine Grace may yet be thus magnified.

The question for us now to consider is in what does this eternal life consist? I do not propose to answer the question as it might be answered, in various ways, but only according to the first of our two texts This is life eternal, that they might know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent.

I. First, then, ETERNAL LIFE CONSISTS IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE ONLY TRUE GOD.   
Let us think for a little while upon the lack of this knowledge. The loss of this knowledge followed upon the Fall. As long as man knew his God, trusted his God and obeyed his God, he was happy enough. But man must know the fallen spirit and, once making acquaintance with him, man must know the knowledge of good and evil. And, contrary to the Lords command, he must take of the forbidden fruit and eat. So he lost the knowledge of God and, with that loss, he lost everything! The highest privilege of manhood is to be acquainted with Godand when our first father turned his back upon God and began to unlearn whatever he had known of his Creator and to forget all that had been revealed concerning his Lord, then came the Falland it was a fall, indeed!   
Out of this lack of knowledge of God grew all manner of idolatries. Man must have a Godhe cannot be happy without one. There are some who struggle hard before they yield, but, as surely as a dog must have a master, so surely man must have a God! There is a great superior Being, our Creator, Preserver and Judge, whom we must have as our Redeemer, or else we are utterly undone. Without God, our nature is disabled and dividedits best part has run awayit becomes dead, in fact, when it becomes separated from God. It was the lack of knowledge of the only true God that led men to bow down before blocks of wood and stone, to worship the sun, moon and starsand to set up all manner of visible objects and to say of themThese are our gods. Oh, to what terrible mischief, to what mental and spiritual death, the lack of the knowledge of God has led the sons of men!   
Nor is this all that the lack of the knowledge of the true God has produced in us. It has spoiled the best aspirations of the noblest men such as Plato and Socrates. Blindly feeling after God, yet without truly knowing Him, what could they do? They could rise to no great heightthey could accomplish but little. Men such as they reared an altar and inscribed thereon, To the unknown god. But what kind of prayer is that which is offered to a god whom we do not know? What comfort can come out of an unknown god? What peace, what rest, what joy can come from a being after whom we grope in the dark, but whom we do not know? Not to know the only true God is deathdeath even to the noblest spirits among us! But it is a much more terrible death to those who, knowing nothing of God, seek that which will please self, indulge their vile lusts and follow their unbridled passions! What is all that, indeed, but the result of the fact that, not knowing God, they are seeking to submit themselves to some other lord? Man must have a master! He is like a horse that must have a rider! He is so constituted that unless he yields himself to a power superior to himself, he grovels and sinks down yet more and more until his condition is little better than that of the beasts that perish! Indeed, in some respects, he is worse off than they are.   
I can scarcely picture what manhood would have been if we had never fallen. The chief joy, I think, would have been that each one among us would have had the only true God as ours. We should have been born into the world, whatever our circumstances, under the patronage of God! We would have gone forth to our labor, sweetly singing in the companionship of God. We would have retired to our rest at nightsupposing that things had been as they are nowand we would have fallen asleep as in the embraces of our God, or on our Fathers breast. Days would have had a brightness about them superior to any the sun can yield, and nights would have had nothing for us to dread even in their densest darkness, for the Lord would still have been there! As a child is happy and knows no care nor need while a good father provides for him everything he needs, such would man have been. Oh, men are miserable who have not known their God! Unhappy men! Well may Scripture speak of them as dead, for it is death to be without the knowledge of God!   
But, Brothers and Sisters, what is this knowledge of God which is eternal life? Let us talk a little about the meaning of this knowledge. It is not eternal life to know that there is a God! A great many people know as much as that and still remain dead. Those who know not that there is a God are dead in the dark, but those who know that there is a God and yet do not trust Him, are dead in the light! That condition is, perhaps, the worse of the two. At any rate, it involves a greater responsibility. Yet, to know that there is a God is not the same thing as knowing God. I may know that there is a Queen of England, but I may not know her. I know that there are many persons in the world whom I do not know and it is a sad thing for anyone to know that there is a God and yet not truly to know God.   
To explain what is meant by knowing God, I must say, first, that it is to know Him as God, that is to say, to know Him as God to us. I have already told you that everybody has something that is god to him something that is superior to himself and which rules himsomething to which he looks up to and which he worships. Now, the great invisible Jehovah, the one God that made Heaven and earth, in whose hands our breath is, who has revealed Himself in the Trinity of His Divine Persons, Father, Son and Holy Spiritthe God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacobthe God of the whole earth, must be God to us! That means that we reverence Him, that we bow before Him as worshippers, that we submit ourselves to His Law, that we seek to do His pleasure. No man really knows God who does not know Him as God, and does not accept Him as His Godand to accept God as your God is eternal life! This is how eternal life becomes yours! And if you have come to that point, you have eternal life.   
Still, that statement does not fully explain what it is to know God. It is to be on terms of personal acquaintance with Him. The Lord is not to be seen, neither can His footsteps be heard, but to know God is to be conscious of His Presence by an inward sense which does both see and hear. It is to feel that He is everywhereon the land or on the sea and, knowing that He is there, to rejoice in being with Him! In fact, it is to find great delight in this God who is not far from any of us. It is to be (let me put it very plainly) on speaking terms with Him! It is to be so reconciled to Him that you have no dread of Him, no bondage and fear when you think of Him.   
You then regard God as your best Friend whom you love and, in whom you delight, to whom you talk as naturally as you talk to friend or father, into whose bosom you pour your griefs, into whose heart you tell your joys. God is nearer than your most familiar friend, nearer to you than eyes and ears, nearer to you than your own body, for He gets within your soul, which your body can never do! If you really know, experimentally, what I am talking about, you have eternal life. If this is so, that you know the only true God, distinctly recognizing His Presence, speaking with Him and rejoicing in Him and, if, above all, you are striving to be like Heif His Spirit in you is photographing the image of God upon your nature so that the old image, which He gave to Adam, but which was effaced by sin, is being reproduced in you by the Holy Spiritthen you know the only true God and this, dear Friends, is eternal life!   
Now, having shown you what the lack of this knowledge produces and the meaning of this knowledge, let me briefly speak of the connection between the knowledge of God and eternal life.   
A man without God is a living man, of course, for he works, he eats, he drinks. Yes, but he has missed the only true life. He has missed a secret happiness which is the very essence of life and, without which life is really death. You do not know it, dear Hearer, if you have never believed in Christ! And I do not expect you to believe what I say, but let me tell you that there is a something that makes life worth living when you once come to know God. There is a secret blissI cannot call it anything less than bliss! There is a little Heaven, a compendious, compressed, essential Heaven which God drops into that soul that lives with Him, so that we know that which makes us leap for joy and makes us bless God that we were ever created! If I had no God, I could say, Cursed was the day in which it was said to my mother that a man-child was born into the world. But now I thank God for my existence! Sometimes, when in great pain and anguish, yet having God with me, I have felt inclined not to curse the day of my birth, but to rejoice that I was ever born, even if I had to live a life of perpetual pain, seeing that I have a God who is, indeed, my own!

To have a God also means that you have a grand objective in life. Look at many of you, how you work hard from morning to night just to provide enough to keep body and soul together. If you have not a God, you are wretched creatures, indeed! But the slave who tugs at the oar of the galley and receives no pay but the cruel lash, is a happy and blessed man if God is with him! Many and many a Huguenot prisoner, condemned for life to the galleys because of his faith, has been happier than the king upon his throne who thrust him there! With God, all conditions of life become life that is life, indeedbut without Him, there is nothing to live for! Here is a poor fellow who lives till he has accumulated millionsit must be all the harder to die and leave so much, must it not? What is the good of it? To get a paragraph in the Illustrated London News saying that So-and-So died worth so much? Oh, the misery of having existed for so small a result! But when you have God, you have something to live for, something that makes every little thing sublime and turns the most common actions of daily life into a holy exercise of a royal priesthood unto the Most High!   
The man who has God also has the explanation of a great many things which puzzle other people and he has something better, still, for he has his God to fall back upon when he cannot explain anything. I like, sometimes, to have to pull up against a huge granite rock and feel, I never shall see through that rock and I shall never see my way through that difficulty. Well, I do not need to see my way through it! I do not need a tunnel from here to New Zealanddo you? I know that I cannot go through the very heart of the earth and I have no wish to do so. I am very glad to know that I cannot, by a stamp of my foot, force my way through to the other side of the globeit would be a poor globe if I could! I would not worship a god that I could fully understand. I do not know how I would feel devout over a faith which I perfectly comprehended. If I could put my religion into my pocket, like a box of lozenges, I should soon suck it all away, but I like something that is grander than my loftiest thought, more sublime than my noblest conceptions, and which tops me altogether! And I find it a blessed thing in life, when troubled with all these difficult problems of our teeming population and ever-present distress, to fall back upon this factThere is a God who will overrule it all and, from the seeming evil, will produce a goodand from that good something better, to His own praise and glory!   
A man with Godyou may strip him, but he is clothed in the Light of God. A man with Godyou may shut him up in prison, but he is perfectly at liberty, for his spirit soars into the immensities! A man with Godhe may be afflicted with a hundred diseases at once, but he has the best of all health, even the sanity of his soul! A man with God has a window to his rooma man without God goes round, and round, and round, and looks, but does not see anything at all! Sometimes he thinks, I wish that I could see something, but there is nothing to be seen. To those who are without God, the future is all a blankthey call themselves agnosticsthat is, men who do not know anything. But you who have God look for eternal life in His Presence. If men talk to you of joy, you say, Oh, yes, there must be joy to one who is at peace with God. It cannot be that any man who loves God and is reconciled to Him, should be perpetually unhappy! That cannot be, so that, in knowing God, there springs up in the mans heart a hope, no, an assurance that it must be well with his soul and that, though Heaven and earth should pass away, Gods Word can never pass away and, therefore, the safety of the man who clings to that Word must be secure! Yes, to know the only true God is to get where life is life, to get into eternal lifenot mere existence, but into that which is worthy to be called life, indeed!   
II. Now, dear Brothers and Sisters, in the second place, notice that ETERNAL LIFE ALSO CONSISTS IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST, WHOM GOD HAS SENTThis is life eternal, that they might know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent.   
Our second text shows that the first one by no means implies that Jesus Christ is not God, for it expressly declares, concerning Jesus Christ, This is the true God, and eternal life. This is the teaching of both passages. It would not be eternal life to know God apart from Christ. God the Father, apart from Jesus Christ, is just an Almighty Being infinitely just, whose Laws I have violateda Being infinitely loving, who would bless me, but who cannot do so while I violate His Lawsa God full of tremendous power and unerring wisdom who would exercise all these for me but that I, having broken His Law, the penalties of that Law are inevitable, and cannot be reversed! It was wise and just on Gods part to append a penalty to sinnothing could be crueler than to allow men to sin without being punished for it! It would be abhorrent to a God of Love as much as to a God of Justice if sin could be made a trifle and there were no punishment attached to it. The first knowledge you and I ever get of God, when we come to know Him, is as One who is infinitely loving, but who, nevertheless, no, who, for that very reason, is infinitely Just and must punish sin.   
No one knows the true God in the real sense of knowledge except through Jesus Christ, for no man comes unto the Father but by the Son. But even if he could know God, in a measure, apart from the Revelation of Him in Christ Jesus, it would be a knowledge of terror that would make him flee away and avoid God! It would not be life to our souls to know God apart from His Son, Jesus Christ! We must know the Christ whom He has sent or our knowledge does not bring eternal life to us. But, Beloved, when we see God in Christ meeting us, demanding a penalty and yet providing it, Himself, decreeing the punishment most justly and then bearing it Himself. When we see Him to be both Judge and Expiation, both Ruler and Sacrifice, then we see that herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the Propitiation for our sins. Then it is, in the knowledge of God in Christ and God through Christ, that we find that we have entered into eternal life!   
Let me add, here, that it would not be eternal life to know Jesus Christ if He were not Godif, as some say, He was only a good manthat He was only a good man is impossible, for He was the worst of impostors if He was not God, for He spoke of Himself as God! And if He were not Divine, then He imposed on men. If He were nothing but a mere man, how could He give us eternal life? And of what use were trust in Him? But if He who bled on Calvary was very God of very God, as well as Man, then the sacrifice He offered has an infinite value about it and I, even I, dare trust my soul to Him with the full assurance that there must be, in such a Savior, ability to save to the uttermost all them that come unto God by Him!   
How do we come to know Christ? I do not think it necessary, at this time, to explain much about how we know Christ, because I am addressing thousands of persons who do know Him. Brothers and Sisters, you know Christ in the glory of His Divine Person, God and Man. You have no doubts about either His Deity or His Humanityyou have tasted of the sympathy that comes to you through His Manhood, and you have felt the majesty of His GodheadHe is to you your Brother and yet your God! You know Him, then, in the glory of His Person.   
You also know Him in the peace-speaking power of His precious blood. This is, to me, the best evidence of the Truth of our holy religion. I was once troubled and tossed to and fro, driven almost to despair under a sense of sinit was only when I understood Christs substitutionary Sacrifice and realized that He stood in my place and bore my sin in His own body on the Cross that I obtained peace with God! I know the power of His blood by the peace it brought me! Do not many of you know it also? I am sure that many of you do. Whenever sin returns to assail you and you get troubled and perplexed, do you not go and look, again, to Christ upon the Cross, and all your anxiety disappears? The wounds of Jesus bleed a balsam that heals your wounds! And His death yields the life that delivers you from going down to death!   
We also know Christ in the perfection of His righteousness. By faith we have put on that glorious robe and we have gone in unto God with our Brothers garments onand the Lord has accepted us for His sakeand we have come from the Divine Presence exceedingly comforted and blessed, accepted in the Beloved. We know, dear Friends, now, what communion with God means. I have never seen Him, but I know Him better than anybody I ever saw! I have never heard His voice, nor do I expect to hear it till these ears are deaf in the grave, unless the Lord should first come suddenly, but I know His voice better than I know the voice of anyone on earth! I can discern it in a moment. A stranger will I not follow, for I know not the voice of strangers, but if there is any Truth of God uttered, I know that Truth by a kind of instinct within my soul. The charm of it is that Jesus has spoken it and it commands my immediate loyal acceptance. Question anything Christ has said? Brethren, if I find Christ contradicting everything that I ever thought of, or any decision I had arrived at, I would, without regret, fling every thought in my mind to the windsand I would embrace each syllable that He has spoken with a joy most intense and a loyalty that never questions!   
I have heard of life in London. I do not know much about what that expression means, but I know what life in Christ is, and there is nothing like it! Life in Heaven is only life in Christif He were gone from the realms of bliss, there would be no life in Heaven, itselfthe center, the core, the soul of the everlasting joy of the redeemed lies in the fact of Christ being with them and their knowing Him! This is life eternal, to know Jesus Christ whom God has sent, and to know God in Him.

This will give you life, you daughters of despair who are at deaths dark doorknow God and Christ and you shall live! This will give you life, you disappointed ones, to whom life seems to be like a sucked orange which you would gladly throw away! This will be the cup of life, again, and put into it the nectar of true life. This will give you something to trust in! This will give you rest to your spirit, this will give you power for service, this will give you a holy expectancy for the world to come! In fact, everything that life means comes to the man who knows God and knows Christand everything that death means comes to the man who does not know God, and does not know Christhe is dead even while he continues to exist.  
I have finished all my discourse but for one fragment. Did you notice the last clause in our second text? This is the true God, and eternal life. Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Do you see the drift of the Apostles injunction? You live by the true God, you live by Jesus Christ therefore, keep yourselves from idols. Idols are untrue gods and they are death to you. Therefore, Little children, keep yourselves from idols.   
Of course, I need not say to you that we must carefully preserve our integrity in the matter of worshipping anything that can be seen. No child of God may dare to worship a picture, an image, or anything that is visible! I would like to break out of every church window every image of the saints, lest it should be worshippedand especially to banish from all public observation every symbol and sign that ever has been worshipped in the Church of Rome lest they should be worshipped again! I see, in the symbolism of certain churches, a tendency to set up something visible as an object of worship. Remember the commandment, You shall have no other gods before Me, that is, have nothing to worship but God, and then, next, You shall not make unto you any engraved image, or any likeness of anything that is in Heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: you shall not bow down yourself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep My Commandments.   
The worship of the cross, the crucifix, the consecrated bread, or anything of that kind is sheer idolatry, and it always brings death with it. Gospel Light dies out when anything but the true God is worshipped. Therefore, away with idols! Have a holy iconoclastic zeal against anything that is regarded by men with the reverence which is due to God, alone!   
But keep yourselves from all other idolsfrom the idols of your own brain, from creeds of your own making, from thoughts of your own imagining. Keep yourselves from letting anything but God rule you. Keep yourselves from golden idolskeep yourselves from the love of fame keep yourselves from the adoration of human science! Keep yourselves from idols. There is no God but God and Christ Jesus, His Son, is the only Mediator between God and men. Keep yourselves from allowing anything but God to get the upper hand of you. Make not gods of yourselves, your own personsmake not gods of your families, make not gods of your children.   
Verily, I say unto you, there are many who worship their children and set them up as little gods! And when they are taken away from them, as they will be when they worship them, then they cry out against God most bitterly. How could they think that God would allow the little Dagons to be set up in His place? It must be God first, God last, God midst, and God, without end! May He make it so with us that, from now on, we shall have this eternal life which consists in knowing the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He has sent! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON:   
**PSALM 27.**

Verse 1. The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? If all your light comes from the Father of Lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning, you need not be afraid of losing your light! The Lord is my light and my salvation. If your salvation comes from the God of Salvation, if it is worked out by the Savior, our Lord Jesus Christ, you need not be afraid that you will ever be robbed of that salvationand you may confidently sing, Jehovah is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?

1. The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? He puts His own force into me and if He who is Omnipotent is the strength of my life, who can stand against me? If my strength were in myself, I might well be afraid, but if it is in God, alone, if, the Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid? Dismiss your fears, then, whatever may be the cause of them, all you who are trusting in the Lord Jehovah! The causes of fear are many, but the cure of fear is one, namely, faith in the living God!

2. When the wicked, even my enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell. This is the record of the Psalmists past experience. David was a soldier and he had a soldiers dangers and a soldiers deliverances. And here he writes the history of his battles. These are dispatches from the field. When the Psalmists enemies rushed upon him like hungry lions seeking to eat him up, they stumbled and fell! He had not to fight, or even to sound a trumpet, for the Lord fought for him!

3. Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident. The past gives him confidence both for the present and for the future. Happy is the man who can fall back upon his past experience, not to make of it a bed to lie upon, but to make of it a lever with which to lift his soul out of the Slough of Despond! I think I have sometimes said that we may use our past experiences as the bargemen use their oars when they push backward to drive the boat forward. You must never lie down upon past mercies and say, I am satisfied with all that has happened, but use the past to help you in the present and the future.

4. One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the House of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in His Temple. David wanted to spend his days in the House of his God and we, also, may do the same, not only in the place that is used for public worship, but wherever we may be! The great House of God is everywhere and His children can always be at home with Him. That is the ideal of a Christians life, to be always in Gods House

*No more a stranger or a guest,*

*But like a child at home.*   
David desired not only that he might dwell in Gods House, but that he might spend his time in adoring contemplation of the beauty of his God to behold the beauty of the Lord. Did you ever think of the wonderful beauties that there are in the Character of the Most High? If you want to see them, behold Him who is altogether lovely, in whom the Father is to be most clearly seen, though veiled in human flesh! This should also be our lifelong work, to study, to understand, and to enjoy the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in His Temple, not only to see Him, but to speak with Him and to hear Him speak. A Christian is one who makes enquiries of his Godhe is an enquirer when he begins, and he should be an enquirer till he ends. The Apostle Peter tells us that the angels belong to the honorable company of enquirers concerning things that accompany salvation. Which things the angels desire to look into. Christian men should go to God with their enquiries and when they come to public worship, this should be one great end of it, to enquire in His Temple.

5. For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion. Forand this is a reason for dismissing all our fearin the time of trouble He shall hide me. I am so little that I may easily be hidden away by One so great as God is. He shall hide me in His pavilion, in His own royal tent and beneath the majesty of His Sovereignty my soul shall find perfect security.

5. In the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me. In that Most Holy Place where none can come and live but those whom God brings there! In the sacred spot where the security must be absolute! In the Tabernacle of Sacrifice sprinkled with the blood of Atonement, shall He hide me. Oh, what a hiding place is this for one who is in trouble!

6. He shall set me up upon a rock. What perfect security the child of God has, first, in the pavilion of Sovereignty, next, in the secrecy of Sacrificeand thirdly, on the rock of Immutability! He shall set me up upon a rock.

6. And now shall my head be lifted up above my enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in His tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yes, I will sing praises unto the LORD. If an ungodly mans head were lifted up above His enemies, he would begin to denounce them and to curse them. But when a Believers head is thus lifted up, he begins to praise his God. Then are his songs louder and sweeter than they ever were before! I will sing, yes, I will sing praises unto the LORD.

7. Hear, O LORD, when I cry with my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me. I thought you were going to sing, David, but you are at prayer, I see. This is how we live spirituallywe breathe in the air by prayer, and we breathe it out by praise! This is the holy respiration of a Christians life! Prayer and praise must be mingled in a divinely wise proportion and then they make a sweet incense, acceptable to God. I hope we can say that we have never finished praying but that we feel we must begin singing, and that we have never finished singing but that we must begin praying! What a blessed interchange this makes for the whole of life! I will sing, yes, I will sing praises unto the Lord. Hear, O Lord, when I cry with my voice: have mercy, also, upon me, and answer me.

8. When You said, Seek you My face; my heart said unto You, Your face, LORD, will I seek. The child of God knows His Fathers voice and responds to it. Gods Word is like a seal and we should be like the wax, ready to take the impress of it. Seek you My face. Your face, Lord, will I seek. It is the same expression reversed, just as it is when the seal makes an impression.

9. Hide not Your face far from me. I do not know why the translators put in that word, far. It is printed in italics, but it should not be there at all! Hide not Your face from me at all, my Lord. I do not ask You not to hide it far from me, but I pray You not to hide it at all! Make no break in my sunlight. Let me always see Youthis is all I ask. Hide not Your face from me.

9. Put not Your servant away in anger. Put not Your servant away. God will not put away His children, but He does, sometimes, put His servants away. I know that this is often a prayer of mine. I wonder whether it is yours alsoDismiss me not from Your service, Lord. We may remain His children and yet we may scarcely be fit to be employed, any longer, in His service. Let this be your prayer as well as Davids, Put not Your servant away in anger.

9. You have been my help. Yes, that You have, O Lord! You have been my help.  
9, 10. Leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation. When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up. There is a poor child and his father and mother have both gone away and left him. But the Divine Father comes along, picks the child up and clasps him to His bosomThen the Lord will take me up. It is a wonderful thing to be taken up by God! A man prospers in business and people say, Oh, yes, he may get on very well, for such-and-such a great man has taken him up! But how much better shall you and I prosper who can say, The Lord will take me up? If He has taken us up, what a wonderful Patron we have! There is no other like the Lord!   
11. Teach me Your way, O LORD. I am only a child. Teach me, Lord. I am fatherless and motherless. Take me into Your orphanage and teach me Your way, O Lord!   
11. And lead me in a plain path, because of my enemies. Make my way to be very straightforward! May my life be such that I never have to apologize for it! May there be no places in it about which unpleasant questions can be asked! Lead me in a plain path because of my enemies. If they can find fault with me, they will do so and if they cannot rightly find fault with me, they will make up some accusation against me. Therefore, O Lord, lead me in a plain path because of my enemies.   
12, 13. Deliver me not over unto the will of my enemies: for false witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breathe out cruelty. I had fainted unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living. Men say that seeing is believing, but that is not true believing is seeing! So David says, I had fainted unless I had believed to see. It is by believing that we see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.   
14. Wait on the LORD. I think I hear David say this short sentence to each one in this great assembly tonight, Wait on the Lord.   
14. Be of good courage and He shall strengthen your heart: wait, I say. David says it from his own experience and thus, as it were, puts his name and seal at the end of the PsalmWait, I say   
14. On the LORD. Everyone who has ever proven the power of prayer may use the same words as David did! The preacher certainly does and with the Psalmist, he exclaims, Wait, I say, on the Lord.

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #2331 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

CHRISTS PASTORAL PRAYER FOR HIS PEOPLE   
NO. 2331

**INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, OCTOBER 22, 1893. DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 1, 1889.

**I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which You have given Me; for they are Yours. And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine; and I am glorified in them. John 17:9, 10.**

To begin with, I remark that our Lord Jesus pleads for His own people. When He puts on His priestly breastplate, it is for the tribes whose names are there. When He presents the atoning Sacrifice, it is for Israel whom God has chosen, and He utters this great Truth of God, which some regard as narrow, but which we adore, I pray for them: I pray not for the world. The point to which I want to call attention is thisthe reason why Christ prays not for the world, but for His people. He puts it, For they are Yours, as if they were all the dearer to Him because they were the FathersI pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which You have given Me, for they are Yours. We might have half thought that Jesus would have said, They are Mine and, therefore, I pray for them. It would have been true, but there would not have been the beauty of Truth about it which we have here. He loves us all the better and He prays for us all the more fervently because we are the Fathers. Such is His love to His Father, that our being the Fathers sheds upon us an extra halo of beauty! Because we belong to the Father, therefore does the Savior plead for us with all the greater earnestness at the Throne of the heavenly Grace.

But this leads us on to remember that our Lord had undertaken suretyship engagements on account of His peopleHe undertook to preserve the Fathers giftThose that You gave Me, I have kept, and none of them is lost. He looked upon the sheep of His pasture as belonging to His Father and the Father had put them into His charge, saying to Him, Of Your hand will I require them. As Jacob kept his uncles flocksby day the heat devoured him and at night the frostbut he was more careful over them because they were Labans than if they had been his own. He was to give an account of all the sheep committed to him and he did so and he lost none of Labans sheep. His care over them was partly accounted for by the fact that they did not belong to himself, but belonged to his uncle, Laban.

Understand this twofold reason, then, for Christs pastoral prayer for His people. He first prays for them because they belong to the Father and, therefore, have a peculiar value in His eyes. And next, because they belong to the Father, He is under suretyship engagements to deliver them all to the Father in that Last Great Day when the sheep shall pass under the rod of Him that counts them. Now you see where I am bringing you, tonight. I am not going to preach, at this time, to the world any more than Christ, upon this occasion, prayed for the world, but I am going to preach to His own people as He, in this intercessory prayer, pleaded for them. I trust that they will all follow me, step by step, through this great theme, and I pray the Lord that, in these deep central Truths of the Gospel, we may find real refreshment for our souls tonight.

I. In calling your attention to my text, I want you to notice, first, THE INTENSITY OF THE SENSE OF PROPERTY WHICH CHRIST HAS IN HIS PEOPLE.

Here are six words setting forth Christs property in those who are savedThem which You have given Me(that is one), for they are Yours. And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine; and I am glorified in them. There are certain persons so precious to Christ that they are marked all over with special tokens that they belong to Him, as I have known a man write his name in a book which he has greatly valued and then he has turned over some pages and written his name again, and, as we have sometimes known persons, when they have highly valued a thing, to put their mark, their seal, their stamp here, there and almost everywhere upon it! So, notice in my text how the Lord seems to have the seal in His hand and He stamps it all over His peculiar possession! They are Yours. And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine. It is all possessive pronouns, to show that God looks upon His people as His portion, His possession, His property. They shall be Mine, says the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels. Every man has something or other which he values above the rest of his estate and here the Lord, by so often reiterating the words which signify possession, proves that He values His people above everything! Let us show that we appreciate this privilege of being set apart unto God and let us each one say to Him

*Take my poor heart, and let it be   
Forever closed to all but Thee!   
Seal You my breast and let me wear   
That pledge of love forever there.*

I call your attention, next, to the fact that, while there are these six expressions here, they are all applied to the Lords own people. My, (that is, the saints), are Yours, (that is, the saints), and Yours, (that is, the saints), are Mine, (that is, the saints). These broad arrows of the King of Kings are all stamped upon His people! While the marks of possession are numerous, they are all set upon one object. What? Does not God care for anything else? I answer, No. As compared with His own people, He cares for nothing else. The Lords portion is His people: Jacob is the lot of His inheritance. Has not God other things? Ah, what is there that He has not? The silver and the gold are His and the cattle on a thousand hills. All things are of Godof Him, and by Him, and through Him, and to Him are all thingsyet He reckons them not in comparison with His people! You know how you, dearly Beloved, value your children much more than you do anything else. If there were a fire in your house, tonight, and you could only carry one thing out of it, Mother, would you hesitate a moment as to what that one thing would be? You would carry your baby and let everything else be consumed in the flames! And it is so with God. He cares for His people beyond everything else. He is the Lord God of Israel, and in Israel He has set His name, and there He takes His delight. There does He rest in His love and over her does He rejoice with singing!

I want you to notice these different points, not because I can fully explain them all to you, but if I can only give you some of these great Truths to think about and to help you to communion with Christ, tonight, I shall have done well. I want you to note, yet further, concerning these notes of possession, that they occur in the private communion between the Father and the Son. It is in our Lords prayer, when He is in the inner sanctuary speaking with the Father, that we have these words, All Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine. It is not to you and to me that He is talking, now. The Son of God is speaking with the Father when They are in very near communion, One with the Other. Now, what does this say to me but that the Father and the Son greatly value Believers? What people talk about when they are alonenot what they say in the market, not what they talk of in the midst of the confused mob, but what they say when they are in privatethat lays bare their heart! Here is the Son speaking to the Father, not about thrones and royalties, nor cherubim and seraphim, but about poor men and womenin those days mostly fishermen and peasant folk who believed on Him!

They are talking about these people and the Son is taking His own solace with the Father in Their secret privacy by talking about these precious jewels, these dear ones that are Their peculiar treasure. You have not any notion how much God loves you! Dear Brother, dear Sister, you have never, yet, had half an idea, or the tithe of an idea, of how precious you are to Christ! You think, because you are so imperfect, and you fall so much below your own ideal, that, therefore, He does not love you much. You think that He cannot do so. Have you ever measured the depth of Christs agony in Gethsemane and of His death on Calvary? If you have tried to do so, you will be quite sure that, apart from anything in you or about you, He loves you with a love that passes knowledge! Believe it. But I do not love Him as I should, I think I hear you say. No, and you never will unless you first know His love to you. Believe it! Believe it to the highest degree, that He so loves you that when there is no one who can commune with Him but the Father, even then Their talk is about Their mutual estimate of youhow much They love you! All Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine.

Only one other thought under this head and I but put it before you and leave it with you, for I cannot expound it tonight. All that Jesus says is about all His people, for He says, All Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine. These high, secret talks are not about some few saints who have reached a higher life, but about all of us who belong to Him! Jesus bears all of us on His heart and He speaks of us all to the FatherAll Mine are Yours. That poor woman who could never serve her Lord except by patient endurance, she is Mine, says Jesus. She is Yours, great Father. That poor girl, newly-converted, whose only spiritual life was spent upon a sickbed and then she exhaled to Heaven, like a dewdrop of the morning, she is Mine, and she is Yours. That poor child who often stumbles, who never brought much credit to the sacred name, He is Mine and He is Yours. All Mine are Yours. I seem as if I heard a silver bell ringing out! The very tones of the words are like the music from the harps of angels! MyYours. Yours Mine. May such sweet risings and fallings of heavenly melodies charm all our ears!

I think that I have said enough to show you the intensity of the sense of property which Christ has in His peopleAll Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine.

II. The next head of my discourse is THE INTENSITY OF UNITED INTEREST BETWEEN THE FATHER AND THE SON CONCERNING BELIEVERS.

First, let me say that Jesus loves us because we belong to the Father. Turn that Truth of God over. My Father has chosen them, My Father loves them. Therefore, says Jesus, I love them and I lay down My life for them, and I will take My life, again, for them, and live throughout eternity for them. They are dear to Me because they are dear to My Father. Have you not often loved another person for the sake of a third one upon whom all your heart was set? There is an old proverb and I cannot help quoting it just now. It is, Love me, love my dog. It is as if the Lord Jesus so loved the Father that even such poor dogs as we are get loved by Him for His Fathers sake! To the eyes of Jesus we are radiant with beauty because God has loved us.

Now turn that thought round the other way, the Father loves us because we belong to Christ. At first, the Fathers love in election was Sovereign and self-contained, but now, today, since He has given us over to Christ, He takes a greater delight in us. They are My Sons sheep, He says, He bought them with His blood. Better stillThat is My Sons spouse, He says. That is My Sons bride. I love her for His sake. There was that first love which came fresh from the Fathers heart, but now, through this one channel of love to Jesus, the Father pours a double flood of love on us for His dear Sons sake. He sees the blood of Jesus sprinkled on us. He remembers the token and, for the sake of His beloved Son, He prizes us beyond all price! Jesus loves us because we belong to the Fatherand the Father loves us because we belong to Jesus!

Now come still closer to the central thought of the text, All Mine are Yours. All who are the Sons are the Fathers. Do we belong to Jesus? Then we belong to the Father! Have I been washed in the precious blood?

Can I sing, tonight *The dying thief rejoiced to see   
That fountain in his day!   
And there have I, though vile as he,   
Washed all my sins away?*

Then, by redemption I belong to Christ! But, at the same time, I may be sure that I belong to the FatherAll Mine are Yours. Are you trusting in Christ? Then you are one of Gods elect! That high and deep mystery of predestination need trouble no mans heart if he is a believer in Christ. If you believe in Christ, Christ has redeemed you and the Father chose you from before the foundation of the world! You may rest happily in that firm belief, All Mine are Yours. How often have I met with people puzzling themselves about election! They want to know if they are elect. No man can come to the Father but by Christno man can come to election except through redemption! If you have come to Christ and are His redeemed, it is certain beyond all doubt that you were chosen of God and are the Fathers elect. All Mine are Yours.

So, if I am bought by Christs precious blood, I am not to sit down and say how grateful I am to Christ as though He were apart from the Father, and more loving and more tender than the Father. No, no! I belong to the Father if I belong to Christand I have for the Father the same gratitude, the same love, and I would render the same service as to Jesus, for Jesus puts it, All Mine are Yours.

If, tonight, also, I am a servant of Christ. If, because He bought me, I try to serve Him, then I am a servant of the Father if I am a servant of the Son. All Mine, whatever position they occupy, belong to You, great Father, and they have all the privileges which come to those who belong to the Father. I hope that I do not weary you. I cannot make these things entertaining to the carelessI do not try to do so. But you who love my Lord and His Truth ought to rejoice, tonight, to think that, in being the property of Christ, you are assured that you are the property of the Father! All Mine are Yours.

*With Christ our Lord we share our part   
In the affections of His heart.   
Nor shall our souls be removed   
Till He forgets His First-Beloved.*

But now you have to look at the other part of itand Yours are Mine. All who are the Fathers are the Sons. If you belong to the Father, you belong to the Son. If you are elect, and so the Fathers, you are redeemed, and so the Sons. If you are adopted, and so the Fathers, you are justified in Christ and so you are the Sons. If you are regenerated, and so are begotten of the Father, your life is still dependent upon the Son. Remember that while one Biblical figure sets us forth as children who have, each one, a life within himself, another equally valid figure represents us as branches of the Vine which die unless they continue united to the Stem. All Yours are Mine. If you are the Fathers, you must be Christs. If your life is given you of the Father, it still depends entirely upon the Son.

What a wonderful mixture all this is! The Father and the Son are One and we are one with the Father and with the Son! A mystic union is established between us and the Father by reason of our union with the Son and the Sons union with the Father. See to what a glorious height our humanity has risen through Christ! By the Grace of God, you who were like stones in the brook are made sons of God! Lifted out of your dead materialism, you are elevated into a spiritual life and you are united to God! You have not any idea, tonight, of what God has already done for you and truly, it does not yet appear what you shall be. A Christian man is the noblest work of God! God has here reached the fullness of His power and His Grace in making us to be one with His own dear Son, and so bringing us into union and communion with Himself. Oh, if the words that I speak could convey to you the fullness of their own meaning, you might spring to your feet, electrified with holy joy to think of thisthat we should be Christs and the Fathersand that we should be thought worthy to be the object of intricate transactions and inter-communions of the dearest kind between the Father and the Son! We, even we, who are but dust and ashes at our very best, are favored as angels never were! Therefore let all praise be ascribed to Sovereign Grace!

III. And now I shall only detain you a few minutes longer while I speak upon the third part of our subject, that is, THE GLORY OF CHRIST. And I am glorified in them. I must confess that while the former part of my subject was very deep, this third part seems to me to be still deeperI am glorified in them.

If Christ had said, I will glorify them, I could have understood it. If He had said, I am pleased with them, I might have set it down to His great kindness to them. But when He says, I am glorified in them, it is very amazing. The sun can be reflected, but you need proper objects to act as reflectorsand the brighter they are, the better will they reflect. You and I do not seem to have the power of reflecting Christs Glory. We break up the glorious rays that shine upon us. We spoil, we ruin so much of the good that falls upon us. Yet Christ says that He is glorified in us! Take these words home, dear Friend, to yourself, and think that the Lord Jesus met you, tonight, and as you went out of the Tabernacle, said to you, You are Mine. You are My Fathers and I am glorified in you. I dare not say that it would be a proud moment for you, but I dare say that there would be more in it to make you feel exalted for Him to say, I am glorified in you, than if you could have all the honors that all the kings can put upon all men in the world! I think that I could say, Lord, now let Your servant depart in peace, according to Your Word, if He would but say to me, I am glorified in your ministry. I hope that He is. I believe that He is, but, oh, for an assuring word, if not spoken to us personally, yet spoken to His Father about us, as in our text, I am glorified in them!

How can this be? Well, it is a very wide subject. Christ is glorified in His people in many ways. He is glorified by saving such sinnerstaking these people, so sinful, so lost, so unworthy. When the Lord lays hold upon a drunk, a thief, an adulterer. When He arrests one who has been guilty of blasphemy, whose very heart is reeking with evil thoughts. When He picks up the far-off one, the abandoned, the dissolute, the fallen, as He often does, and when He says, These shall be Mine. I will wash these in My blood. I will use these to speak My Word. Oh, then, He is glorified in them! Read the lives of many great sinners who have afterwards become great saints and you will see how they have tried to glorify Him, not only she who washed His feet with her tears, but many another like her. Oh, how they have loved to praise Him! Eyes have wept tears, lips have spoken wordsbut hearts have felt what neither eyes nor lips could speakof adoring gratitude to Him. I am glorified in them. Great sinners, Christ is glorified in you! Some of you Pharisees, if you were to be converted, would not bring Christ such Glory as He gets through saving publicans and harlots! Even if you struggled into Heaven, it would be with very little music for Him on the road, certainly no tears and no ointment for His feet, and no wiping them with the hairs of your head! You are too respectable ever to do that. But when He saves great sinners, He can truly say, I am glorified in them, and each of them can sing

*It passes praises, that dear love of Yours, My Jesus, Savior: yet this heart of mine   
Would sing that love, so full, so rich, so free, Which brings a rebel sinner, such as me,   
Near unto God.*

And Christ is glorified by the perseverance which He shows in the matter of their salvation. See how He begins to save and the man resists. He follows up His kind endeavor and the man rebels. He hunts him, pursues him, dogs his footsteps. He will have the man, but the man will not have Him! But the Lord, without violating the free will of man, which He never does, yet at length brings the one who was most unwilling to lie at His feet and he that hated most begins to love! And he that was most stouthearted bows his knees in lowliest humility. It is amazing how persevering the Lord is in the salvation of a sinneryes, and in the salvation of His own, for you would have broken loose long ago if your great Shepherd had not penned you up within the fold! Many of you would have started aside and have lost yourselves if it had not been for constraints of Sovereign Grace which have kept you to this day and will not let you go! Christ is glorified in you. Oh, when you once get to Heaven, when the angels know all that you were and all that you tried to be. When the whole story of Almighty, Infinite Grace is told, as it will be told, then will Christ be glorified in you!

Beloved, we actively glorify Christ when we display Christian Graces. You who are loving, forgiving, tender-hearted, gentle, meek, selfsacrificingyou glorify HimHe is glorified in you. You who are upright and who will not be moved from your integrity. You who can despise the sinners gold and will not sell your conscience for it. You who are bold and brave for Christ. You who can bear and suffer for His names sakeall your Graces come from Him! As all the flowers are bred and begotten of the sun, so all that is in you that is good comes from Christ, the Sun of Righteousness! And therefore He is glorified in you.

But, Beloved, Gods people have glorified Christ in many other ways. When they make Him the object of all their trust, they glorify Him. When they say, Though I am the chief of sinners, yet, I trust Him. Though my mind is dark and though my temptations abound, I believe that He can save to the uttermost, I trust Him. Christ is more glorified by a sinners humble faith than by a seraphs loudest song! If you believe, you glorify Him. Child of God, are you, tonight, very dark, dull and heavy? Do you feel half dead, spiritually? Come to your Lords feet and kiss themand believe that He can saveno, that He has saved you, even you, and thus you will glorify His holy name. Oh, said a Believer, the other day, I know whom I have believed. Christ is mine! Ah, said another, that is presumption. Beloved, it is nothing of the kind! It is not presumption for a child to acknowledge his own father. It might be pride for him to be ashamed of his fatherit is certainly great alienation from his father if he is ashamed to acknowledge him. I know whom I have believed. Happy state of heart, to be absolutely sure that you are resting upon Christ, that He is your Savior, that you believe in Him, for Jesus said, He that believes on Me has everlasting life. I believe on Him and I have everlasting life! He that believes on Him is not condemned. I believe on Him and I am not condemned! Make sure work of this, not only by signs and evidences, but do even bettermake the one sign and the one evidence to be thisJesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. I, a sinner, accept His great Sacrifice and I am saved.

Especially, I think that Gods people glorify Christ by a cheerful conversation. If you go about moaning and mourning, pining and complaining, you bring no honor to His name. But if, when you fast, you appear not unto men to fast. If you can wear a cheerful countenance even when your heart is heavy. And if, above all, you can rally your spirit out of its depths and begin to bless God when the cupboard is empty, and friends are few, then you will, indeed, glorify Christ!

Many are the ways in which this good work may be donelet us try to do it. I am glorified in them, says Christ. That is, by their bold confession of Christ. Do I address myself to any here who love Christ, but who have never acknowledged it? Come out and come out very soon! He deserves to have all the glory that you can give Him. If He has healed you, be not like the nine who forgot that Christ had healed their leprosy. Come and praise the name of the great Healer and let others know what Christ can do! I am afraid that there are a great many here, tonight, who hope that they are Christians, but they have never said so. What are you ashamed of? Ashamed of your Lord? I am afraid that you do not, after all, love Him! Now, at this time, at this particular crisis in the history of the Church and the world, if we do not publicly take sides with Christ, we shall really be against Him! The time has now come when we cannot afford to have gobetweens. You must be for Him or for His enemies and, tonight, He asks you, if you are really His, to say it! Come forward, unite yourself with His people and let it be seen by your life and conversation that you belong to Christ! If not, how can it be true, I am glorified in them? Is Christ glorified in a non-confessing people, a people that hope to go slinking into Heaven by the by-roads or across the fields, but dare not come into the Kings Highway and travel with the Kings subjects, and confess that they belong to Him?

Lastly, I think that Christ is glorified in His people by their efforts to extend His Kingdom. What efforts are you making? There is a great deal of force in a Church like this, but I am afraid that there is a great deal of wasted steam, wasted power here. The tendency is, so often, to leave everything to be done by the minister, or else by one or two leading people, but I pray you, Beloved, if you are Christs, and if you belong to the Father, if, unworthy though you are, you are claimed with a double ownership by the Father and the Son, try to be of use to Them! Let it be seen by your winning others to Christ that He is glorified in you! I believe that, by diligent attendance to even the smallest Sunday school class, Christ is glorified in you. By that private conversation in your own room. By that letter which you dropped into the post with many a prayer. By anything that you have done with a pure motive, trusting in God in order to glorify Christ, He is glorified in you!

Do not mistake my meaning with regard to serving the Lord. I think it exceedingly wrong when I hear exhortations made to young people, Quit your service as domestics and come out into spiritual work. Business men, leave your shops. Workmen, give up your trades. You cannot serve Christ in that calling, come away from it altogether. I beg to say that nothing will be more pestilent than such advice as that! There are men called by the Grace of God to separate themselves from every earthly occupation and they have special gifts for the work of the ministry, but to ever imagine that the bulk of Christian people cannot serve God in their daily calling is to think altogether contrary to the mind of the Spirit of God! If you are a servant, remain a servant! If you are a waiter, go on with your waiting! If you are a tradesman, go on with your trade! Let every man abide in the calling wherein he is called, unless there is in him some special call from God to devote himself to the ministry. Go on with your employment, dear Christian people, and do not imagine that you are to turn hermits, or monks, or nuns! You would not glorify God if you did so!

Soldiers of Christ are to fight the battle out where they are. To quit the field and shut yourselves up would be to render it impossible that you should get the victory. The work of God is as holy and acceptable in domestic service, or in trade, as any service that can be rendered in the pulpit, or even by the foreign missionary! We thank God for the men specially called and set apart for His work, but we know that they could do nothing unless the salt of our holy faith should permeate the daily life of other Christians. You godly mothersyou are the glory of the Church of Christ! You hard working men and women who endure patiently, as seeing Him who is invisible, are the crown and glory of the Church of God! You who do not shirk your daily labor, but stand manfully to it, obeying Christ in it, are proving what the Christian religion was meant to do! We can, if we are truly priests unto God, make our everyday garments into vestments, our meals into sacraments and our houses into temples for Gods worship! Our very beds will be within the veil, and our inmost thoughts will be as a sweet incense perpetually smoking up to the Most High. Dream not that there is anything about any honest calling that degrades a man, or hinders him in glorifying God! But sanctify it all till the bells upon the horses shall ring out, Holiness to the Lord, and the pots in your houses shall be as holy as the vessels of the sanctuary!

Now, I want that we should so come to the Communion Table, tonight, that even here Christ may be glorified in us. Ah, you may sit at the Lords Table wearing a fine dress or a diamond ring and you may think that you are somebody of importance, but you are not! Ah, you may come to the Lords Table and say, Here is an experienced Christian man who knows a thing or two. You are not glorifying Christ that wayyou are only a nobody! But if you come, tonight, saying, Lord, I am hungry, You can feed methat is glorifying Him! If you come saying, Lord, I have no merit and no worthiness. I come because You have died for me and I trust You you are glorifying Him! He glorifies Christ most who takes most from Him and who then gives most back to Him! Come, empty pitcher, come and be filled! And, when you are filled, pour all out at the dear feet of Him who filled you! Come, trembler, come and let Him touch you with His strengthening hands, and then go out and workand use the strength which He has given you! I fear that I have not led you where I wanted to bring you close to my Lord and to the Fatheryet I have done my best. May the Lord forgive my feebleness and wandering, and yet bless you for His dear names sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 17.**

Verses 1, 2. These words spoke Jesus and lifted up His eyes to Heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You: as You have given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. Here the Doctrines of a General and a Particular redemption sweetly blend, As You have given Him power over all flesh, they are all under Christs mediatorial government by virtue of His matchless Sacrifice. But the object in view is specially the gift of everlasting life to the chosen peoplethat He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him.

3. And this is life eternal, that they might know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent. No man has life eternal, then, who is in ignorance of God and of His Son, Jesus Christ. But once we know God and Christ, we have sure evidence that we possess a life that can never dieThis is life eternal.

4-6. I have glorified You on the earth: I have finished the work which You gave Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify You Me with Your own Self, with the Glory which I had with You before the world was. I have manifested Your name unto the men which You gave Me out of the world: Yours they were, and You gave them to Me; and they have kept Your Word. Is not that sweetly put on the part of our Divine Lord? These chosen men had been poor creatures at the very bestvery forgetful and very erringyet their Lord brings no charges against them but He says to His Father, They have kept Your Word.

7. Now they have known that all things whatever You have given Me are of You. They have learned to link the Father and the Son. They know that though I am the channel of all blessing, yet You, O My Father, are the fountain from which it flows.

*Jesus, we bless Your Fathers name!   
Your God and ours are both the same!   
What heavenly blessings from His Throne Flow down to sinners through His Son!*

8. For I have given unto them the Words which You gave Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from You, and they have believed that You did send Me. He is looking at them in contrast with the world which utterly rejected Himin contrast with that world, the disciples had received and known Christ. Oh, what a blessed distinction does the Grace of God make between men! We were all blind by nature, but now that we see, it is because the sacred finger of Christ has touched our eyes and opened them! Let Him have all the glory for it, yet let us note how well He speaks of His people. For I have given unto them the Words which You gave Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from You, and they have believed that You did send Me.

9, 10. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which You have given Me; for they are Yours. And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine; and I am glorified in them. Oh, the blessed union of interests between Christ and the Father! How surely do we belong to the Father if we, in very deed, belong to Christ! And what a holy unity is thus established!

11. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your own name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one, as We are. Here is a prayer, then, for the preservation and the unity of the people of Godtwo very necessary petitions. Would God that they might be fulfilled in us, that we might be kept, and kept even to the endand then kept in living union with all the people of God, and with the Father and with the Son!

12, 13. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name: those that You gave Me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the Scripture might be fulfilled. And now come I to You and these things I speak in the world, that they might have My joy fulfilled in themselves. In this wondrous prayer, note the special design of the Words of Christnot only that we might have joy, but that we might have Christs joyand not merely have a little of it, but might have it fulfilled in ourselves.

14-16. I have given them Your Word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the Evil One. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Jesus puts twice over this most special and important fact, which we must never forgetThey are not of the world. Let us never live as if we were of the world, but where such a vivid distinction has been made, God grant that there may be an equal distinction in our lives! Now comes the prayer for sanctification.

17, 18. Sanctify them through Your Truth: Your Word is Truth. As You have sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. Christ was the great Missionary, the Messiah, the Sent One. We are the minor missionaries, sent out into the world to accomplish the Fathers will and purpose.

19, 20. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the Truth. Neither pray I for these, alone, but for them, also, which shall believe on Me through their word. That shows that Christs prayer embraces us, also, who have been brought to believe on Him through the word which the Apostles declared. Christ, with prescient eyes, looked on every one of us who believe on Him and prayed for each one of us as much as He did for John, and Peter, and James.

21, 22. That they all may be one; as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that You have sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them; that they may be one, even as We are One. Unity is the glory of the Church of Christ! It shall be the very crown of the Church of the living God and when she puts it on, then will the wondering world acknowledge and accept her Lord!

23. I in them, and You in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me. Wonderful words! How shall we dive into their depths? To think that the Father should have loved us even as He loved His onlybegotten Son! Oh, the heights and depths of this wondrous love!

24, 25. Father, I will that they, also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My Glory, which You have given Me: for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world has not known You: but I have known You, and these have known that You have sent Me. Do you notice the division that there is here. There are two partiesthere is the world and there is the Church. What is it that divides them? Read these two clausesThe world has not known You. These have known that You have sent Me. What stands between? But I have known You. It is Christ, Himself, coming in between the two parties, like the cloudy-fiery pillar, black with darkness to the Egyptians, but bright with light to the Israelites! Oh, to have Christ between You and the world! It is the best form of separationI have known You, and these have known that You have sent Me.

26. And I have declared unto them Your name, and will declare it. I read it to you as it stands. Our good translators were always afraid of using a word too often, for fear of falling into tautology. So, for what they considered the beauty of the language, they used the word, declared, instead of, I made known. But why should they have done so? Who were they that they should have needed to improve on Christs Words? It should be the same Word right onThe world has not known You: but I have known You, and these have known that You have sent Me. And I have made known unto them Your name, and will make it known.

26. That the love wherewith You have loved Me may be in them, and I in them. Oh, that this love may be in us, for Christs sake! Amen.   
Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #1883 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

**THE PASTORS RETURN.   
THREE SPECIALLY-SELECTED SERMONS TO HIS CHURCH, CONGREGATION, READERS AND FRIENDS, CONSISTING OF   
A RETROSPECT [No. 1882]   
A PROSPECT**

**AND AN   
EXHORTATION [No. 1884.]**

PROSPECTHE WILL KEEP

NO. 1883

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

**Now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your own name those whom You have given Me that they may   
be one, as We are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name: those whom You gave Me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the Scripture might be fulfilled.   
John 17:11, 12.**

WHAT a wonderful intercommunion and fellowship exists between the Father and the Son in the matter of redemption! It is the Father who gave the Sonit is the Son who gave Himself. It is the Father who gave us to the Sonit is the Son who has bought us with a price and has kept us by His hand. Here, in the text, the Father who gave, receives back from the Son, the Son praying to Him in these terms, Holy Father, keep through Your own name those whom You have given Me. We cannot doubt the personality of the Father and of the Son, nor their essential unity. There are not three Gods, but one God. The Father and the Son, though two in one sense, are one in another. I delight to see the traces of the Trinity in every act of Grace. From the first transactions of Covenant love, even to the ingathering of the whole election of Grace and the introduction of the chosen into Glory, we hear the sound of that voice which of old said, Let Us make man. The three Divine Persons work together in absolute union for the production of one grand result. Glory be unto the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end! Amen.

Observe that our text is all about keeping. Three or four times over we have some tense or other of the word, keep. Holy Father, keep those whom You have given Me. While I was with them in the world, I kept them. Greatly do we need keeping. You have been redeemed, but you must still be kept. You have been regenerated, but you must be kept. You are pure in heart and hands, but you must be kept. You are quickened with the Divine life, you have aspirations after the holiest things, your love to Christ is intensebut you must be kept. You have had a deep experience and you know the temptations of the enemybut still, you must be kept. The sunlight of Heaven rests upon your honored brow. You are near the gates of Glory, but you must be kept. The same hand that bought you must keep youand the same Father who has begotten you, again, unto a lively hope, must keep you to His eternal Kingdom and Glory. All Glory be unto Him who is able to keep us from falling! Let all those unite in the song who are kept by the power of God! Here lies our topic and we will not wander far from it.

First, we will notice a choice pastorate which was enjoyed by some of Gods people. Secondly, we shall observe that this choice pastorate, was, after all, but a temporary privilege. And, thirdly, we shall see that those who enjoyed it were brought, by-and-by, to the exact place where we must always be and, therefore, were made the objects of a blessed prayer, Holy Father, keep through Your own name those whom You have given Me.

I. First, here is A CHOICE PASTORATE. Our little children sing

*I think when I read that sweet story of old, When Jesus was here among men,   
How He called little children like lambs to his fold. I should like to have been with them!*

And so forth. Might not you and I well wish that we had been numbered with the 12, or that we had been among the Marys? It was certainly a choice privilege to be one of the Apostles who were the intimates of Christ, the bodyguard of Jesus. These men saw Him in His privacy, understood His dark sayings and read His heart. That privilege cannot be ours. Let us think of them without envy and learn something from them.

You notice what the Savior did for the 12 who were round about Him While I was with them in the world, I kept them. This care was continuous. It looks as if He did this above everything else. He kept them. He was a guard to His people. He made this the chief employment of His life. While He went about doing good and reclaiming the wandering, He never diverted His care from His people. Loving them as His own, He loved them to the end. In this chapter you have the ruling passion strong in death. He has kept them in life and now He says, I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. And the one thought of His heart is, What is to become of them? While I was with them, I kept them. What will they do, now, that I am taken from them? They will have nobody to resolve their doubts, nobody to abate their discords, no one to answer their adversaries, no one to cheer them into holy confidence. What will the poor babes do when their Nurse has gone? What will the half-instructed scholars do when their Teacher shall be taken up from among them? He closes His life on earth by commending them to the keeping of His heavenly Father!

Surely, Brothers and Sisters, this teaches us that this care is always needed. Sheep never outgrow the necessity for their being kept by the Shepherd. If the 11 always required keeping, I am sure that you and I do. We are not better than Thomas, or Peter, or John. We have among us many a Thomas who will not believe without a superfluity of evidence. We have many a Peter, rash and impetuous, and many a John who would call fire from Heaven upon the adversaries of the cause! We are full of flaws and failures, are we not? We shall crumble to the dust if the Lord does not keep us! Is there one man among us that can live unless the Eternal Life shall continue to flow into him? I am sure there is not!

We are all so greatly dependent upon the continual keeping of our Lord, that I look with joy to a care always personal. I read with pleasure that the Lord, Himself, all the while that He was here, kept those whom the Father gave Himthose 11 priceless gems were always in His custody. I bless His name that they enjoyed a ministry so tenderly personalWhile I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. He lays stress upon His personal careI kept them. The Good Shepherd kept the sheep, not by proxy, but by His own hands. There is no nourishment for the child like that which comes from its own mothers breastand a child of God only thrives as he lives upon Christ, Himself. Those of us who are under-shepherds exercise a very poverty-stricken ministry compared with that of our Lord, but we should at least give the best we have. We should be willing, night and day with tears, to the utmost of our strength and even beyond it, to help the feeble and cheer the faint, if by any means we may preserve the flock of God committed to our imperfect charge. Do you not wish that you had Christ for your Pastor? You may well wish it! But it cannot be, for He has ascended. Truly, it was a choice privilege to the 11 that Christ could say of them, while I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name.

What must have been the effect of the personality of Christ upon those eleven? There are some men whose influence upon others has, for lack of a better word, been called, magical. History tells us of warriors who have been courageous and skillful in the marshalling of battalionsand these have inspired their soldiers with boundless loyalty, grappling them to themselves with hooks of steel. Certain heroes have been absolutely supreme over their fellow mena willing homage has been rendered to them. The influence of the Christ upon those who actually lived with Him must have been superlative. Think of it! There were but 11 of them, but He so molded them that the little handful of seed brought forth a harvest, the fruit of which did shake like Lebanon! They were nothing but peasants when they came under His hand, but when they left it, they were the fathers of a new age! They were the Patriarchs of 12 tribes of a new Israel! The Apostles, after they had been with Jesus, were men of a superior mold. Though they had little human learning, they were the best educated men on the earth! Each man of them was more than a prince, in having touched the skirts of Deity, in bearing upon his face the brightness of the eternal Godhead, in speaking with a word which, like the Word of God Himself, was utterly irresistible! They were men anointed above their fellows, men to the fullness of manhood, men beyond the utmost height to which the schools could have trained them. What a privilege to have had Jesus, Himself, for ones own private Tutor!

Our Lords care was most successful . Of the 11, not one was lost. I should not have marveled at all, apart from what we know of our Lords gracious power, if the whole 11 had gone back. They were very fickle, at first, and extremely ignorant. And, at the same time, they were strongly tempted. Influences which made some go back and walk no more with Jesus would, naturally, have had the same power over them if Jesus had not kept them. Yet of those whom the Father gave Him, not one of them was lost! His marvelous pastorate was so successful that He could say, Of those whom You have given Me I have lost none. Thomas, John, Peter, Jamesthey are all kept. The training of the Master has qualified each one for his lofty office. Oh, that you and I may be helped by Divine Grace to keep with us all the souls God has given us, that we may, at last, say of all our Hearers, Here am I and the children that You have given me! Our Lords was a wonderful pastorate, was it not?

But, nevertheless, it was attended with an awful sorrow, for He says, None of them is lost, but the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. Our Savior never meant us to understand that Judas was one of those whom the Father gave Him. He never made a mistake about that. Very early he said, I have chosen you 12 and one of you is a devil. He had spoken distinctly about the character and doom of Judas. Some have asked, How could Jesus have all knowledge and yet permit a man like Judas to be one of the twelve? Brethren, He did it advisedly, with wisdom aforethought, for He knew that often, in the ages to come, people would say, Can this Christianity be true which has such false-hearted traitors in its midst, which has such sellers of the Master even among its leaders? He allowed that objection to come up at the very first and suffered a covetous traitor to be one of the twelve.

The Savior sometimes seemed to speak of Judas as if he were one of His, but then He was speaking popularly and according to the method of common conversation. He permits the Evangelist to call him, one of the twelve, as if He would let us feel that men may go very far on the way to Heaven and have everything except the essential matterand yet may perish. When Judas cast out devils and in Christs name did many wonderful works, it would have been impossible for any but the Omniscient God to have seen any difference between him and any other of the twelve. In some respects Judas excelled others of the Apostles! He probably had not half the faults of Peter, nor half the doubts of Thomas. There were fine qualities within him, but they were all leavened by that supreme covetousness which mastered him and made him the son of perdition. He seemed very near to being all that he should be, yet the Master described him in this prayer, not as one that would be lost, but as one that was already lost. None of them is lost but the son of perdition.

He calls him the son of perdition and you may be sure that He did not give him that name without great sorrow. The Watcher over the sons of men could not lose even Judas without deep regrets. He sighs, He that eats bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me. Among the bitter herbs of His Passover, none was more like to wormwood and gall than that word, Verily, verily, I say unto you, one of you shall betray Me. As there is inexpressible sweetness in the doctrine of the Final Perseverance of the Saints, so there is an unutterable horror in other doctrines which guard it, such as that which our Lord lays down in the words, if the salt has lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is therefore good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Final Perseverance is a rose of Heavens own garden, but it is set with thorns and those thorns are such cases as those of Judas and of others that drew back unto perdition.

See, then, in this choice pastorate of our Master, the great need there is of keeping. Let us pray for Him to keep us to the end.

II. Secondly, and very briefly, let us speak of A TEMPORARY PRIVILEGE. The eleven were not to have Christ with them always. He was to ascend unto His Throne and then they were to fall back on another mode of living, common to all saints.

Now, why was Christ with them at all? It was because they were very weak. They needed fostering and nurturing. Look, Brothers and Sisters, you had great joys in your early days. You then enjoyed raptures and transports. It may be you have not had them lately, for you have traveled to Heaven at a steadier pace. My mother dandled me upon her knee when I was a babe, but she never thought of nursing me when I became a man. Certain spiritual joys are the privilege and the necessity of our religious babyhood, but we outgrow them. The Lord took the eleven when they were in their infancy and He was with them in the world and kept them. Why, then, did He go away? Why, for this reason, that they might grow to spiritual manhood! If He had always remained with them, working miracles and teaching them by His personal Presence, they would always have been mere children. It was expedient for them that He should go, for then the Holy Spirit came upon them and they rose into the full vigor of manhood! While Jesus was with them, they were little children, but in His absence they became men in Christ, quitting themselves valorously through faith in His name. Many joys of sense are allowed to trembling saints which are taken from them when they become strong in the Lord.

You also, dear Friends, have enjoyed a profitable pastorate and you are now about to lose it. You have not been under Christs personal teaching, that could not bebut you have been under the teaching of some man whom God has very greatly blessed in the ministry of His Word. Alas, you are now going far from the much-loved means of Grace! I pray God that you may now grow stronger. Now that the plant is put out into the cold, may it have strength and vigor enough to bear the frost! I see my gardener hardening off young plants and it may be the Lord is about to do the same with you. A boat in the builders yard has been gradually fashioned to perfection and beautified with abundant care. But it must be launched! It must be washed by the rough sea. It must know the wear and tear of storms. Israel must not always fatten in Goshenthe tribes must be led into the wilderness and must be conducted over stony placesfor thus the Lord brings His chosen to their promised rest.

Please note that, choice as the privilege was of having Jesus, Himself, to be their Pastor, apart from the Grace of God this special gift had no power in it. The Lord Jesus Christ might preach, but He could not touch the heart of the son of perdition! He looked on Peter and Peter went out and wept bitterly, but the Lord might have looked till Dooms Day at Judas and there would have been no tears of penitence in Judass eyes. Alas, Judas heard every sermon that Christ preached, saw all the mighty deeds that He dideven saw the bloody sweat upon His face in the Garden of Gethsemaneand kissed that face with traitorous lips! No ministry of itself can turn a heart of stone into flesh. You must be born from above. Though the Son of God, Himself, is the Preacher, yet when the congregation goes out, 11 in whom there is the Grace of God are blessedbut the son of perdition remains just what he washardened even to the end.

Let this be a warning to such as are not profited under the Word when faithfully preached. Beware lest you perish under the Gospel and so perish with a vengeance! If, however, a choice ministry is about to be removed from any of you, let this thought minister a measure of comfort to you, that, after all, the essential thing is not to be taken from you, for even in the absence of the best outward ministry, the Spirit of God can bless you! But without that Spirit of God, even the ministry of Christ, Himself, in the days of His flesh, could not have been effectual to you!

III. So now I come, in the last place, to show you where the Master left His disciples, where we all are, where we may well be content to be! We are all the objects of A BLESSED PRAYER. Holy Father, keep through Your own name those whom You have given Me that they may be one, as We are. Beneath this Divine petition we all find shelter!

Notice how He begins Father. Oh, yes, it is the Father who keeps us! Children of God, who can be a better keeper for you than your Father? To whom can you cry with such certainty of being heard as to your Father in Heaven? Whose heart will so soon be moved? Whose ears will be so quick to hear? Whose feet will be so swift to save as your Fathers? The Lord Jesus was tender to us when He selected that title of the great God and did not say, Jehovah, or Elohim, keep Your people, but, Father, keep them.

And then He puts it, Holy Father, but why that? Why, just because the keeping means, keep us holy, and who can make us holy but the Holy God and who can keep us holy but He who is, Himself, holy? Who will have such an intense interest in our growing holiness as One whose name is the Holy Father? Beloved, I love well this titleit commends itself to my faith and breeds assurance in my soul! If the blessed hand of Jesus has put me into the bosom of the Holy Father that I may be kept, why, the keeping is sure and certain! The Holy One will never suffer us to be polluted or defiled!

Carefully note that the prayer is stillKeep them: keep them. What keeping do you and I require? I was thinking of the various forms of keeping that we, as a Church, might seek. We need keeping from discord. Holy Father, keep them that they may be one. It is a very wonderful thing when a dozen people agree for a dozen weeks. We are such an odd lot of peopleI did not mean you in particular, but I mean all members of Christian Churchesthat it is really no wonder when we disagree. The wonder is that we have been so long and so heartily united! I praise and bless God for our years of spiritual harmony. Knowing that despite our imperfections, our tendencies to self-exaltation, the easiness of misunderstanding one another, the readiness with which we provoke and are provoked without cause, it is very amazing to me that we should have had no strifes or divisions. Holy Father, keep us. Let us pray that prayer very often! We do not know how soon we may be all sixes and sevens. Let us pray God that we may not fall foul of one another through the entrance of some serpents of discord into our happy paradise.

But, Brothers and Sisters, to be kept in unity is not enoughwe need keeping from error. The world swarms with false doctrines like Egypt with frogs in the day of her plague! You cannot put your head outside the door without having a flight of heresies buzzing around you. As some cities on the Continent have been full of cholera, so has this city been full of modern thought and I will not attempt to decide which is the worse of the two! But it is a great mercy to be kept from the silly love of novelties and to be helped to adhere to the old faith, to cling to the old Cross. Happy is he who is determined to know nothing save Jesus Christ and Him crucified! Holy Father, keep us. We have seen some go to the east and some to the west, some to the moon and some to the stars, some to perfection and some to licentiousness. Keep us, Holy Father! Keep us staunch in Your Truth even to the end!

But it would not be enough for us to be kept united and firm in the Truth of Godwe need, also, to be kept from sin. Saints must be kept, or they will soon be sinners. How have I seen the brightest men tarnished with the foulest lusts! How have I mourned as I have known those who preached holiness with wondrous power to practice unholiness in their private lives! You and I are so ready to be upset by a sudden squall of temptation, especially such as carries much sail and little ballast, that we have need to pray each one, for himself, and then for all his Brothers and Sisters, Holy Father, keep us: keep us from all evil.

Nor would that be enough, for there is such a thing as being kept perfectly moral, outwardly proper and decorous and yet our hearts may gradually subside into spiritual death. Have you never seen it? It was not putridityit was not even ghastliness. The corpse was washedwashed with rosewaterand there were touches of paint on the cheeks and lips that almost veiled the work of death. Fitly draped and with a smile upon its countenance, it looked a welcome to you, yet it was a corpse! Could you have thought it? O Church of God, beware of accepting the semblance of life! In the battles between the Spaniards and the Moors, when the Cid, Rodrigo Diaz, had fallen in the fight, the Spaniards set his body upright upon his milk-white steed and went forth to battle with his corpse at their head! How often had his presence made victory secure to his comrades! Until the Moors discovered that the mighty arm was palsied by death, they fled before the sword of the great Cid! But when once they knew that the uplifted falchion was held in a dead hand, they recovered spirit.

And so you can make a dead church sit upright in the saddle, wearing all its harness of war, and you can make it bear aloft the great sword of the Lord and, for a time, its death may be unsuspected. But once let the world find out the dreadful secret and its hour of defeat has come! A dead church, like a dead lion, is sport for children! A church devoid of spiritual life is the laughing stock of devils. God keep us that we never fall into the condition of spiritual decay! Pray from the bottom of your hearts, my Brothers and Sisters, in unison with the sweet prayer of our living, loving Lord, Holy Father, keep through Your own name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one, as We are.

Observe, further, that our Lord Jesus Christ asks that we may be kept through Gods own name. It requires the very name of God to keep a Christian!

By the word, name, is sometimes meant the whole Character of God, the whole royal power and prerogative of God. Frequently, power is meant by the word, name. There is no keeping one of us, much less the whole ships company, except the sacred name of God shall exert all its power to keep off our foe. The Savior concludes with this plea, Holy Father, keep through Your own name those whom You have given Me. I do not know whether it will strike you, but it strikes me as very touching. He seems to say, Father, You did give these to Me. They are very precious to Me. They are My jewels. Now I am going away and, therefore, I must leave them. O My Father, keep for Me the sweet tokens of Your own love to Me! These are Your forget-me-nots and I have valued them, therefore I ask you, while I go up to yonder bloody tree and die and, when afterwards I come to You and enjoy My eternal rest, take care of these whom You have given Me.

It is like a husband who has obtained his bride, but now finds that he must go away from her. He gives her back to her father who originally gave her to him and says, Take care of her for my sake. As you love me, take care of her. We are talking about you, you believers in Christ! Listen, therefore, with diligence. The Father Himself loves you. The Father gave you to Jesus because He loved Jesus. He wanted Jesus to have that which would give Him most delight and so He gave you to Him! And now that Jesus cannot be with you by His bodily Presence, He gives you over to the great Father, from whose loving hands He first received you, and He says, Holy Father, keep them. Do you think the Father will answer the Sons request? I am sure that He will. I feel safe in those Almighty hands in which Jesus has placed me

*I know that safe with God remains,   
Protected by His power,   
All that to Jesus appertains,   
Till the decisive hour.*

Remember that double-handed safety of which Jesus speaks in John 10:28, 29They shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. My Father, which gave them to Me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of My Fathers hand.

Do you belong to Christ, dear Hearer? You are not alone in being owned by that royal Proprietormany of us are the sheep of His flock and the children of His love. We are going to gather around our Lords table. Will you go away, or will you come with us and say, We belong to Him and we would share His banquet of love? If you must go away this once, hasten to put yourself right, that you may obey your Lord in the future. End this forgetfulness of your dying Lord, I pray you! Give yourself to Jesus and that shall be the best evidence that the Father gave you to Jesus, for never did a heart give itself to Jesus except as the result of the eternal purpose of God and the work of the Spirit within. Beloved Hearer, yield yourself to the Well-Beloved, whose love shall henceforth be your joy, your safeguard, your perfection, your bliss! Yield yourself, now, without an hours delay!

Let the Lords people now come and keep the feast with joy and gladness, singing praises unto the name of the Great Keeper of Israel who does neither slumber nor sleep!

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CHRISTS NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE PRAYER   
NO. 2355

**A SERMON INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS DAY, APRIL 8, 1894. DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 5, 1888.

**I pray not that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from evil.   
John 17:15.**

NOTICE, in the prayer of our Divine Lord, what honor He always puts upon God the Father. He ascribes to God everythingthe taking the disciples out of the world, or the keeping them from the evil in the world. Let us never neglect to look for Gods hand in all that happens to the saints and let us not fall into the error of those who deny the Great First Cause and are always dealing with appearances, forgetting the Mighty God who shapes our ends and rules our destinies. If we die, it is not by chance, but because God takes us out of the world. Believers fall asleep in Jesus, neither before nor after the predestined time. No disease or accident can cut short their lives and it would not be possible to prolong their existence beyond the time appointed by the Lord. I like to believewhatever it may be to some of you, to me it is very sweet to believe that

*All must come, and last, and end,   
As shall please my heavenly Friend.   
Plagues and deaths around me fly,   
Till He bids, I cannot die!   
Not a single shaft can hit   
Till the God of Love thinks fit.*

Our lives are entirely in the keeping of our loving Father. You can see that Truth of God in the text. Jesus speaks of God as taking the beloved ones out of the world and it is even so. This fact should make us cease to be anxious about when or how we shall die and it should, at the same time, reconcile us to the time and the manner of the going Home of any whom we love most dearly. They were not snatched away by the robber, Deaththey were taken out of the world by our dear Fathers gracious hand! Let us say concerning them what Job said of his loved ones, The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

See, also, how our Lord Jesus honors the Father by ascribing to Him the keeping of the saints from evil, for He says, I pray not that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from evil. Beloved, our escape from evil, at the first, was by the Fathers Grace. Our persevering in righteousness until now has been worked in us by the Fathers hand, through the Divine Spirit and, this day, if we have not apostatizedif we have not denied the faith and proved traitors to Christwe must ascribe it entirely to the Grace of God! As the Psalmist says, It is He that has made us, and not we, ourselves, and it is He who keeps us, and not we, ourselves, for, again quoting the 100th Psalm, We are His people, and the sheep of His pasture.

I want you, as far as you possibly can, to be constantly recognizing Gods overruling handGod, in our death, taking us out of the world, and God, in our life, keeping us from evil, and upholding us in our integrity. When you get thus near to God and realize that God is always present with you, you are in the right frame of mind for prayer. You are also in the state and condition of heart which will give you courage in time of dangeryou are, indeed, ready for anything and for everything, whatever may come to you, when God is thus consciously overshadowing your spirit. This much, I think, the prayer of our Lord plainly suggests.

Observe, again, that God has us absolutely at His disposal. Let us always remember that great Truth. The prayer of Jesus recognizes His Fathers Sovereignty, but, we, ourselves, must also recognize that we are entirely in Gods hands. He can take us out of the world, or He can keep us in the world and preserve us from evil. We are glad to be at the disposal of our God! As His people, we would have no voice or choice in fixing our own position, but with the Psalmist we would say, He shall choose our inheritance for us. Whether we stay, or whether we go, depends entirely upon the Lords will and Christ, in His prayer, recognizes that it is so. He would not pray for a matter which was not in the hands of Him to whom He prayed. He felt that His people were absolutely at His Fathers disposal and, therefore, He presented the prayer which is to be the subject of our meditation tonight.

Now, in this petition, there are two things. There is, first, the negative prayer I pray not that You should take them out of the world. And then, secondly, there is the positive prayer But that You should keep them from evil.

I. There is here, first, THE NEGATIVE PRAYERI pray not that you should take them out of the world.   
At first sight, that seems almost unkind on our Saviors part. What could happen better than for those whom the world hated to be taken out of the world? Jesus, Himself, was going out of the worldwhat could He do that should have greater love in it than to pray that they might go with Him? I have often felt as Thomas did when he said, Let us, also, go, that we may die with Him. Has Jesus gone? Why should we tarry here? Has Jesus entered Glory? Let us be with Him where He is, that we may behold His Glory. There is nothing left to detain us below since He has ascended to His Fathers right handbut there is

everything to attract us upward since He is there who is our hearts Lord, our All in All! Have you not often felt inclined to pray for yourself that the Lord would take you out of the world? I mean, not merely in times of depression, when, like Elijah, who never died, you are ready to pray, Now, O Lord, take away my life, but in times of exultation, when you have been near to the gates of Heaven in ecstatic joy and holy gladnesshave you not wished to slip in? Lord, it is good for us to be here: if You will, let us make here three tabernacles. Have you not said so in your heart, if not with your voice? No, have you not wished, not to stay on the Mount of Transfiguration, but from that point to take your heavenward flight and land yourself in the New Jerusalem, to go no more out forever? I know that, sometimes, on a Sabbath, when we have been singing, to the tune Prospect *On Jordans stormy banks I stand,   
And cast a wishful eye   
To Canaans fair and happy land,   
Where my possessions lie,*   
I have felt that I could, from my heart, sing the last verse of the hymn *Filled with delight, my raptured soul   
Can here no longer stay.   
Though Jordans waves around me roll,   
Fearless Id launch away.*   
Yet the Savior says, I pray not that You should take them out of the world. I am sure, therefore, that it is a better thing for us to stay here till our appointed time than it is for us to be taken out of the world. It may not be better in all respects, but there are some points in which it is an advantage for Believers to remain here. Our Savior loves us so much that He would be certain to ask the very best thing for us. Therefore, for us to be taken out of the world at once, would not be, all things considered, the best disposition of us that the Lord could make.   
How is that? Well, first, if we, who are Christs people, were taken out of the world, then the world, itself, could perish. Do we contemplate, with any pleasure, such a catastrophe as that? You are the light of the world. Take all the lights away and the murky atmosphere, which is dark enough, even now, would become dense as Egyptian midnightand life would be intolerable. You are the salt of the earth. Should the salt be taken away, putrefaction would revel without limitcorruption would then have nothing to contend with it and the world would reek in the nostrils of God, Himself, till He would be obliged to destroy it!   
I look along the ages and I see mankind given up to debauchery and eaten up with worldliness, yet the sinners are permitted to live on year after year. But I also see a strange-looking ship that has been built on dry land and I watch the only family on the earth that fears God, going up into that strange-shaped vessel, and the door is shut by God, Himself! I hear it as it closes and the moment that door is shut, what happens? The world is doomed! God pulls up the sluices of the great deep that lies under and He throws open the floodgates of Heaventhe fountains gush up from below and the rains pour down from above till the whole world is drowned! This awful judgment did not begin till Noah, the one righteous man, was taken away from the rest of mankind and shut in the ark The same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of Heaven were opened. And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights. In the same day entered Noah, and Shem, and Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noahs wife, and the three wives of His sons with them, into the ark.   
I look again, and away yonder, I behold, in the vale of Siddim, the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. If I go within their gates, I hear and see that which disgusts my soul. Things that it were a shame even to speak of, are done in those cities! There is one good man who lives there, and only one. And I see him, early one morning, fleeing with his wife and daughters out of the city. The moment he has passed beyond the bounds of the condemned cities and escaped to little Zoar, what happens? Destruction is poured out of Heaven upon the guilty peopleThe sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar. Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of Heaven and He overthrew those cities, all the plain, all the inhabitants of the cities and that which grew upon the ground.   
Because we do not wish such awful destruction as that, either by water or by fire, to fall upon this guilty world, we ask God to permit the salt to remain in the earth, the light to still burn in it, the Noah to still linger, the Lot to still dwell here yet a little while. When the Lord shall begin rapidly to gather His saints Home, as He may do, by-and-by, and when the wail is heard, The faithful fail from among the children of men, then shall come dark days, indeed, and the earth shall know the terrible vengeance of Almighty God!   
This, then, is one reason why Christ does not pray that we should be taken out of the worldbecause it would be the ruin of guilty men if the saints were removed from the earth which is only preserved for their sake.   
Does not the Lord also wish the righteous to stay in the world a while that they may be the means of the salvation of others? How came Jesus here, Himself? He came to seek and to save that which was lost and when He went away, He did not take His disciples out of the world because their ministry was to be blessed to many of their fellow creatures. In this very prayer to His Father, He said, As You have sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. They who might be safely housed in Heaven stay here that they may be the means of saving others. Mother is still here, though her son has well-near broken her heart. She is left on the earth that she may yet win that boy for Christ. And our old gray-headed friend, whose infirmities are multiplying, is still among us though he would be far happier among the harps of angels but he is detained here that his grandson, or his still unconverted daughter may hear from his lips, once more, a loving, living testimony for the Lord Jesus and may, thereby be turned to God.   
I think that there are many of you who do not, yourselves, love the Lord, who, nevertheless, ought to be very grateful to Him for saying, I pray not that You should take them out of the world. Oh, dear man, you do not want to lose that loving wife of yours! She has brought you here, tonight, after a good deal of coaxing and tender persuasion. You do not think of her God, or care about the Lord Jesus, but your wife is still living to seek the salvation of your soul! I believe she will win you, yet, by Gods Grace! There are many who might, long ago, have received their reward and would have been thrice happy to do so, but they have yet to preach the everlasting Gospel and yet to win more souls to Christ! It is more necessary for sinners that Paul should abide in the flesh a little longer, though he, himself, has a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better!   
Beloved Christian Brothers and Sisters, if the Lord is keeping any of us here with the objective of using us in the salvation of others, let us take care that we answer the purpose of our continued existence on the earthlet us be up and doing! Let us be earnestly seeking the souls of our relatives! Let us be zealously endeavoring to bring others to Christ! I am sometimes saddened when I hear of households conducted by professedly Christian peopleplaces where one would think that Gods name would be upon every tongueand yet servants may live for years in such families and their masters and mistresses never speak to them about their souls! And many men, employing hundreds of people, will give them their wages as if they had no souls to care about, for they take no interest in the eternal welfare of those who work for them in temporal things! Do not let it be so with you, dear Friends! Masters and mistresses, there are occasions in which you can go to your servants and those employed by you and, without being at all intrusive, can seek to interest them in the things of God! You can call at their homes, perhaps, and the offering of a prayer and speaking to them about the Gospel of Christ may reach them, and bring them to the Savior, where our sermons have failed to do so. I charge you, by Him who bought you by His blood, either go to Heaven and glorify Christ, there, or else, if you remain in the world, glorify Him here! But whether you live, or whether you die, see to this matter, that you answer the Divine purpose, which is that being saved, yourself, you may become the means of saving others.   
There is a second reason, then, for our Lord wishing His disciples to stay here, that they may be the means of the salvation of others.   
Next, I think the Lord lets His people stay in the world that they may serve Him in the place where they sinned against Him. If I had been converted just now, and the Lord were to open the gates of Heaven and say, Come in, I think that I would step back and say, Dear Master, may I stay here just a little while to undo some of the mischief that I did in my ungodly state? I can fancy that someone here would pray, Lord, there is my friend who used to go to the theater and the music-hall with me, and I taught him much that was mischievous. Will it please You to let me tarry here and tell him about Your great salvation? I think that another would say, Lord, I spent so many years in the service of Satan. Now, before I go Home to see Your face, let me have a few years in Your service! I would like to undo, by Your Grace, at least a portion of the evil that I have done before I stand in Your Presence amid the eternal splendors of Heaven. It seems to me that it is most gracious of the Lord to let us remain here to serve Him where we sinned against Him, and not to take us Home as soon as we are converted. I think that we shall congratulate ourselves, even in Heaven, that we had some opportunity of contending for the faith, or of bearing reproach for Christs sake, or of seeking to win souls for Him before we entered upon our everlasting rest.

Is not that a good reason why the Savior did not pray that His disciples might be taken out of the world?   
And is not this another good reason why saints are left in the world? The Lord keeps His people here that He may exhibit in them the power of Divine Grace. Just as He permitted Job to be tempted by the devil, that all the world might see how God can enable a man, by patience, to triumph, so He keeps us here to let the devil and all men know what His Grace can do for His people and, also, to let angels and principalities and powers in the heavenly places behold what saints God can make out of guilty sinners! He takes those who had gone far away in sin and brings them near by the blood of Jesus! He fashions the rough, knotty timber that did not seem as if it could ever be shaped, and uses it in the building of His Temple. He makes wonders of Grace out of sinful men and womensuch marvels of mercy that the angels will stand and gaze at them throughout eternity, as they say, How could God make such perfect beings as these out of such sinful material?   
All this will be to the praise of the Glory of His Grace, wherein He has made us accepted in the Beloved. You see, we cannot exhibit patience in Heaven. So far as we now know anything about Heaven, it does not seem possible that there will be any need of patience there. We cannot manifest strength of faith in Heaven, for faith will be lost in sight. We can take our love into Glorythere are some flowers that will sweetly open in the land where they have no need of the sun, for Christ is better than the sun! There are certain flowers of less sweet perfume and those can only be developed in the earth and the Lord, therefore, bids us tarry here a while, that He may show what Grace can do in sustaining us in suffering, upholding us under trials and protecting us against temptation. O soldiers of the Cross, do You want crowns without having contended for them?   
*Must You be carried to the skies   
On flowery beds of ease,   
While others fought to win the prize   
And sailed through bloody seas?*   
Ask no such thing! Be satisfied to take your share in the conflict, or else I do not see how you can so sweetly relish the triumph which God will give to His people in due time.   
Thus, the Lord exhibits the power of His Grace in us and that is another reason why we have to tarry here a while.   
Next, I shall have to say many things very briefly where I could have wished to have had time for enlargement. Do you not think that we are kept here to prepare us for Heaven? Are we not as yet like children who need education for that truer, higher life? When a boy first goes to school, you do not put into his hands the higher classics. He must plod through his grammar. He must learn many elementary lessons and then he must work hard on dry and dreary roots. And afterwards you will give him some classic poet that he may read intelligently. So must you and I, here below, go plodding throughout primers. We must work hard at our grammars. We must still have a slate and pencil and when we have become proficient in all, we have to learn, here, so that we shall the better enjoy the holy rest and perfect service which make up the Heaven of the blessed.   
Let me give you an illustration of what I mean. A boy is sent to school and his parents pinch themselves to pay for him to have a good education. It is not every boy who will say this to himself, but if he does, he is a first-rate ladMy poor father and mother are doing all they can to give me a first-class education here. They want to make something of me and I am going to learn with all my heart, so that I may be worthy of all that my parents design for me, and not waste one single shilling of the money they are spending upon me. Such a boy is diligent at his books. He labors where others loiter and treasures up in his mind everything that he learns while others forget it. Now the Lord Jesus Christ is thus putting some of us to school, training us for high employment hereafter! He means to make something of us, by-and-by, and our desire, now, is to be prepared, as far as possible, for what Christ intends for us, that we may be the more to His praise and gloryand our own completeness forever and ever.   
I have often been puzzled by those words of the Lord Jesus, I go to prepare a place for you. What there was about Heaven that was not ready, I do not know, except it was that Jesus, Himself, was not there. But I can easily understand this truth, that we are not ready for Heaven yet, for Heaven consists more in character than in place. We have to be more completely sanctified, more truly developed in all good things than we are at present. We are not yet fit for Glory, so Jesus does not pray that we should be taken out of the world, but we are to wait, here, a little longer till His Grace has more fully fitted us for Glory.   
Does not the Lord, also, by keeping us here, mean us to see more of the wisdom, the power, the Grace, and the Truth of God? Within this last montha month of remarkable pain and travail for meI have had certain experiences which I shall never forget! But I would pass through seas ten times as deep and boisterous, merely for the sake of having those experiences repeated! There are some of them which I could not tell, here. There are facts connected with them that would be discreditable to some who had to do with them, though greatly honorable to other. But as to my God, they have shown me His faithfulness, His power, His tenderness, His wisdomand I believe that, had I been in Heaven, I would not have seen as much of some of the attributes of God as I have seen here below! If you had been an angel, forever praising God in Glory, could you tell how faithful He is to a tried saint? Could you say, if you had not experienced it here on earth, how surely He comforts His people in their deepest sorrows? There are some pearls in these troubled waters that the sea of glass, itself, can never contain! There are some bright eternal lessons that we would never have known if it had not been for our earthly trials, even if we might have had an archangel for a schoolmaster! Therefore we must stay here, a while, and suffer affliction, temptation, depression of spirit, slander and abuse that we may learn, thereby, the deeper Truths of Gods Revelation.   
I shall have to abandon the second part of my subject, I see, for my time has already nearly gone. I must, however, make just one more remark upon our first head.   
I think that our Lord Jesus does not pray that we may be called out of the world because He knows that we shall be taken to Heaven in due time. He scarcely thinks of that as a matter of prayerit is so entirely in the Fathers hands that He leaves it there. I would not encourage anybody here to pray that he might die and, on the other hand, I do not know that I would incite anybody here to pray very earnestly that he might live. Hezekiah prayed that his life might be lengthened and his prayer was granted. Manasseh would not have been born if Hezekiah had not lived those extra 15 years, but it would have been a good thing if Manasseh had never been born! Those sins and iniquities with which he made Judah to sin with his idols, though they were forgiven, yet filled up the cup of the nations perversion from God and fixed the doom of that apostate people! I do not know if the lifting of our finger could make us live for another 20 years, whether we had not better hesitate to lift that finger! At any rate, I feel quite clear about the other side of the question we have no business to pray that we may die.   
As I have already reminded you, the man who prayed that he might die, never died at all! How foolish he was to pray that he might die, when God had intended that he should go to Heaven by a whirlwind, with a chariot and horses of fire! We shall all die in good time, unless the Lord shall come in the splendor of His Second Advent. If You and I had the choice of the time of our death, there would be just a tinge of the element of suicide about it and that is the very worst form of murder. This is clearly our duty, to leave ourselves wholly and unreservedly in the hands of Him to whom belong the issues of lifeit is certainly our best course.   
This, then, is our Lords negative prayerI pray not that You should take them out of the world.   
II. Secondly, if time had permitted, I was also to have spoken to you about THE POSITIVE PRAYER. I will only hint at this.   
What did Jesus pray for His disciples? That God would keep them from evil. This is the right prayer for you to offer for yourself. Do not pray to get out of the battleask God that you may never be a coward, but that you may bravely play the man in the day of danger. Do not seek to be screened from affliction, but plead that you may never be driven to sin by your affliction. You need not even pray that you may not have prosperity, but you may entreat the Lord that prosperity may not make you proud, or worldly. Let your condition be as God wills it, but let your great anxiety be that you may be kept from all sin in every condition.   
I pray not that you should take them out of the world, but that you should keep them from evil. We need to be kept from the evil of apostasy, the evil of worldliness, from the evil of unholiness, from the evil of getting to be as men of the world arethat is the main point. I do not think that it matters much what the condition of a man is so long as his heart is above his condition. I remember that St. Bernard, as he is usually calledBernard, of Clairvauxone of the holiest and humblest of men, was, one day, riding on a mule to a certain monastery. One who saw him said, I think Bernard is getting proud because he is riding on a mule, and sitting upon a cloth which has a fringe of gold lace on it. Now Bernard was a man who cared nothing for that sort of thing and when the other charged him with pride, he said, Perhaps it may be so, but I never noticed that I had any cloth at all. Someone else had put that fine cloth upon the mule without his knowing anything about it. He really thought that he was riding on the animals bare back, for his mind was taken up with something far more important.

If you are rich and you have a cloth with a gold fringe on it, do not be conscious of its existencelet your soul rise above it! If you are poor and you have no saddle at all, do not notice your lack, but let your soul soar above such matters. Pray not that you may be taken out of this or that, be it poverty or be it wealth, be it sickness or be it healthbut pray that you may be kept from the evil of it, for there is an evil in every case! If you are making money, we ought to have a special Prayer Meeting for you, to pray that you may be kept from evil. I said to a Brother who was going to a banquet, the other day, Well, we will pray for you, dear Friend, for you are going into a place of peril. I do not think there was any great risk to such a man in goingperhaps some of those who stayed at home and complained of him were in more danger! The great point is not where you are, not what you are as to circumstances, but that you may be kept by almighty power from the evil which might come out of any circumstances unless you were Divinely preserved from evil! Oh, that the Lord Jesus may say this concerning us, tonightI pray not that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from evil! If so, we can leave everything else in His dear hands.   
But, Brothers and Sisters, do not let us be anxious to get to Heaven just yet. Let us seek to fight our way there in valiant fashion. Do not let us be so earnest about the end as about the waylaying hold on Christ and lifting up His dear Cross as our banner! Oh, that all of you would do this and follow the Lamb wherever He goes! We will just bend our thoughts to this one point and not think so much of going to Heaven as of avoiding sin! Lord, keep me out of evil! Then let me live or let me die, hold me up or press me down, let me dance with joy of heart, or let me lie and pine in an agony of pain with anguish racking every bone in my body, it shall be all the same to meso long as nothing of the evil of surrounding circumstances enters into medo with me as you will, O my God!   
God bless you, dear Friends, for Jesus sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 17.**

Verse 1. These words spoke Jesus, lifted up His eyes to Heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come. The hour to which He had so long looked forward to. The hour which He had anticipated with ardent desireThe hour is come. On the very night that Jesus prayed this prayer, Lukes record tells us, When the hour was come, He sat down, and the twelve Apostles with Him. And He said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. So He began His great intercessory prayer, Father, the hour is come

1, 2. Glorify Your Son that Your Son also may glorify You: as You have given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. In these words we have both the general and the special aspects of redemption. Christ has received power over all flesh, but with this peculiar design, that He should give eternal life to as many as His Father has given Him. Who are they who have been given to Him by His Father? All who come to Him by faith, even as He said, All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me. To all of these Jesus gives eternal life.

3. And this is life eternal, that they might know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent. Do you know God? Do you know Jesus Christ? Are you on speaking terms, on loving terms with them? Are They your Friends? Then you have eternal life, for, this is life eternal, that they might know You the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent.

4-6. I have glorified You on the earth: I have finished the work which You gave Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify You Me with Your own Self with the glory which I had with You before the world was. I have manifested Your name unto the men which You gave Me out of the world: Yours they were, and You gave them to Me; and they have kept Your Word. What a sweet thing for the Lord Jesus to say of that poor, much-erring company of disciples, They have kept Your Word! They have not been all they might have been, nor all they ought to have been, but, O My Father, they have kept Your Word! I trust that we may be found faithful to the Truths of God that the Holy Spirit has taught us, and obedient to its precepts, that our Lord may be able to say to His Father concerning us, also, They have kept Your Word.

7, 8. Now they have known that all things to whatever You have given Me are of You. For I have given unto them the Words which You gave Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from You, and they have believed that You did send Me. See how the Lord Jesus, Himself, takes all His teaching from the Father. You never hear from Him any boast about being the originator of profound thoughts. No, He just repeated to His disciples the Words He had received from the FatherI have given unto them the Words which You gave Me. If Jesus acted thus, how much more must the messengers of God receive the Word from the Lords mouth and speak it as they receive it!

9, 10. I pray for them: I pray not for the world but for them which You have given Me, for they are Yours. And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine: and I am glorified in them. Is not this a wonderful prayer? If anybody possessing the greatest possible inventive faculty were asked to produce a prayer which could be fitly prayed by a Person who was both God and Man, it would be an impossible task! This chapter has about it all the air of truthfulness. It ought to be sufficient to convince any man that Christ was God and Man. There is such a wonderful mixing of the two Natures without any confusion of ideas, so manifestly does He plead as Man, and yet so clearly does He also pray as none but the Son of God could pray, that He must be the God-Man, the one Mediator between God and man!

11, 12. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your own name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one, as We are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name: those that You gave Me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. It was known and foretold that Judas would be lost. Therefore, the Savior, the great Keeper of the sheep, is not to be held responsible for the loss of, the son of perdition, who was never committed to His charge.

13-17. And now come I to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they might have My joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them Your Word and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through Your Truth: Your Word is Truth. Our Divine Lord seems to think nothing about His own sufferings! All His thoughts are occupied with that which concerns His people. All His prayers are for them, that they may be made holy, and that so God may be glorified in them.

18-19. As You have sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself. Or, I set myself apart.

19, 20 *.* That they, also, might be sanctified through the Truth. Neither pray I for these, alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word. They were only a handful of disciples, but you cannot tell what a multitude will believe on Christ through their word! There were but 12 Apostles yet John beheld a hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel and, after that, he beheld a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, standing before the Throne of God, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and with palms in their hands! The Savior doubtless linked His little band of disciples with the ancient promise, There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains, the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon. What great events from little causes, spring! Whenever You are doing good, remember not only those who are immediately saved, but the others who will be blessed through them, even as our Savior said, Neither pray I for these, alone, but for them, also, which shall believe on Me through their word. We who have believed on Jesus, through the Word preached or written by the Apostles, are also included in this prayer of their Lord and ours. Notice what our Savior asked of His Father for them and for us

21. That they all may be one; as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You, that they, also, may be one in Us: that the world may believe that You have sent Me. And when Christians, being one in Christ, and one in the Truth of God, shall become more manifestly one in heart, and life, and faithwhat glad days we may hope to see!

22, 23. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them: that they may be one, even as We are one: I in them, and them in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them, as You have loved Me. This is a wonderful expression! Where will you find anything like it? It is, indeed, marvelous that God should have loved His people even as He loved Christ, His Son, yet that is what the Lord Jesus here saysYou have sent Me, and have loved them, as You have loved Me.

24-26. Father, I will that they, also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, that they may behold My Glory, which You have given Me: for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world has not known You: but I have known You, and these have known that You have sent Me. And I have declared unto them Your name

**Your Character, Your work**   
26. And will declare it: that the love wherewith You have loved Me may be in them, and I in them. This prayer is for You and for Me, as much as for the 12 Apostles. May the Lord fulfill it in all of us as well as in them, for His dear names sake! Amen.

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THE PRESERVATION OF CHRISTIANS IN THE WORLD   
NO. 2703

A SERMON   
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, DECEMBER 2D, 1900.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT NEW PARK STREET CHAPEL, SOUTHWARK, ON A THURSDAY EVENING, IN THE YEAR 1855.

**I pray not that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil.   
John 17:15.**

THE text, as we observed on a former occasion, [Sermon #47, Volume 1  
CHRISTS PRAYER FOR HIS PEOPLEread/download the entire sermon free of charge at

http://www.spurgeongems.org] contains two prayersa negative prayer and a positive prayer. First, there is the negative prayerI pray not that You should take them out of the world. There are wise ends to be observed by their remaining here. It will ultimately increase their happiness in Heaven. It will give glory to God. It shall be the means of the conversion of otherstherefore, I pray not that you should take them out of the world, but I do prayand here comes the positive prayerthat, while they are in it, you should keep them from the evil.

I. Let us first, then, CONSIDER THE EVIL FROM WHICH CHRIST PRAYS THAT HIS PEOPLE MAY BE KEPT.   
We have no hesitation in declaring that the only evil here intended is the evil of sin. It may be true that Jesus Christ pleads with His Father to preserve us from some of the direful afflictions which might be too much for our mortal frame to endure. It may be that, sometimes, the blows and attacks of the enemy are warded off by the arm of the intercession of Jesus. It may be that the great aegis of Almighty God is often held over our heads in matters of Providence to keep us from evil when we walk, and to guard us lest we dash our feet against a stone. We feel persuaded, however, that neither of these things is here intended, but that, the evil, so continually spoken of in Scripture, the evil pre-eminently here meant, is sin and nothing else. I pray that you should keep them from the evil.   
Afflictions are often beneficial, therefore Christ does not plead that we should be kept entirely from this kind of evil. Trial brings us to His feet and gives new life to prayer, therefore Christ has not asked that this bittersweet might not be given to us. Death itself, which seems an evil, is a good thing for Believers, so Christ does not ask that we may not die. The petition He puts up here for His people is, I pray that You should keep them from the evilthe special evil, the particular, the deadly evil of sin.   
Let us here remark that sin is an unqualified evil. It is the evil without the mitigation of any good in it. In sin there can be no goodit is evil, only evil and that continually. The lowest form of sin is the evil. The highest is the evil more fully developed. Sin in an angel was the evil, for it turned him into a devil. Sin in Eden was the evil, for it plucked up the fair trees by the roots and blasted all their fruitsand sent Adam out to till the ground from where he was taken. Sin is always an evilit brings no profit to anyone. It shall not profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul, and in especially the Christian it is evil, nothing but evil. Sin can never benefit him, it is an evil, only an evil, a powerful evil and a dreadful evilit is unmitigated evilit is the evil.   
It is true, out of evil God brings good. Sometimes the very sins of Gods people are overruled so as to preserve them from some greater sin, but that does not destroy the evil. If God sends out bears from the woods to execute his commission, and they slay the mocking children, they are still bears. And if sin is sometimes made to be the means of honoring God, yet sin is sin, notwithstanding any purpose that God may accomplish by it. And no false preaching can ever make us believe any doctrine which would take away the deadly character which by right belongs to sin. It is always hurtful and dangerous.   
The Christian who trusts that, by any one sin, he may keep himself out of difficulty, or get himself out of difficulty, makes a terrible mistake. This cannot bring you good. But, you say, I am in real difficulties. My creditors are pressing me, what shall I do? If I could draw that accommodation bill, or forge that note, there might be some good in it. There cannot be any good in it! Sin is evil! It is the evil. It is the evil without a single particle of goodness. It is the evil without any mitigation whatever. Oh, says another, if I were to do such-and-such a thingit is but a little evilI should then prosper in business! And then I could dedicate myself to God and serve Him better! And so, out of the evil, I could bring a good. The end would justify the means. No! If the means are bad, they are bad. If the means are evil, they are evil. Sin is sin and nothing but sinand however there may, sometimes, appear to be temporary advantages in itit is still evil, and only evil. What though the noxious draught may sometimes stimulate the man and seem to make him mightier, it really weakens himand it will ultimately destroy him. A man may fancy sin to be good for a time. It may patch him up in respectability and make him stand a little more favorably in the eyes of worldlings, but the house repaired with such rotten material as that shall fall, notwithstanding all that is done to prop it up! All sin is unmitigated evil, and the only name we will give to it is, evil. Let the monster plead as it may and ask us to call it good, we charge it with having slain our Lordand we condemn it as an evil to be hated and avoided. A serpent may have beauteous blue hues upon his scales, but he is a deadly thing and is to be crushed to the earth.   
Next, we say that sin is the evil because it is an unparalleled evil. You can find nothing in the world so evil as sin. Nothing has so desolated this fair earth of ours as sin has. Tell me that war has slain its tens and hundreds of thousands, that earthquakes have shaken down vast cities, that pestilence has devoured millionsdescribe to me the concussion of the elements, speak to me of the wild uproar of Nature abroad, and remind me of how it smites down man, and destroys his handiworkbut when you have written out the black catalog of all the terrible things that have happened to man, I will still tell you that sin stands up as the monster evil, the giant topping them all, head and shoulders above them, the most unqualified and unparalleled evil in the world!   
You ask me whether sin has done much evil, I answer you, Yes. Look at Edens garden blasted, a whole world drowned with water, even the tops of the mountains covered! Watch the earth open and Korah, Dathan, and Abiram go down into the Pit. Watch fire rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah and see the cities of the plain, with all their inhabitants, destroyed. But sin has done more than thatit has dug a Hell somewhere, we know not wherenot in the caverns of the earth. That were a direful thought, that this home of the righteous for a season should become the dwelling of the damned. If there is anything worse than that, sin is guilty of it, for it slaughtered Emmanuel, it slew the Lord of Life and Glory! Sin betrayed Him, scourged Him, put a crown of thorns upon His head, spit in His face, crucified Him, nailed His hands and His feet to the accursed tree! Sin sat by and watched Him till He died. And that momentblessed be His name!the sins of all His people were finished. Sin is unparalleled. No evil can compare with it. Find what evil you please, sin stands out first and foremost as the evil.   
Sin also, in some sense, is an evil that has no remedy. You may, perhaps, be somewhat startled by that thought, especially when you have so continually heard me say that the death of Christ takes away from a Christian the very guilt of his sin, so that he is not guilty before God, but stands accepted in Christ, with his Saviors righteousness on, so that he can plead that before God and even claim the merits imputed to him through Jesus. Still, what I have said is truethat for sin there still remains no remedy, even to the Christian, when he has committed it. There is the remedy of forgiveness, so far as he is concerned, but there is no remedy for the sin itself. Where, for instance, is the remedy for a sinful word that I have spoken? Can my tears bring it back and stop it from doing an injury to my fellow creatures? Even though Christ has forgiven me, that will not end the wrong I may have done to others. When I drop a single stone of sin into the ocean of this universe, it will continue to make circle after circle, always expanding. I may, through my whole life, labor with more than seraphic zeal, and with a Christ-like heart to undo the evil I have donebut if I might work throughout eternity I could never untie those knots that I have tied, or dash down those mountains that I have piled, or dry up the rivers I have dug.   
True, the sin is all forgiven. It will never be laid to my charge, but, I think, though Christ has forgiven me, I shall never forgive myself for some things in which I may have disgraced His name and dishonored His blessed Person. When some of you old blasphemers recollect that some in Hell were damned by your means, you may thank God that you are saved, but you cannot undo that ruin to immortal souls. Sin is the evil. Well might Jesus pray for His people, Father, keep them from the evil, for an evil it is, which, though it has a remedy as to itself, has no remedy as to its consequences upon others. God grant that any evils which we may have worked, may be as much remedied as it is possible by the future holiness of our lives!   
Once more, sin is a most pestilent evil because it brings every other evil with it. I think the worst evil sin has ever done to me is thisit has sometimes robbed me of the Presence of my blessed Master. There have been seasons when the Spirit has been withdrawn from me. There have been times when I have sought my Beloved, but have not found Him when I have ardently desired His Presence, but could not find it, and my only song was

*What peaceful hours I once enjoyed,   
How sweet their memory still!   
But now I find an aching void   
The world can never fill.*   
Sin was that veil that came between me and my Lord. Dear old Joseph Irons used to say, Christ often hides His face behind the clouds of dust His own children kick up. So we make dust by our sins and Christ hides behind it. We build a wall by our transgressions and our Beloved hides behind that wall. Ah, Sin, you are, indeed, an evil, for you have robbed me of His sweet society, and taken away His blessed company! You have been sitting on the throne of my heart and He will not tolerate such an insultHe will not stay where sin is. You have entered into my soul and Jesus has said, I will not tarry where there is sin. My Presence shall drive out sin, or sin shall drive out My Presence. O Sin, how much misery I experience through you! the Christian can say. Ah, Sin, how many poor and fettered Believers have had their fetters first forged by you? Sin, you are the anvil on which our doubts are welded. Sin, you are the fire in which our spirits are often molten down to grief. We could do all things were it not for you. O Sinyou clip the wings of faith, you dampen the flame of love, you destroy the energy of zealyou are the evil. My Master calls you so, and such you are. You need not to be renamedthat name once given you shall bear foreverand throughout eternity you shall be pointed at, in the pillory of scorn, by all the saints, as, the evil. Well might Christ ask His Father that while He did not wish His children to be taken out of the world, He did wish that they might be kept from the evil!   
I charge you, you young converts who are about to put on the Lord Jesus Christ, remember that sin is the evil. Through all your future lives you must remember that this is the evil you are to shun. Fear not affliction, fear not persecutionrather, rejoice, and be exceedingly glad if that should be your lot, for great is your reward in Heaven! But, I charge you, fear sin! I commend you to the God of all Grace who is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the Presence of His Glory. But yet I beg you always to recollect that sin, itself, is the evil to you. It will always be so to you as long as you live and, though forgiven, it is still pardoned sin. Shun it in the least degree! Do not give way to little sins and you will not give way to big ones. Remember the proverb, Take care of the pence, and the pounds will take care of themselves. Beware of little sins and you will not commit great ones. I charge you, keep your hearts in the love of God and may God, Himself, preserve you, according to our Saviors prayer, that You should keep them from the evil.   
II. We can make only a very few remarks upon the second point, which is THE DANGER TO WHICH CHRISTS PEOPLE ARE EXPOSED. Is there any danger of Christian men running into sin? After they have believed in Jesus and after they have been pardoned, will they commit sin again? After they have been adopted into Gods family, will they sin? Will they, can they sin after all that! O Beloved! I thought once, when my Lord first pardoned me, that I could never sin against Him anymore. When black from head to foot, He spoke the cleansing word and made me whitewhen He took off my rags and clothed me in royal garments, and kissed me with the kisses of His love, and showed me His deep, affectionate heart, I thought, O blessed Jesus! Can I ever again sin against You? Can it be that I, a pardoned rebel, whom You have forgiven so much, could do such a thing? No, precious Jesus, the young, convert thinks, I can come and wash Your feet with my tears and wipe them with the hairs of my head, but I cannot sin, I will not sin. Ah, how soon is that beautiful vision taken away! How soon the theory is spoiled by experience!   
Beloved, do you not find that you are in danger of sinning right now? Those of us who are youngwhat danger of sinning we are in! While our passions are strong and our lusts furious, we have need to be kept of God, or we shall sin against Him. And you middle-aged gentlemen, to you, also, I have a word or two to say. You always pray so particularly for the young and the young people are very much obliged to youand they always intend to pray especially for you, because you are in the most dangerous position! I remind you of what I have told you before, that there is in Scripture no instance of a young man falling into sin, but there is more than one such instance of a middle-aged man!   
You grandparents with snowy heads, whose hairs are whitened with ageknow you not that you still have need of Divine keeping or you will fall? O you veterans in the army of the Lord, do you not acknowledge that if His Grace were withdrawn from you, you have enough tinder in your hearts to catch fire, for your souls are not yet perfectly purified? When I ask my old Brothers and Sisters whether sin is still present with them, each one of them always says, Well, I thought I had a bad heart, once, but I know I have one now. I thought I was vile, once, but I know I am now. I grow viler and viler as the years roll on and I see myself to be more and more so every day. Is it not so with you? Ah, is it not just so with you perpetually? And will you not confess, till your last dying moment, that you will be kept if God keeps you, but that if He were to leave you, you would be lost? I was pleased to hear some of the good answers the young people gave me when I asked them, Do you think you will be kept faithful to Christ to the end? Yes, by Gods Grace, they said. But suppose God should leave you? I next asked, and how exceedingly proper the answer was! God will not leave me, so I cannot tell anything about that. That was a sweet way of answering the question. He has promised that He will not leave us, nor forsake us, so, Christian, while we warn you of the danger if God should leave you, we comfort you by telling you that He will not leave you!   
Mark the terrible threats that those poor Arminians have been speaking of so much. Those who know nothing of the Doctrines of Grace make out that sinners fall and come in again, and fall again, and come in againand a more unscriptural doctrine cannot be propounded, for God solemnly declares that if it were possible for a man, once regenerated and sanctified, to apostatize, he would be lost beyond all remedy and there would remain no hope for himbut a certain fearful looking for judgment and fiery indignation. I charge you to remember that if it were possible for you thus to fall, there is the precipice over which you must drop. There is no ransom for you in such a case as that! If true conversion fails, God will never try twice! If once He puts His hand on you, and fails, He has done with you. But it is not possible, glory be to His name! He has not yet failed and He never will! Still, we warn you, and Scripture tells us to do so, to remember that we shall be kept only through faith unto salvation and that our Lord Jesus Christ said, My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. My Father, which gave them to Me, is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of My Fathers hand.   
III. This brings us to speak, thirdly, concerning THE KEEPER OF CHRISTS PEOPLE. I pray that You should keep them from the evil.   
We often get to keeping ourselves, Beloved, and a bad job we make of it, when we do that. If a Christian tries to keep his own heart without asking the help of God, he will be just as good a keeper as those guards whom Herod set to watch the Apostle Peter, and who, when they opened the prison doors in the morning, found that the prisoner had escaped. You may stand and watch your heart without God, but you will find that it has escaped and gone after sin, notwithstanding. The Christian must not trust to his guarding himself because he will sometimes be asleep, and then the enemy will catch him unawares. People are often ready, as the saying is, to put a lock on the stable door when the horse is gone. And Christians are sometimes very careful after they have sinned. Ah, but the thing is to lock the door while the horse is in the stableand to take care before you sin. It is better to keep your house from being on fire than to get the fire put out ever so quickly.   
We, all of us, have need to be kept by God. We think we can keep ourselves, but we cannot, for poor flesh and blood will fail. Though the spirit may be willing, the flesh is weak, and if it were possible for us to keep ourselves a little while, we should soon be overcome with spiritual slumber. And then, you know, the devil would come walking into the camp in the middle of the night, and if he caught us slumbering, and off our guard, he would, if allowed of God, hurry us away to perdition! If you trust yourselves to God, He will preserve you. But if you try to keep yourselves, you will fail. How many different schemes people have for keeping themselves from sin! Why do they not go and ask God to keep them, instead of binding themselves hand and foot to this thing and the other, and so thinking to avoid sin? Let us give our hearts to God thoroughly, for He will preserve His own people. Oh, what a gracious promise the Lord has given concerning His vineyardI the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment; lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day. Is not that a precious expression, I the Lord do keep it? The Lord seems to speak in His own defense, They say I do not keep it, but I do. They say that I let My people fall away, but I do not. Look at My vineyard, I the Lord do keep it. Whatever they may say, I will water it every moment; lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day. This is the only ground of our confidencethat God keeps the feet of His saints and none that trust in Him shall be desolate.   
We must now conclude, praying on behalf of the Lords people that God would keep them. Remember, Believer, that

while it says God will keep you, He does it by means. You must look after each other. I like to admonish you to look after your Brothers and Sisters. Why, there are some of you sitting with only a rail between you, and yet you do not know your next door neighbors! Some of you, I know, sometimes talk too much, but I would rather you talk a little too much than not talk at all. Oh, how little like Christians some of you aresitting down, side by side, and yet not knowing one another! The Church is meant to be a place where we shall be like children at home. Be sure to look after these young friends who are coming into the Churchtry and take care of them. We need a few fathers who will lead them in the right way. Poor Souls, you cannot expect them to know much. Some of them, indeed, may have been long in the service of Godothers have just commenced to run the Christian raceyou must look after the young ones, and then the prayer of Christ will be fulfilled in their case, I pray that You should keep them from the evil.   
Finally, remember that the only Keeper of the saints is God, and put your souls day by day into His hands. I beseech you, by the love of Christ, forget not His holy prayer of which I have been speaking to you! Often meditate upon the Grace that put you into the Saviors custody. Oh, forget not that you have been His from all eternity, and that it ill becomes you to sin! Do not forget that you are elect in Christ and it would be a disgrace to you to transgress. Recollect that you are one of the aristocracy of the universeyou must not mix with vile worldlings! Remember that the blood royal of Heaven runs in your veinstherefore do not disgrace yourselves by acts which might be tolerated in a beggar, but which would demean a prince of the heavenly household! Stand on your dignity! Think of your future glory! Remember where you stand and in whom you standin the Person of Jesus! Fall at His feet daily! Grasp His strength hourly, crying out   
*Oh, for this no power have I   
My strength is at Your feet to lie.*

O Beloved, you who do not love the Lord, I cannot pray that God would keep you from the evil because you are already in it! But I do pray God to take you out of it. There are some of you who do not feel sin to be an evil and shall I tell you why? Did you ever try to pull a bucket up a well? You know that when it is full of water, you can pull it easily so long as the bucket remains in the waterbut when it gets above the water, you know how heavy it is. It is just so with you. While you are in sin, you do not feel it to be a burdenit does not seem to be evil! But if the Lord once draws you out of sin, you will find it to be an intolerable, a heinous evil! May the Lord, this night, wind some of you up! Though you are very deep down, may He draw you up out of sin and give you acceptance in the Beloved! May you have new hearts and right spirits which are alone the gift of God! Remember the words of the Lord JesusAsk, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for everyone that asks receives; and he that seeks, finds; and to him that knocks it shall be opened. God give you Grace to ask, and seek, and knock, for Jesus sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **ISAIAH 49:1-23.**

Verses 1, 2. Listen, O isles, unto Me; and hearken, you people from far; the Lord has called Me from the womb; from the bowels of My mother has He made mention of My name. And He has made My mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of His hand has He hid Me, and made Me a polished shaft; in His quiver has He hid Me. Our Lord Jesus, that great Prophet of the Church, was in a special manner the Lords in the matter of His birth. A wondrous holy mystery hangs about His birth at BethlehemHe was, in that respect, the Lords in a very remarkable sense. He has made My mouth like a sharp sword. You know how our Lords mouth, or the Word of His Gospel that issues from His mouth, is like a sharp swordhow it conquershow it cuts its wayhow, wherever it goes, it pierces even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. In the shadow of His hand has He hid Me. You know how the protecting hand of God always covered Christ and how His Gospel is always sheltered by the Providence of God.

3. And said unto Me, You are My servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified. It is wonderful condescension on Christs part to take the name of His Church so that He, Himself, is called, Israel, in this passage. And there is another passage, equally remarkable, where the Church is allowed to take one of the names of ChristThis is the name wherewith she shall be called, The Lord Our Righteousness. Such an intermingling of interests, such a wonderful union is there between Christ and His Church, that these two are truly one!

4 *.* Then I said, I have labored in vain, I have spent My strength for nothing, and in vain: yet surely My judgment is with the LORD, and My work with My God. Our Savior did, in His earthly ministry, to a large extent labor in vain. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. He was sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, yet how few of them recognized Him as the good Shepherd. He told His disciples that after He returned to His Father, those who believed in Him should do even greater things than He had done. That promise was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost and since then it has been fulfilled over and over again in the history of the Christian Church.

5. And now, says the LORD that formed Me from the womb to be His servant, to bring Jacob again to Him, Though Israel is not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the LORD, and My God shall be My strength. What though the Jews still reject the Messiah, their sin does not affect His honor. His Glory is still as great as ever it was in the esteem of the Most High!

6. And He said, It is a light thing that You should be My Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give You for a light to the Gentiles, that You may be My salvation unto the end of the earth. What a blessed passage this is for you and for me, Beloved! Strangers to the commonwealth of Israel were we, but, now, we who were afar off are made near by the blood of Jesus and so are made fellow-heirs with the seed of Abraham, partakers of the same Covenant blessing as the father of the faithful enjoys. In this let us exceedingly rejoice! And for this let us praise and magnify the name of the Lord.

7. Thus says the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel, and His Holy One, to Him whom man despises, to Him whom the nation abhors. What a true picture this is of the way in which the Jews still treat the promised Messiah! To this day they gnash their teeth at the very mention of the name of Jesus of Nazareth. And the bitterest words of blasphemy that are ever uttered by human lips come from the mouth of Israel against the Lord JesusHim whom the nation abhors.

7. To a Servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the LORD that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and He shall choose You. The Father has chosen Christ to be the precious cornerstone of the eternal Temple and He has also chosen all the living stones that are to be joined to Him forever.

8, 9. Thus says the LORD, In an acceptable time have I heard You, and in a day of salvation have I helped You: and I will preserve You, and give You for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages; that You may say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places. Dear Brothers and Sisters, what honor the Lord has put upon Christ! In proportion as He has been the despised of men and the abhorred of the Jewish nation, God has made Him to be His own delight, His Well-Beloved. He displays through Him the marvels of His saving power for His own Glory. I pray that it may be displayed in our midst just now, and in the way mentioned hereI will preserve You, and give You for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages; that You may say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness. Show yourselves. Come, Beloved, after you receive such a message as this from Gods mouth, what prison can hold you? What darkness can conceal you? The Word of Christ shall break your bonds asunder and change your darkness into the glory of noonday! May this gracious work be done for any of you who are prisoners!

10. They shall not hunger nor thirst. To the woman at the well, Christ said, Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst. That is a parallel to this passageThey shall not hunger nor thirst.

10. Neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for He that has mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall He guide them. Oh, the wondrous sweetness of these exceedingly great and precious promises! They are all concerning Christ, you see. Undoubtedly they are given with an eye to us, but yet much more with an eye to Him, that He may be glorified in the deliverance and guidance of His people, in the protection of them from danger, and in the abundant provision for the supply of all their needs. It would not be for Christs honor to let you die of thirst, poor thirsty one! It would not glorify Him to lead you where there were no springs of water. Be sure, then, that God will always do that which will glorify His Sonand He will therefore deal well with you for His sake.

11, 12. And I will make all My mountains a way, and My highways shall be exalted. Behold, these shall come from far and, lo, these from the north and from the west; and these from the land of Sinim. From far-away China they must come to Christ! The result of His death is not left to chance. Some say that His death did something or other, which, somehow or other, will benefit somebody or other. But we never speak in that indefinite way. We know that Christ, by His death, did eternally redeem His people, and we are quite sure that He will have all those for whom He laid down the ransom price. He died with a clear intent, a definite purpose, and for the joy that was set before Him, He endured the Cross, despising the shame. He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied. The Divine intent and purpose of the death of Christ cannot possibly be frustrated. He reigns from the Cross and He shall win and conquer world without end!

13. Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains: for the Lord has comforted His people, and will have mercy upon His afflicted. How? Why, by the very coming of Christ, by His birth at Bethlehem, and all the blessings which come with the Incarnate God, His afflicted ones are consoled and all His people are Divinely comforted. Shall we not, then, rejoice in Christ, who is Himself so full of joy that He teaches the very heavens to sing and the mountains to break forth in praise?

14. But Zion said. Hear the lament of the poor Jewish Church, like a castaway left all alone   
14. The LORD has forsaken me, and my Lord has forgotten me. When we are glad In the Lord and are singing out our hearts joy, there is pretty sure to be someone or other who sorrowfully sighs, The Lord has forsaken me. People say that there never was a feast so well furnished but that somebody went away unsatisfiedbut God will not have it so at His festivals and, therefore, the rest of the chapter shows how the Lord comforted this poor Zion, whose lamentation and mourning He had heard. Notice how He begins.   
15. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Can a womanthe most tender parent of the twoforget her childher own child, her feeble little child that still depends upon her for its nutriment and lifeher sucking child?   
15. Yes, they may forget. It is just possible. There have been such monstrositiesthey may forget.  
15. Yet will I not forget you  
*Yet, says the Lord, should Nature change, And mothers, monsters prove,   
Zion still dwells upon the heart   
Of everlasting love.*   
How that gracious assurance should comfort the little handful, the remnant, weak and small, of Gods people among the Jews! How it should also comfort any of Gods servants who are under a cloud and who have lost, for a while, the enjoyment of His Presence!   
16. Behold, I have engraved you upon the palms of My hands. Where they must be seen and where He can do nothing without touching His people while doing it. When a name is engraved on the hand with which a man works, that name goes into his work and leaves its impress on the work.   
16, 17. Your walls are continually before Me. Your children shall make haste; your destroyers and they that made you waste shall go forth of you. Jerusalem, the very Jerusalem that is in Palestine, shall be rebuilt! God will remember her walls and the Church of God in Israel shall yet rise from that sad low estate in which it has been these many centuries. And all Gods cast-down ones shall be comforted and His churches that seem to be left to die, shall be raised up again, for our God is no changeling. His heart does not come and go towards the sons of men   
**Whom once He loves, He never leaves,   
But loves them to the end.**   
18. Lift up your eyes round about and behold: all these gather themselves together, and come to you. What are all converted Gentiles doing, after all, but coming to the one Church? It is no longer a matter of Jew or Gentile, but all who believe are one in Christ Jesus. Let poor Zion rejoice that she herself is enriched by the conversion of these far-off sinners of the Gentiles!   
18. As I live, says the LORD, you shall surely clothe yourself with them all, as with an ornament, and bind them on you, as a bride does. Converts are the garments of the Church, her bridal array, her ornaments and her jewels. I wish that all churches thought so, but many of them think that gorgeous architecture, the garnishing of the material building in which they meet, the sound of sweet music and the smell of fragrant incense and choice flowers make up the dignity and glory of a churchbut they do no such thing! Converts are the true glory of a churchYou shall surely clothe yourself with them all, as with an ornament, and bind them on you, as a bride does.   
19, 20. For your waste and your desolate places, and the land of your destruction, shall even now be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants, and they that swallowed you up shall be far away. The children which you shall have, after you have lost the others. The children of your childlessnessso it runsthe children of your widowhood. It was strange that she should have children then. It is not so among men, but it is so with the Church of GodThe children which you shall have, after you have lost the others.   
20-23. Shall say again in your ears, The place is too small for me: give me a place that I may dwell. Then shall you say in your heart, Who has begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro? And who has brought up these? Behold, I was left alone; these, where had they been? Thus says the Lord GOD, Behold, I will lift up My hand to the Gentiles, and set up My standard to the people: and they shall bring your sons in their arms, and your daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders. And kings shall be your nursing fathers, and their queens your nursing mothers: they shall bow down to you with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of your feet. I have heard this passage quoted as a reason why there should be a State Churchthat kings should nourish the ChurchHenry VIII, for instance, and George IV. It was poor milk, I am sure, that they ever gave the Church of God. Yet I have no objection whatever to this text being carried out to the fullestyes, to the very letteronly mind where the kings are to be put! What place does the verse say that they are to occupy? They shall bow down to you with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of your feet. There is no headship of the Church, here nothing of that sort! The kings are to be at the feet of the Church, and that is what the State ought to dosubmit itself to God and obey His commands, and give full liberty to the preaching of the Gospel! This is all that the true Church of Christ asks, and all she can ever fairly take if she is loyal to her Lord.   
23. And you shall know that I am the LORD. Jehovah. You shall understand the greatness of your God, His infiniteness, His majesty, His all-sufficiency. You shall know that I am the I AM.   
23. For they shall not be ashamed that wait for Me. Glory be to His holy name, none that wait for Him shall ever have cause to be ashamed! May we all be of that blessed number, for Christs sake! Amen.

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #47 New Park Street Pulpit 1

CHRISTS PRAYER FOR HIS PEOPLE   
NO. 47

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON SABBATH MORNING, OCTOBER 21, 1855, BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT NEW PARK STREET CHAPEL, SOUTHWARK.

**I pray not that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the Evil One. John 17:15.**

THIS prayer of Christ is an ever precious portion to all true Believers from the fact that each of them has an inalienable interest in it. Everyone of us, Beloved, when we listen to the words of Christ, should remember that He is praying for usthat while it is for the great body of His elect He intercedes in this Chapter and the one preceding ityet it is also for each Believer in particular that He offers intercession. However weak we are, however poor, however little our faith, or however small our Grace may be, our names are still written on His heart! Nor shall we lose our share in Jesus love.

I will proceed at once to the discussion of the text as my time is limited. First, there is a negative prayerI pray not that You should take them out of the world. Second, here is a positive prayerbut that You should keep them from the Evil One.

We have, then, a negative prayer in this verse. I pray not that You should take them out of the world. Now Beloved, when we see persons converted to Godwhen men are turned from iniquity unto righteousness, from sinners into saints, the thought sometimes strikes uswould it not be good to take them at once to Heaven? Would it not be an excellent thing to translate them speedily from the realms of sin to the breast of the Lord who loves them with an everlasting love? Would it not be wiser to take the young plants out of the chilly air of this world where they may possibly be injured and weakened and transplant them at once to the land where they may bloom forever in peace and tranquility? Not so, however, does Jesus pray. When the man had the devils cast out of him, he said to Jesus, Lord, I will follow You wherever You go. But Jesus said to him, Go to your friends and relations and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you. Some men, when they are converted, are all for going speedily to Heaven. But they have not done with earth yet. They would like to wear the crown without bearing the Cross. They desire to win without running and conquer without a battle. But their whim has no countenance from Jesus, for He exclaims, I pray not that You should take them out of the world.

I shall first of all speak of the meanings of this prayer. Secondly, the reasons for this prayer. Thirdly, the Doctrinal inferences that we may derive from it. And fourthly, the practical lessons it teaches. Briefly on each point.

I. First. THE MEANINGS OF THIS PRAYER. I pray not that you should take them out of the world. Now there are two senses in which this prayer may be understood. One isHe prays not that they should, by retirement and solitude, be kept entirely separate from the world. And the secondHe asks not that they should be taken away by death.

First, as regards retirement from the world and solitude. Some hermits and others have fancied that if we were to shut ourselves out from the world and live alone, we would then be more devoted to God and serve Him better. Many men of old lived in deserts, never coming into the cities, wandering about alone, praying in caves and forests and thinking they were contaminated and rendered impure if once they mingled with mankind. So have we among the Roman Catholics, persons who act the part of hermits living far from the common haunts of men and believing that by so doing they shall abundantly serve God. There are, also, certain orders of monks and nuns who live almost alone, seeing only their fellows and fancying that they are putting honor upon God and winning salvation for themselves. Now it is too late in the day for any of us to speak against monasticism. It has demonstrated its own fallacy! It was found that some of those men who had separated from society were guilty of more vile and vicious practices and sinned more grossly than men who were in the world. There are not many who can depart from the customs of social life and in solitude maintain their spirit, pure and unsullied. Why, Brothers and Sisters, common sense tells us at once that living alone is not the way to serve God! It may be the way to serve

self and wrap ourselves in a garment of self-complacency. But it cannot be the way to truly worship God. If it is possible, by this means, to fulfill one part of the great Law of God, we cannot possibly carry out the other portionto love our neighbor as ourselves, for we thus become unable to bind up the broken-hearted, to bring the wanderer back, or to win souls from death and sin! Out of the heart proceeds all evil and if we were in retirement, we would sin because we would carry our hearts with us into whatever solitude we entered. If we could but once get rid of our hearts, if there were some means of rendering our natures perfectthen we might be able to live alone! But as we now are, that door must be well enforced so that could keep out the devil. That Hell must be much secluded so that sin cannot enter. I have heard of a man who thought he could live without sin if he were to dwell alone. He took a pitcher of water and a store of bread, and provided some wood and shut himself up in a solitary cell, saying, Now I shall live in peace. But in a moment or two he chanced to kick the pitcher over and he, thereupon, used an angry expression. Then he said, I see it is possible to lose ones temper even when alone. And he at once returned to live among men!

But it may be understood in a second sense. I pray not that You should take them out of this worldby death. That is a sweet and blessed mode of taking us out of the world which will happen to us all, by-and-by. In a few more years the chariot of fire and the horses of fire will take away the Lords soldiers. But Jesus does not pray that one of His chosen people should be too soon removedHe does not desire to see His newly-begotten souls plume their wings and fly aloft to Heaven until their time shall come. How frequently does the wearied pilgrim put up the prayer, O that I had wings like a dove, for then would I fly away and be at rest. But Christ does not pray like that. He leaves us to His Father, until, like shocks of corn fully ripe, we shall, each of us, be gathered into our Masters garner! Jesus does not plead for our immediate removal by death. He asks that we may do well in the world, but He never asks for us to be gathered in before we are ripe. Thus I have explained the two meanings of the words, I pray not that You should take them out of the worldeither by living retired from men, or being taken away by death.

II. Now the second point was THE REASONS FOR THIS PETITION. These reasons are threefold. Christ does not pray that we should be taken out of the world because our abode here is for our own good, for the worlds benefit and for His Glory!

1. First, it would not be for our own good to be taken out of this world. I leave out the first idea of the text and only speak of it concerning death. We conceive that the greatest blessing we shall ever receive of God is to die. But doubtless it would not be for our good to withdraw from this world as soon as we had escaped from sin. It is better for us to tarry a little whilefar better. And the reasons for this arefirst, because a little stay on earth will make Heaven all the sweeter. Nothing makes rest so sweet as toil! Nothing can render security so pleasant as a long exposure to alarms and fears and battles. No Heaven will be so sweet as a Heaven which has been preceded by torments and pains! I think the deeper draughts of woe we drink here below, the sweeter will be those draughts of eternal glory which we shall receive from the golden bowls of bliss! The more we are battered and scarred on earth, the more glorious will be our victory above when the shouts of a thousand times ten thousand angels welcome us to our Fathers palace! The more trialsthe more bliss. The more sufferingsthe more ecstasies. The more depressionthe higher the exaltation. Thus we shall gain more of Heaven by the sufferings we shall pass through here below. Let us not, then, my Brothers and Sisters, fear to advance through our trialsthey are for our good. To stop here awhile is for our benefit. Why? We would not know how to converse in Heaven if we had not a few trials and hardships to tell of and some tales of delivering Grace to repeat with joy. An old sailor likes to have passed through a few shipwrecks and storms, however hazardous they may have been, for if he anchors in Greenwich Hospital, he will there tell his companions, with great pleasure, of his hair-raising escapes! There will be some old soldiers in Heaven, too, who will recount their fights how their Master delivered them and how He won the victory and kept off all their foes.

Again, we would not have fellowship with Christ if we did not stop here. Fellowship with Christ is so honorable a thing that it is worth while to suffer that we may thereby enjoy it. You have sometimes heard me express a desire that I might be in the number of those who shall be alive and remain and so shall escape death. But a dear friend of mine says he had rather die, in order that he might thus have fellowship with Christ in His sufferingsand I think the thought finds an echo in my own breast! To die with Jesus makes death a perfect treasure. To be a follower in the grave with Him makes death a pleasure. Moreover, you and I might be taken for cowards, although we may have fellowship with Him in His Glory, if we had no scars to prove the sufferings we had passed through and the wounds we had received for His name! Thus, again, you see it is for our good to be herewe would not have known fellowship with the Savior if we had not tarried here a little while. I would never have known the Saviors love half as much if I had not been in the storms of affliction. How sweet it is to learn the Saviors love when nobody else loves us! When friends flee away, what a blessed thing it is to see that the Savior does not forsake us but still keeps us and holds fast by us and clings to us and will not let us go! O Beloved Brothers and Sisters, believe that your remaining here on earth is for your eternal benefit and, therefore, Jesus said, I pray not that You should take them out of the world.

2. And again, it is for the good of other people. I think we should all be willing to remain on earth for the good of others. Why may not saints die as soon as they are converted? For this reasonbecause God meant that they should be the means of the salvation of their brethren. You would not, surely, wish to go out of the world if there were a soul to be saved by you! I think if I could go to Glory before I had converted all the souls allotted to me, I would not be happy. But that would be impossible, for God will not shut His saints in till they have been spiritual fathers to those appointed. We do not wish to enter Heaven till our work is doneit would make us uneasy on our beds if there were one single soul left to be saved by our means! Tarry, then, Christian. There is a brand to be plucked out of the fire, a sinner to be saved from his sins, a rebel to be turned from the error of his waysand maybe that sinner is one of your relatives! Maybe, poor widow, you are spared in this world because there is a wayward son of yours not yet saved. Perhaps God has designed to make you the favored instrument of bringing him to Glory. And you grayheaded Christian, it may be that though, the grasshopper is a burden to you and you long to go, you are kept here because one of your offspring, by your instrumentality is yet to be saved. Tarry, then, for your sons sake, who came from your loins. I know how deeply you love him and for his sake, surely, you are content to be left here a littlecounting it for the best that you may bring in your son to Glory with you!

3. But the third reason is because it is for Gods Glory. A tried saint brings more glory to God than an untried one. I do verily think in my own soul that a Believer in a dungeon reflects more glory on his Master than a Believer in Paradise! I believe that a child of God in the burning fiery furnace, whose hair is yet unscorched and upon whom the smell of the fire has not passed, displays more of the Glory of the Godhead than even he who stands with a crown upon his head, perpetually singing praises before the Eternal Throne. Nothing reflects so much honor on a workman as a trial of his work and its endurance of it. So with God. It honors Him when His saints preserve their integrity. Peter honored Christ more when he walked upon the water than when he stood upon the land. There was no glory given to God by his walking on the solid shore, but there was glory reflected when he trod upon the water. Peter saw the Lord coming on the water and he said to Him, Lord, if it is You, bid me come unto You on the water. And He said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. What may we not go through, Christians, at His command? O I think we could rise and cut Agag to pieces and hew Satan, himself, and break his head through the power of Jesus! It is, then, for the glory of Jesus that we yet tarry. If my lying in the dust would elevate Christ one inch higher, I would say, O let me remain, for it is sweet to be here for the Lord. And if to live here forever would make Christ more glorious, I would prefer to live here eternally. If we could but add more jewels to the crown of Christ by remaining here, why should we wish to be taken out of the world? We would say, It is blessed to be anywhere where we can glorify Him.

III. The third point is THE DOCTRINAL INFERENCE WE MAY DERIVE FROM THIS PRAYER.   
The first inferenceDeath is God taking the people out of the world and when we die we are removed by God. Death is not an independent being who comes at his own will to carry us away when he pleases. In fact, it is not true that Death takes away the Christian at allGod, alone, can remove His children from this world. Whether the humble peasant, or the reigning monarch, one hand lifts them to the sky. You will see this by referring to the Revelation where the vintage of the wicked is gathered by an angel but the harvest of the righteous is reaped by Christ, Himself. And another angel came out of the temple which is in Heaven, he, also, having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over the fire and cried with a loud cry to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in your sharp sickle and gather the cluster of the vine of the earth. For her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. These were the wicked. But if you go to the preceding passage, it says, And I looked and behold a white cloud and upon the cloud One sat like unto the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown and in His hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in Your sickle and reapfor the time is come for You to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And

He that sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth. And the earth was reaped. Christ is the Reaper who cuts His own corn! He will not trust an angel to do it. God, alone, has the issues of life in His hand.  
The next thing is that dying is not of one-half so much importance as living to Christ. I pray not that You should take them out of the world. He does not make their dying an object of prayer, but that You should keep them from the Evil One. He prays that they should be preserved in life knowing that their death would assuredly follow rightly, as a matter of course. Many say, one to the other, Have you heard that So-and-So is dead? How did he die? They should say, How did he live? It may be an important questionhow does a man die? But the more important one is, how does a man live? What curious notions people get about death! The question they ask is not whether a man dies in the Lord Jesus, but, Has he had a very easy death? Did he die gently? If so, they conclude that all is well. If I ask, Had he any affection to trust in Christ? the reply probably will be, Well, at all events, I thought he had. He had a very easy death. People think so much of an easy deathif there are no pains in death, if they are not in trouble and not plagued like othersthey falsely conclude all to be well. But though like sheep they are laid in the grave, they may awaken to destruction in the morning! It is not a sign of Grace that our dying is easy. It is natural for persons in the decay of strength to die easily. Many of the most vicious men who have destroyed the power of their bodies have an easy, painless death from the fact that there is nothing to struggle against death. But then, though they die like lambs, they wake up in sorrow! Do not put any confidence in deathbeds, my dear Friends. Do not look on them as evidences of Christianity. The great evidence is not how a man diesbut how he lives!  
IV. The practical lesson we learn from this part of the textI pray not that You should take them out of the world, is thisthat we never have any encouragement to peevishly ask God to let us die. Christians are always wanting to die when they have any trouble or trial. You ask them, Why? Because we would be with the Lord. O yes, they want to be with the Lord when troubles and temptations come upon them! But it is not because they are panting to be with the Lordit is because they desire to get rid of their troublesotherwise they would not want to die at all times when a little vexation is upon them! They want to get Home, not so much for the Saviors company, as to get out of the little hard work! They did not wish to go away when they were in quiet and prosperity. Like lazy fellows, as most of us are, when we get into a little labor we beg to go home. It is quite right, sometimes, that you should desire to depart because you would not prove yourself to be a true Israelite if you did not want to go to Jerusalem. You may pray to be taken Home out of the world, but Christ will not take up the petition. When your prayers come to the Lord, this little one may try to get among them, but Christ will say, I do not know anything about you, I pray not that You should take them out of the world. You may wish it sincerely and really desire it, but you will not, at present, get your Master to pray with you. Instead of crying, or wishing to be away from the battle, brace yourself up in the name of the Lord! Think every wish to escape the fight is but a desertion of your Master. Do not so much as think of rest, but remember that though you may cry, Let me retire into the tent, you will not be admitted until you return a victor! Therefore stop here and work and labor.   
My dear Friends, I had intended to preach from the other half of the verse, but that is quite impossible. The time is so far gone and I can only manage the first part. So I must depart from my original intention. And I will restrict myself to some thoughts which occur to me upon the first portion of our text.   
I pray not that You should take them out of the world. Perhaps tomorrow you will be saying, I am very sorry Sunday is over. I am obliged to go to business again. I wish it were always Sunday, that I might attend to my preaching, or to the schools, or to the Prayer Meeting, or to the tract-distributing. No obstructions of the world afflict me there, no vexations of the spirit occur there. I am sick of the world. Oh, if I could never go into it again. Let me jog your elbow a bit. Does Jesus think so? Hear Him! I pray not that You should take them out of the world. There is no remedy for the ill, if it is an illtherefore endure it with becoming fortitude! Yes, rather seek to improve the opportunity thus afforded you of conferring a blessing upon your race and of gaining advantages for yourselves.   
The pious mind will know how to improve the very sight of sin to its own sanctification. It will learn humility when it remembers that restraining Grace, alone, prevents a similar fault in itself. It will gather subjects for gratitude and admiration from the fact that Grace, alone, has made it to differ. Never shall we value Divine Grace so much as when we see the evil from which it delivers us! Never shall we more abhor sin than when we discern its visible deformity! Bad society is, in itself, like the poisonous cassava shrubbut if baked in the fire of Grace, it may even be rendered useful! True Grace casts salt into the poisonous stream and then, when forced to ford it, the filth is destroyed. Abide, then, O Soldier, in the trenches of labor and battle, for the hardness of service is beneficial to you.   
But remember while here that you lose no opportunity of attacking the foe. Never miss an opportunity of having a shot at the devil! Be ready on all occasions to do mischief to the enemy. In business, drop a word of savor and unction. In company, turn the conversation heavenward. In private, wrestle at the Throne. I do not advise you to intrude religion at unseasonable hours. I do not conceive it to be your duty, when a customer calls to pay a bill, to ask him into your office and spend half an hour in prayer with him. Nor would I think it necessary to sanctify your ribbons and shawls by exhorting the purchasers across the counter! Some have not been quite innocent of the charge of cant who make as much use of religion to attract customers as they do of their plate glass window. Do not talk of religion to be heard of men but when a fair opportunity offers, out with your rifle and take a steady aim! Cromwells singular advice to his soldiers was, Trust in God, my Friends, and keep your powder dry. In a better sense this is minemore than all keep up a continual fire on the Enemy by a holy life! Nothing will more reprove sin than your holiness. If you cannot tell the stick it is crooked, you can prove it to be so by laying a straight one side by side with it. So put your purity before the impure and they will be effectually reproved!

Well then, again, do not be afraid to go out into the world to do good. Christ is keeping you in the world for the advantage of your fellow men. I am sometimes wicked enough to think that I would rather go anywhere than stand up again and preach my Masters Gospel. Like Jonah, I have thought I would really pay my fare to be carried away to Tarshish, instead of coming back to Nineveh. So would some of you who have tried to preach and found you could not succeed as you desired. But do not be down-hearted, my Brothers! A Christian should never get so. If you have but one listener, today, perhaps the next time the number will be doubled, and so on, till they cannot be counted! Never say, I wish to go out of this World. Do not murmur, My life is prolonged beyond my joys. Do what you can! Do not go among people with fear. Do not be ashamed to look duty in the face. If you are not successful, at first, do not be cowards and run away from your guns! We should do all we can to bring our guns into line with our Brothers and take good aim at our foes. Never desert your work, though you come home distressed in spirit, though you see no gleam of success and nothing is gained. Remember you cannot run out of the battle, but you must go on. And you cannot escape the service. On, then, and glory shall be yours, by Gods Grace!

Now, my brethren, what bearing has this text upon the ungodly? There are some here, my dear Friends, of whom I have sometimes thought that I could almost pray that God would take them out of the world! I can tell you whythey are so wickedso dreadfully wicked! They are such hardened reprobates, with such iron souls, that they seem as if they never would be turned to God! There are some here whose portion it would appear to be damned and to lead others to the same condition. I know a village where there is a man so vicious, so abandoned, that I could almost pray for him to be removed out of the world. He is so awfully wicked that many of those I thought hopeful Christians, have been poisoned by his example. Indeed, he seems to be depraving the entire population! He stands like a deadly Upas tree, with outspread branches, over-shadowing the whole place. He is consuming all around him. And instead of it being a mercy for him to be here, it would be like a mercy if he were gone! Are not some of you like that man? Are you not so bad that you are doing all the mischief in the world you can? You never do anything for the cause of Christ. You are always trying to do your utmost against it. You never sow a little blade of Gods grass where none grew before. You are of no service and yet you are spared because Jesus says, I pray not that You should take them out of the world. He prays that you may be in the world a little longer! And what has He preserved you from? First, fever comes and bows you down. But Christ says, Let him not depart yet. O spare him now. And you are spared. The second time disease comes near you and great pains bow you down. Again He prays, Spare him! And you are yet safe. The third time you are fast approaching your end. Now the angel of death is lifting up the glittering steel and his axe is almost fallen on you. Yet Christ says, Spare him, angel! Spare himperhaps he may yet turn to Me with full purpose of heart. He whom you hate, loved you so much that He interceded for you and, therefore, you were spared till now. Remember, however, that this reprieve will not continue forever. At last Justice will cry, Cut him down, he cumbers the ground. Some of you have been cumbering the ground for 60 or 70 yearsold sinnersof no use in this world. Is it so? There you are! Occupying the ground, keeping other trees from growing and of no use! Your family is being damned by your example. The whole neighborhood is tainted by you. Do not tell me I should not speak so roughly. I tell you as long as I have a tongue in my head you shall have no mincemeat from me! If you are lost, it shall not be for want of plain speaking and honest warning. Oh, you cumber-grounds! How much digging and dunging have you received at the Lords hand and yet you are fruitless? The axe will soon be at your root and oh, the fire into which you shall be cast! Ungodly man, you are spared until your overflowing cup of sin is dropping like oil upon the flame of vengeance and the increasing fire will presently reach you. The longer the archer draws the bow, the more mighty is the force of the arrow. What though vengeance tarries, it is that its sword may be sharpened and its arm nerved for direr execution. Oh, you gray-heads! A little more delay and the stroke shall falltremble and kiss the Son, lest He be angry and you perish in the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little!

And yet, I think some of you who have cumbered the ground do most heartily desire to serve God. Poor Sinner! I rejoice that you feel that you have been a cumber-ground. Do you confess that you have been a poor thorn and briar until now? Do you acknowledge that the Lord had been just to you if He had damned you? Then come as you are and cast yourself on Jesuswithout works, without merit! Will you ask the Lord to turn you into a good fig tree? If you will, He will do it, for He declares that He hears prayer!

There was once a poor man in a small country town who had not all the sense people usually have. But he had sense enough to be a great drunkard and swearer. As God would have it, he once listened to a poor woman who was singing

*Im a poor sinner and nothing at all,   
But Jesus Christ is my All-in-All*

Home he went, repeating these wordshe put his trust in a crucified Savior and was really converted. Well, he soon came to Church and although he was a peddler and always traveling about, he said, I want to join your Church. They, remembering his sinful way of life, required some great evidence of a change before they received him, Oh he said, I must come in. But you have been such a great sinner and you are unconverted, added the Elders. Well, said poor Jack, I dont know if Im unconverted and I confess I am a great sinnerbut

*Im a poor sinner and nothing at all,   
But Jesus Christ is my All-in-All.*   
They could not get from him any other testimony save this. He would only say

*Im a poor sinner and nothing at all,   
But Jesus Christ is my All-in-All.*   
They could not refuse him and, therefore, accepted him for fellowship. After this he was always happy. When a Christian said to him, But you always seem so happy and pleased, Jack. How is it? Well he said, I

ought to be happy, for  
*Im a poor sinner and nothing at all,   
But Jesus Christ is my All-in-All.*

Well but, said the gentleman, I cant see how you can be always so happy and sure. I sometimes lose my evidences. I dont, said Jack, *Im a poor sinner and nothing at all,   
But Jesus Christ is in my All-in-All.*   
Ah, said a friend, I am at times miserable because I remember my sad sinfulness even since conversion. Ah, said Jack, you have not begun to sing   
*Im a poor sinner and nothing at all,   
But Jesus Christ is my All-in-All.*   
Oh, said the friend, How do you get rid of your doubts and fears? My faith frequently fails and I miss my sure hope in Christ. My frames are so variable and feelings so contrary, what do you think of that? Think? said poor Jack, Why Master, I have no good things to care about  
*Im a poor sinner and nothing at all,   
But Jesus Christ is my All-in-All.*  
Well, then, if there is anyone here who is a poor sinner and nothing at allwhere is he? In the gallery, or sitting down below? If he cannot say all that poor man said, if he can say the first line, he need not fear to say the second! Never mind if he cant say   
*Jesus Christ is my All-in-All.*   
If he can say   
Oh, but, says one, I am sinful, vile, worthless. All right! Youre a poor sinner and nothing at all, and Jesus Christ is willing to be your All-in-All. But I have blasphemed God, departed from His ways and grievous! I transgressed. Well, I believe all that and a great deal more and am very glad to hear it. For thus I see you are   
*A poor sinner and nothing at all.*   
I am very glad if you will hold that opinion of yourself. Ah! but I am afraid I have sinned too much. When I try, I cannot do anything! When I try to mend my ways. When I try to believe in Christ, I cannot. We are glad, very glad of it Brother, that you are   
*A poor sinner and nothing at all.*   
If you had a single particle of goodness. If you had a little bitnot big enough to cover the top of your little finger, we would not be glad. But if you are  
*A poor sinner and nothing at all,   
Jesus Christ is your All-in-All.*   
Come! Will you have Him? You are nothing at all. Will you have Christ? Here He stands. Askit is all He wants, for you are the object of His regard. There are only three steps. One is to step out of self. The second is to step upon Jesus. The third is to step into Heaven. You have taken one step. I am sure you will take the others. God never makes you feel you are, A poor sinner and nothing at all, but, sooner or later, He gives   
*Jesus Christ as your All-in-All.*  
O poor Sinner, do not be doubtful of my Masters power! Do but touch the hem of His garment and you shall be made whole! Like the poor woman in the crowd, do but get at it and touch it and He will surely say unto you, you are saved.   
If you will go to Him with this cry   
*Im a poor sinner and nothing at all,   
And Jesus Christ is my All-in-All.*   
Then you will see the blessed reason why Jesus interceded thusI pray not that You should take them out of the world.

*Im a poor sinner and nothing at all,* he is most assuredly on the right road!  
Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software.   
PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #78 New Park Street Pulpit 1

THE CHARACTER OF CHRISTS PEOPLE   
NO. 78

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON SABBATH MORNING, NOVEMBER 22, 1855, BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT NEW PARK STREET CHAPEL, SOUTHWARK.

**They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. John 17:16.**

Christs prayer was for a special people. He declared that He did not offer an universal intercession. I pray for them, He said. I pray not for the world, but for them which You have given Me, for they are Yours. In reading this beautiful prayer through, only one question arises to our mindsWho are the people that are described as, them, or as, they? Who are these favored individuals who share a Saviors prayers, are recognized by a Saviors love, have their names written on the stones of His precious breastplate and have their character and their circumstances mentioned by the lips of the High Priest before the Throne on High? The answer to that question is supplied by the words of our text. The people for whom Christ prays are an unearthly people. They are a people somewhat above the world, distinguished altogether from it. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

I shall treat my text, first of all, Doctrinally. Secondly, experimentally. And thirdly, practically.   
I. First, we shall take our text and look at it DOCTRINALLY. The Doctrine of it is that Gods people are a people who are not of the world, even as Christ was not of the world. It is not so much that they are not of the world as that they are, not of the world, even as Christ was not of the world. This is an important distinction, for there are to be found certain people who are not of the world and yet they are not Christians. Among them I would mention sentimentalistspeople who are always crying and groaning in affected sentimental ways. Their spirits are so refined, their characters are so delicate, that they could not attend to ordinary business. They would think it rather degrading to their spiritual nature to attend to anything connected with the world. They live much in the air of romances and novels. They love to read things that fetch tears from their eyes. They would like to continually live in a cottage near a forest, or to inhabit some quiet cave where they could read, Zimmerman on Solitude, forever! For they feel that they are not of the world. The fact is, there is something too flimsy about them to stand the wear and tear of this wicked world! They are so pre-eminently good that they cannot bear to do as we poor human creatures do. I have heard of one young lady who thought herself so spiritually-minded that she could not work. A very wise minister said to her, That is quite correct! You are so spiritually-minded that you cannot workvery well, you are so spiritually-minded that you shall not eat unless you do. That brought her back from her great spiritual-mindedness! There is a stupid sentimentalism that certain persons nurse themselves into. They read a parcel of books that intoxicate their brains and then fancy that they have a lofty destiny. These people are not of the world, truly. But the world does not need them and the world would not miss them, much, if they were clean gone forever!   
There is such a thing as being not of the world, from high order of sentimentalism and yet not being a Christian after all. For it is not so much being, not of the world, as being, not of the world, even as Christ was not of the world. There are others, too, like your monks and those other mad individuals of the Catholic Church, who are not of the world. They are so awfully good that they could not live with us sinful creatures at all! They must be distinguished from us altogether. They must not wear, of course, a boot that would at all approach to a worldly shoe they must have a sole of leather strapped on with two or three thongs, like the far-famed, Father Ignatius! They could not be expected to wear worldly coats and waistcoats. But they must have peculiar garbs, cut in certain fashions, like the Passionists. They must wear particular dresses, particular garments, particular habits. And we know that some men are not of the world by the peculiar mouthing they give to all their words the sort of sweet, savory, buttery flavor they give to the English language because they think themselves so eminently sanctified that they fancy it would be wrong to indulge in anything in which ordinary mortals indulge. Such persons are, however, reminded that their being, not of the world, has nothing to do with it! It is not being, not of the world, so much as being not of the world, even as Christ was not of the world.   
This is the distinguishing markbeing different from the world in those respects in which Christ was different. Not making ourselves singular in unimportant points, as those poor creatures do, but being different from the world in those respects in which the Son of God and the Son of Man, Jesus Christ, our glorious Exemplar, was distinguished from the rest of mankind! And I think this will burst out in great clearness and beauty to us if we consider that Christ was not of the world in Nature. That He was not of the world again, in Office. And above all, that He was not of the world in His Character.

1. First, Christ was not of the world in Nature. What was there about Christ that was worldly? In one point of view His Nature was Divine. And as Divine, it was perfect, pure, unsullied, spotless! He could not descend to things of earthliness and sin. In another sense He was Human. And His Human Nature, which was born of the Virgin Mary, was begotten of the Holy Spirit and, therefore, was so pure that in it rested nothing that was worldly. He was not like we ordinary men. We are all born with worldliness in our hearts. Solomon well says, Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child. It is not only there, but it is bound up in itit is tied up in his heart and is difficult to remove! And so with each of us when we were children, earthliness and carnality were bound up in our nature. But Christ was not so. His Nature was not a worldly one. It was essentially different from that of everyone else, although He sat down and talked with them. Mark the difference! He stood side by side with a Pharisee. But everyone could see He was not of the Pharisees world. He sat by a Samaritan woman and though He conversed with her very freely, who is it that fails to see that He was not of that Samaritan womans worldnot a sinner like she was? He mingled with the Publicans, no, He sat down at the Publicans feast and ate with Publicans and sinners. But you could see by the holy actions and the peculiar gestures He there carried with Him, that he was not of the Publicans world, though He mixed with them. There was something so different in His Nature that you could not have found an individual in all the world whom you could have set beside Him and said, There! He is of that Mans world. No, not even John, though he leaned on His bosom and partook very much of his Lords Spirit, was exactly of that world to which Jesus belonged. For even he once, in his Boanergean spirit, said words to this effect, Let us call down fire from Heaven on the heads of those who oppose Youa thing that Christ could not endure for a moment and, thereby, proved that He was something even beyond Johns world.

Well, Beloved, in some sense, the Christian is not of the world even in his nature. I do not mean in his corrupt and fallen nature, but in his new nature. There is something in a Christian that is utterly and entirely distinct from that of anybody else. Many persons think that the difference between a Christian and a worldling consists in thisone goes to chapel twice on the Sabbath, another does not go but once, or perhaps not at all. One of them takes the sacrament, the other does not. One pays attention to holy things, the other pays very little attention to them. But, ah, Beloved, that does not make a Christian! The distinction between a Christian and a worldling is not merely external, but internal. The difference is one of nature and not of act!

A Christian is as essentially different from a worldling as a dove is from a raven, or a lamb from a lion. He is not of the world even in his nature. You could not make him a worldling if you were able to do to him what you liked. You might cause him to fall into some temporary sin, but you could not make him a worldling. You might cause him to backslide, but you could not make him a sinner, as he used to be. He is not of the world by his nature. He is a twice-born man! In his veins run the blood of the royal family of the universe. He is a nobleman. He is a Heaven-born child. His freedom is not merely a bought onehe has his liberty by his new-born nature. He is begotten again unto a lively hope. He is not of the world by his naturehe is essentially and entirely different from the world! There are persons now in this Chapel who are more totally distinct from one another than you can even conceive. I have some here who are intelligent and some who are ignorant. Some who are rich and some who are poor. But I do not allude to those distinctionsthey all melt away into nothing in that great distinctiondead or alive, spiritual or carnal, Christian or worldling! And, oh, if you are Gods people, then you are not of the world in your nature, for you are not of the world, even as Christ was not of the world.

2. Againyou are not of the world in your office. Christs Office had nothing to do with worldly things. Are you a king, then? Yes. I am a king, but My Kingdom is not of this world. Are you a priest? Yes. I am a Priest. But My Priesthood is not the priesthood which I shall soon lay aside, or which shall be discontinued as that of others has been. Are you a teacher? Yes. But My Doctrines are not the doctrines of morality, doctrines that concern earthly dealings simply between man and man. My Doctrine comes down from Heaven. So Jesus Christ, we say, is not of the world. He had no Office that could be termed a worldly one and He had no aim which was in the least worldly. He did not seek His own applause, His own fame, His own honor. His very Office was not of the world! And, O Believer! What is your office? Have you none at all? Why, Man, you are a priest unto the Lord your God! Your office is to offer a sacrifice of prayer and praise each day. Ask a Christian what he is. Say to himWhat is your official standing? What are you by office? Well, if he answers you properly, he will not say, I am a draper, or druggist, or anything of that sort. No. He will say, I am a priest unto my God. The office unto which I am called is to be the salt of the earth. I am a city set on a hill, a light that cannot be hid. That is my office. My office is not a worldly one. Whether yours is the office of the minister, or the deacon, or the Church member, you are not of this world in your office, even as Christ was not of the worldyour occupation is not a worldly one!

3. Again, you are not of the world in your character. That is the chief point in which Christ was not of the world. And now, Brothers and Sisters, I shall have to turn somewhat from Doctrine to practice before I get to this part of the subject rightly. I must reprove many of the Lords people, that they do not sufficiently manifest that they are not of the world in character, even as Christ was not of the world. Oh, how many of you there are who will assemble around the Table at the Supper of your Lord, who do not live like your Savior! How many of you there are who join our Church and walk with us and yet are not worthy of your high calling and profession! Mark you, the churches all around and let your eyes run with tears when you remember that of many of their members it cannot be said, you are not of the world, for they are of the world! O, my Hearers, I fear many of you are worldly, carnal and covetous. And yet you join the churches and stand well with Gods people by a hypocritical profession! O you whitewashed sepulchers! You would deceive even the very elect! You make clean the outside of the cup and platter, but your inward part is wickedness. O that a thundering voice might speak this to your ears!Those whom Christ loves are not of the world, but you are of the worldtherefore you cannot be His, even though you profess to be! For those who love Him are not such as you. Look at Jesus Character how different from every other manspure, perfect, spotless! Even such should be the life of the Believer. I plead not for the possibility of sinless conduct in Christians, but I must hold that Divine Grace makes men to differ and that Gods people will be very different from other kinds of people! A servant of God will be a Gods-man everywhere. As a chemist, he could not indulge in any tricks that such men might play with their drugs. As a grocerif indeed it is not a phantom that such things are donehe could not mix sloe leaves with tea or red lead in the pepper. If he practiced any other kind of business, he could not, for a moment, condescend to the little petty shifts called, methods of business. To him it is nothing what is called, businessit is what is called Gods Law he feels that he is not of the world, consequently, he goes against its fashions and its maxims!

A singular story is told of a certain Quaker. One day he was bathing in the Thames and a waterman called out to him, Ha! There goes the Quaker. How do you know Im a Quaker? Because you swim against the stream. It is the way the Quakers always do. That is the way Christians always ought to doto swim against the stream! The Lords people should not go along with the rest in their worldliness. Their characters should be visibly different. You should be such men and women that your fellows can recognize you without any difficulty and say, Such a person is a Christian. Ah, Beloved, it would puzzle the angel Gabriel, himself, to tell whether some of you are Christians or not, if he were sent down to the world to pick out the righteous from the wicked! None but God could do it, for in these days of worldly religion they are so much alike. It was an ill day for the world when the sons of God and the daughters of men were mingled togetherand it is an ill day, now, when Christians and worldlings are so mixed that you cannot tell the difference between them! God save us from a day of fire that may devour us in consequence! But O Beloved! the Christian will be always different from the world. This is a great Doctrine and it will be found as true in ages to come as in the centuries which are past. Looking back into history we read this lessonThey are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. We see them driven to the catacombs of Rome. We see them hunted about like partridges. And wherever in history you find Gods servants, you can recognize them by their distinct, unvarying character they were not of the world, but were a people scarred and peeled. A people entirely distinct from the nations! And if in this age there are no different people. If there are none to be found who differ from other peoplethere are no Christiansfor Christians will always be different from the world! They are not of the world, even as Christ is not of the world. This is the Doctrine.

II. Now for treating this text EXPERIMENTALLY.   
Do we, dearly Beloved, feel this Truth of God? Has it ever been laid to our souls so that we can feel it is ours? They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Have we ever felt that we are not of the world? Perhaps there is a Believer sitting in a pew tonight who says, Well, Sir, I cant say that I feel as if I were not of the world, for I have just come from my shop and worldliness is still hanging about me. Another says, I have been in trouble and my mind is very much harassedI cant feel that I am different from the world. I am afraid that I am of the world. But Beloved, we must not judge ourselves rashly, because just at this moment we discern not the spot of Gods children. Let me tell you there are always certain testing moments when you can tell of what kind of stuff a man is made. Two men are walking. Part of the way their road lies side by side. How do you tell which man is going to the right and which to the left? Why, when they come to the turning point. Now, tonight is not a turning point.   
Let me tell you one or two turning points, when every Christian will feel that he is not of the world. One is, when he gets into very deep trouble. I do believe and proclaim that we never feel so unearthly as when we get plunged down into trouble. Ah, when some creature comfort has been swept away, when some precious blessing has withered in our sight, like the fair lily, snapped at the stalkwhen some mercy has been withered, like Jonahs gourd in the nightthen it is that the Christian feels, I am not of the world. His cloak is torn from him and the cold wind whistles almost through him. And then he says, I am a stranger in the world, as all my fathers were. Lord, You have been my dwelling place in all generations. You have had at times deep sorrows. Thank God for them! They are testing moments. When the furnace is hot, it is then that the gold is tried best. Have you felt at such a time that you were not of the world? Or, have you rather sat down and said, Oh, I do not deserve this trouble? Did you break under it? Did you bow down before it and let it crush you while you cursed your Maker? Or did your spirit, even under its load, still lift itself unto Him, like a man all dislocated on the battlefield, whose limbs are cut away, but who still lifts himself up as best he can and looks over the field to see if there is a friend approaching? Did you do so? Or did you lie down in desperation and despair? If you did that, I think you are no Christian. But if there was a rising up, it was a testing moment and it proved that you were not of the world, because you could master afflictionbecause you could tread it under foot and say   
*When all created streams are dry,   
His goodness is the same!   
With this I am well satisfied,   
And glory in His name.*   
But another testing moment is prosperity. Oh, there have been some of Gods people who have been more tried by prosperity than by adversity! Of the two trials, the trial of adversity is less severe to the spiritual man than that of prosperity. As the fining pot for silver, so is a man to his praise. It is a terrible thing to be prosperous. You had need to pray to God not only to help you in your troubles, but to help you in your blessings. Mr. Whitefield once had a petition to put up for a young man who hadstop, you will think it was for a young man who had lost his father or his property. No!The prayers of the congregation are desired for a young man who has become heir to an immense fortune and who feels he has need of much Divine Grace to keep him humble in the midst of riches. That is the kind of prayer that ought to be put up! Prosperity is a hard thing to bear. Now, perhaps you have become almost intoxicated with worldly delights, even as a Christian. Everything goes well with you. You have loved and you are loved. Your affairs are prosperous. Your heart rejoices, your eyes sparkle. You tread the earth with a happy soul and a joyous countenance. You are a happy man, for you have found that even in worldly things, godliness with contentment is great gain. Did you ever feel   
*These can never satisfy.   
Give me Christ, or else I die?*   
Did you feel that these comforts were nothing but the leaves of the tree and not the fruit and that you could not live upon mere leaves? Did you feel they were, after all, nothing but husks? Or did you not sit down and say, Now, Soul, take your ease. You have goods laid up for many years. Eat, drink and be merry? If you did imitate the rich fool, then you were of the world! But if your spirit went up above your prosperity so that you still lived near to God, then you proved that you were a child of God, for you were not of the world. These are testing pointsboth prosperity and adversity.   
Againyou may test yourselves in this way in solitude and in company. In solitude you may tell whether you are not of the world. I sit down, throw the window up, look out on the stars and think of them as the eye of God looking down upon me! And oh, does it not seem glorious, at times, to consider the heavens when we can say, Ah, beyond those stars is my house not made with handsthose stars are milestones on the road to Glory and I shall soon tread the glittering way, or be carried by seraphs far beyond them and be there! Have you felt in solitude that you are not of the world? And so again in company? Ah, Beloved, believe me, company is one of the best tests for a Christian. You are invited to an evening party. Sundry amusements are provided which are not considered exactly sinful, but which certainly cannot come under the name of pious amusements. You sit there with the rest. There is a deal of idle chat going on. You would be thought Puritanical to protest against it. Have you not come awayand, notwithstanding all has been very pleasant and friends have been very agreeablehave you not been inclined to say, Ah, that does not do for me. I would rather be in a Prayer Meeting. I would rather be in an old broken down cow-lodge with six old women, so long as I could be with the people of God, than in fine rooms with all the dainties and delicacies that could be provided without the company of Jesus. By Gods Grace I will seek to shun all these places as much as possible. That is a good test. You will prove in this way that you are not of the world. And you may do so in a great many other ways which I have no time to mention. Have you felt this experimentally, so that you can say, I know that I am not of the world. I see it. I experience it. Dont just talk of Doctrine. Give me Doctrine ground into experience. Doctrine is good. But experience is better! Experimental Doctrine is the true Doctrine which comforts and which edifies.  
IV. And now, lastly, we must briefly apply this in PRACTICE. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. And, first, allow me, man or woman, to apply this to you. You who are of the world, whose maxims, whose habits, whose behavior, whose feelings, whose everything is worldly and carnal, listen to this. Perhaps you make some profession of religion. Hear me, then. Your boasting of religion is empty as a phantom and shall pass away when the sun rises, as the ghosts sleep in their grave at the crowing of the cock. You have some pleasure in that professional religion of yours wherewith you are arrayed. Which you carry about you as a cloak and use as a stalking horse to your businessand a net to catch the honor in the world. And yet you are worldly, like other men. Then I tell you if there is no distinction between yourself and the worldly, the doom of the worldly shall be your doom! If you were marked and watched, your next door tradesman would act as you do and you act as he does. There is no distinction between you and the world. Hear me, then. It is Gods solemn Truthyou are none of His! If you are like the rest of the world, you are of the world. You are a goat and with goats you shall be cursed. For the sheep can always be distinguished from the goats by their appearance. O you worldly men of the world! You carnal professors, you who crowd our Churches and fill our places of worship this is Gods Truthlet me say it solemnly. If I should say it as I ought, it would be weeping tears of blood. You are, with all your profession, in the gall of bitterness. With all your boastings, you are in bonds of iniquity. For you act as others and you shall go where others go. And it shall be done with you as with more notorious heirs of Hell!   
There is an old story which was once told of a Dissenting minister. The old custom was that a minister might stop at an inn and not pay anything for his bed or his board. And when he went to preach, from place to place he was charged nothing for the conveyance in which he rode. But on one occasion, a certain minister stopped at an inn and went to bed. The landlord listened and heard no prayerso when the preacher came down in the morning, he was presented his bill. Oh, I am not going to pay that, for I am a minister. Ah, said the landlord, you went to bed last night like a sinner and you shall pay this morning like a sinner! I will not let you go. Now, it strikes me that this will be the case with some of you when you come to Gods bar. Though you pretended to be a Christian, you acted like a sinner and you shall fare like a sinner, too. Your actions were unrighteous. They were far from God. And you shall have a portion with those whose character was the same as yours. Be not deceived. It is easy to be so. God is not mocked, though we often are, both minister and people. God is not mocked. Whatever a man sows, that shall he also reap.   
And now we want to apply this to many true children of God who are here. By way of caution I say, my Brother and Sister Christian, you are not of the world. I am not going to speak harshly to you because you are my Brother or Sister and in speaking to you I speak to myself, also, for I am as guilty as you are. Brothers and Sisters, have we not often been too much like the world? Do we not, sometimes, in our conversation talk too much like the world? Come, let me ask myselfare there not too many idle words that I say? Yes, that there are. And do I not sometimes give occasion to the enemy to blaspheme because I am not so different from the world as I ought to be? Come, Brother. Come Sister. Let us confess our sins together. Have we not been too worldly? Ah, we have. Oh, let this solemn thought cross our mindssuppose that after all we should not be His! For it is written, You are not of the world. O God, if we are not right, make us so! Where we are a little right, make us still more right! And where we are wrong, amend us!

Allow me to tell a story to you. I told it when I was preaching last Tuesday morning, but it is worth telling again. There is a great evil in many of us being too light and frothy in our conversation. A very strange thing once happened. A minister had been preaching in a country village very earnestly and fervently. In the midst of his congregation there was a young man who was deeply impressed with a sense of sin under the sermon. He therefore sought the minister as he went out, in hopes of walking home with him. They walked till they came to a friends house. On the road, the minister had talked about anything except the subject on which he had preached, though he preached very earnestly and even with tears in his eye. The young man thought within himself, Oh, I wish I could unburden my heart and speak to him. But I cannot. He does not say anything, now, about what he spoke of in the pulpit. When they were at supper that evening, the conversation was very far from what it should be and the minister indulged in all kinds of jokes and light sayings. The young man had gone into the house with eyes filled with tears, feeling like a sinner should feel. But as soon as he got outside after the conversation, he stamped his foot and said, It is a lie from beginning to end! That man has preached like an angel and now he has talked like a devil. Some years after, the young man was taken ill and sent for this same minister. The minister did not know him. Do you remember preaching at such-and-such a village? asked the young man. I do. Your text was very deeply laid to my heart. Thank God for that, said the minister. Do not be so quick about thanking God, said the young man. Do you know what you talked of that evening afterwards, when I went to supper with you? Sir I shall be damned! And I will charge you before Gods Throne with being the author of my damnation! On that night I did feel my sin. But you were the means of scattering all my impressions. That is a solemn thought, Brothers and Sisters. and teaches us how we should curb our tongues, especially those who are so lighthearted, after solemn services and earnest preachingthat we should not betray levity. Oh, let us take heed that we are not of the world, even as Christ was not of the world.   
And Christian, lastly, by way of practice, let me comfort you with this. You are not of the world for your home is in Heaven. Be content to be here a little while, for you are not of the world and you shall go up to your own bright inheritance, by-and-by. A man in traveling goes into an inn. It is rather uncomfortable, Well, says he, I shall not have to stay here many nights. I have only to sleep here tonight. I shall be at home in the morning, so I dont care much about one nights lodging being a little uncomfortable. So, Christian, this world is never a very comfortable onebut remember you are not of the world! This world is like an inn. You are only lodging here a little while. Put up with a little inconvenience because you are not of the world, even as Christ is not of the world. And by-and-by, up yonder, you shall be gathered into your Fathers house and there you will find that there is a new Heaven and a new earth provided for those who are not of the world.

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #1890 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

OUR LORDS PRAYER FOR HIS PEOPLES SANCTIFICATION

NO. 1890

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, MARCH 7, 1886, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Sanctify them through Your truth: Your Word is truth. John 17:17.**

OUR Lord Jesus prayed much for His people while He was here on earth. He made Peter the special subject of His intercession when He knew that he was in extraordinary danger. The midnight wrestling of the Son of Man was for His people. In the sacred Record, however, much more space is taken up by our Lords intercessions as He nears the end of His labors. After the closing supper, His public preaching work being ended and nothing remaining to be done but to die, He gave Himself wholly to prayer. He was not, again, to instruct the multitude, nor to heal the sick and, in the interval which remained, before He should lay down His life, He girded Himself for special intercession. He poured out His soul in life before He poured it out in death!

In this wonderful prayer, our Lord, as our great High Priest, appears to enter upon that perpetual office of intercession which He is now exercising at the right hand of the Father. Our Lord always seemed, in the eagerness of His love, to be anticipating His work. Before He was set apart for His life-work, by the descent of the Holy Spirit upon Him, He must, of necessity, be about His Fathers business. Before He finally suffered at the hands of cruel men, He had a baptism to be baptized with and He was straitened till it was accomplished. Before He actually died, He was covered with a bloody sweat and was exceedingly sorrowful even unto death. And in this case, before He, in person, entered within the veil, He made intercession for us. He never tarries when the good of His people calls for Him. His love has wings as well as feetit is always true of Him! He rode upon a cherub and did fly: yes, He did fly upon the wings of the wind. O Beloved, what a Friend we have in Jesus! He is so willing, so speedy to do for us all that we need. Oh that we could imitate Him in this and be quick of understanding to perceive our line of serviceand eager of heart to enter upon it!

This chapter, which ought to be universally known as the Lords Prayer, may be called the Holy of Holies of the Word of God. Here we are admitted to that secret place where the Son of God speaks with the Father in closest fellowship of love. Here we look into the heart of Jesus as He sets out, in order, His desires and requests before His Father on our behalf. Here Inspiration lifts her veil and we behold Truth of God face to face. Our text lies somewhere near the middle of the prayerit is the heart of it. Our Lords desire for the sanctification of His people pervades the whole prayer, but it is gathered up, declared and intensified in the one sentence that I have read to youSanctify them through Your truth: Your Word is truth. How invaluable must the blessing of sanctification be when our Lord, in the highest reach of His intercession, cries, Sanctify them! In sight of His passion. On the night before His death, our Savior lifts His eyes to the great Father and cries in His most plaintive tones, Father, sanctify them.

The place where we stand is holy ground and the subject of which we speak demands our solemn thought. Come, Holy Spirit, and teach us the full meaning of this prayer for holiness!

First, I call your attention to what it is the Savior askssanctify them. And then, for whom He asks itit is for those whom His Father had given Him. Thirdly, we shall note of whom He asks itHe asks this sanctification of God the Father, Himself, for He, alone, it is who can sanctify His people. Lastly, we will enquire how is this blessing to be worked?Sanctify them through Your truth. And our Lord adds an explanatory sentence which was a confession of His own faith towards the Word of the Lord and an instruction to our faith in the same matter. Your Word is truth.

I. At the beginning, then, consider WHAT HE ASKED. What is this inestimable blessing which our Savior so earnestly requests at the Fathers hand? He first prays, Holy Father, keep them. And again, Keep them from the Evil One. But this negative blessing of preservation from the Evil One is not enoughHe seeks positive holiness for them and, therefore, He cries, sanctify them. The word is one of considerable range of meaning. I am not able to follow it through all its shades, so one or two must suffice.

It means, first, dedicate them to Your service, for such must be the meaning of the word further down, when we read, For their sakes I sanctify Myself. In the Lords case it cannot mean purification from sin, because our Savior was undefiledHis Nature was unblemished by sin and His actions were unspotted. No eye of man, nor glance of fiend, could discover fault in Him and the search of God only resulted in the declaration that in Him, God was well pleased. Our Lords sanctification was His consecration to the fulfillment of the Divine purpose, His absorption in the will of the Father. Lo, I come to do Your will, O God. In this sense our interceding Lord asks that all His people may, by the Father, be ordained and consecrated unto holy service. The prayer means, Father, consecrate them to Your own Self. Let them be temples for Your indwelling, instruments for Your use.

Under Jewish law, the tribe of Levi was chosen out of the 12 and ordained to the service of the Lord, instead of the first-born, of whom the Lord had said, All the first-born of the children of Israel are Mine: on the day that I smote every first-born in the land of Egypt I sanctified them for myself (Num 8:17). Out of the tribe of Levi one family was taken and dedicated to the priesthood. Aaron and his sons are said to have been sanctified (Levi 8:30). A certain tent was sanctified to the service of God and, therefore, it became a sanctuaryand the vessels that were in it, whether they were greater, like the altar, the holy table and the Ark of the Covenant, or whether they were of less degree, like the bowls and the snuff-dishes of the candlestickwere all dedicated or sanctified (Num 7:1). None of these things could be used for any other purpose than the service of Jehovah. In His courts there was a holy fire, a holy bread and a holy oil. The holy anointing oil, for instance, was reserved for sacred uses. Upon mans flesh it shall not be poured. And again, Whoever shall make like unto that, to smell thereto, shall even be cut off from his people.

These sanctified things were reserved for holy purposes and any other use of them was strictly forbidden. Bullocks, lambs, sheep, turtledoves and so forth were given by devout offerers, brought to the Holy Place and dedicated unto God and from then on they belonged to God and must be presented at His altar. This is one part of the meaning of our Lords prayer. He would have each of us consecrated unto the Lord, designated and ordained for Divine purposes. We are not the worlds, otherwise we might be ambitious. We are not Satans, otherwise we might be covetous. We are not our own, otherwise we might be selfish. We are bought with a price and, therefore, we are His by whom the price is paid. We belong to Jesus and He presents us to His Fatherand begs Him to accept us and sanctify us to His own purposes. Do we not most heartily concur in this dedication? Do we not cry, Father, sanctify us to Your service? I am sure we do if we have realized our redeemed condition!

Beloved Brothers and Sisters, if the sprinkling of the blood, of which we spoke last Lords Day, [The Blood of Sprinkling (Second Sermon) Sermon No. 1889, Volume 32] has really taken effect upon us, we belong, from this time forth, unto Him that died for us and rose again! We regard ourselves as Gods children, the liveried servants of the great Kingthat livery, the robe of righteousness. We were as sheep going astray, but we have now returned unto the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls and, from this day on we are His people and the sheep of His pasture. If any should ask, To whom do you belong? We answer, I belong to Christ. If any enquire, What is your occupation? We reply with Jonah, I fear God. We are not now at our own disposal, neither can we hire ourselves out to inferior objects, mercenary aims, or selfish ambitionsfor we are engaged by solemn contract to the service of our God! We have lifted up our hands unto the Lord and we cannot draw back. Neither do we wish to withdraw from the delightful compact and Covenantwe desire to keep it even to the end! We seek no liberty to sin, nor license for selfrather do we cry, Bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar. Sanctify us, O Lord! Let us know and let all the world know that we are Yours because we belong to Christ!

In addition to this, those who belonged to God and were dedicated to His service were set apart and separated from others. There was a special service for the setting apart of priests. Certain rites were performed at the sanctifying of dedicated places and vessels. You remember with what solemn service the Tabernacle was set up and with what pomp of devotion the Temple, itself, was set apart for the Divine service? The Sabbath, which the Lord has sanctified, is set apart from the rest of time. To man it is a dies non, because it is the Lords-Day. The Lord would have those who are dedicated to Him to be separated from the rest of mankind. For this purpose He brought Abraham from Ur of the Chaldees and Israel out of Egypt. The people shall dwell alone and shall not be reckoned among the nations. The Lord says of His chosen, This people have I formed for Myself; they shall show forth My praise. Before long this secret purpose is followed by the open callCome out from among them, and be you separate; touch not the unclean thing and I will be a Father unto you, and you shall be My sons and daughters. The Church of Christ is to be a chaste virgin, wholly set apart for the Lord ChristHis own words concerning His people are these, They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

By the election of Grace from before the foundation of the world, this distinction commences and the names are written in Heaven! Thereupon follows a redemption, peculiar and special, as it is written, These were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb. This redemption is followed by effectual calling wherein men are made to come forth from the old world into the Kingdom of Christ. This is attended with regeneration, in which they receive a new life and so become as much distinguished from their fellow men as the living are from the dead! This separating work is further carried on in what is commonly known as sanctification, whereby the man of God is removed farther and farther from all fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness and is changed from glory unto glory, into an ever-growing likeness of his Lord, who was holy, harmless, undefiled separate from sinners.

Those who are sanctified in this sense have ceased to be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. They have ceased to run with the multitude to do evil. They are not conformed to this present evil world and they are strangers and pilgrims upon the earth. The more assuredly this is true of them, the better! There are some, in these apostate days, who think that the Church cannot do better than to come down to the world to learn her ways, follow her maxims and acquire her culture. In fact, the notion is that the world is to be conquered by our conforming to it. This is as contrary to Scripture as light is to darkness! The more distinct the line between him that fears God and him that fears Him not, the better all round. It will be a black day when the sun, itself, is turned into darkness. When the salt has lost its savor and no longer opposes putrefaction, the world will rot with a vengeance! That text is still true, You are of God, little children, and the whole world lies in the Wicked One.

The seed of the woman knows no terms with the serpent brood but continual war! Our Lord says that in this matter He came not to send peace on the earth, but a sword. Because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. If the Church seeks to cultivate the friendship of the world, she has this message from the Holy Spirit by the pen of the Apostle JamesYou adulterers and adulteresses, know you not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whoever, therefore, will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. He charges all who would please the world with the black and filthy crime of spiritual adultery! The heart which ought to be given to Christ and purity must not wander forth wantonly to woo the defiled and polluted things of this present evil world! Separation from the world is Christs prayer for us.

Put these two things together, dedication to God and separation unto Him, and you are nearing the meaning of the prayer. But, mark you, it is not all separation that is meant, for, as I told you in the reading, there are some who separate themselves and yet are sensual, not having the Spirit. Separation for separations sake savors rather of Babel than of Jerusalem! It is one thing to separate from the world and another thing to be separate from the Church. Where we believe that there is living faith in Jesus and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, we are not called to division, but to unity! For actual and manifest sin we must separate ourselves from offendersbut we err if we carry on this separation where it is not authorized by the Word of God. The Corinthians and Galatians were far from being perfect in life and they had made many mistakes in doctrineyes, even upon vital pointsbut inasmuch as they were truly in Christ, Paul did not command any to come out of those Churches and to be separate from themhe exhorted them to prove, each man, his own work. And he labored to bring them all back to the one and only Gospel and to a clearer knowledge of it.

We are to be faithful to the Truth of God, but we are not to be of a contentious spirit, separating ourselves from those who are living members of the one and indivisible body of Christ. To promote the unity of the Church by creating new divisions is not wise! Cultivate at once the love of the Truth and the love of the Brethren. The body of Christ will not be perfected by being torn apart! Truth should be the companion of love. If we heartily love even those who are, in some measure, in error, but who possess the life of God in their souls, we shall be the more likely to set them right. Separation from the world is a solemn dutyindeed it is the hard pointthe crux and burden of our religion! It is not easy to be filled with love to men and yet for Gods sake and even for their own sake, to be separated from them. May the Lord teach us this.

At the same time, this word, sanctification, means what is commonly understood by it, namely, the making of the people of God holy. Sanctify them, that is, work in them a pure and holy character. Lord, make your people holy, should be our daily prayer. I want you to notice that this word, here used in the Greek, is not that which is rendered, Purify, but it has another shade of meaning. Had it meant, purify, it would hardly have been used in reference to our Lord as it is in the next verse.

It has a higher meaning than that. O Brothers and Sisters, if you are called Christians, there must be no room for doubt as to the fact that you are purged from the common sins and ordinary transgressions of mankindotherwise you are manifestly liars unto God and deceivers of your own souls! They that are not moral. They that are not honest. They that are not kind. They that are not truthful are far from the Kingdom of God! How can these be the children of God who are not even decent children of men? Thus we judge and rightly judge, that the life of God cannot be in that mans soul who abides willfully in any known sin and takes pleasure in it. No, purification is not all. We will take it for granted that you who profess to be Christians have escaped from the foul pollution of lust and falsehood. But if you have not done so, humble yourselves before God and be ashamed, for you need the very beginnings of Grace! They that are Christs have crucified the flesh.

But sanctification is something more than mere morality and respectability. It is not only deliverance from the common sins of men, but also from the hardness, deadness and carnality of natureit is deliverance from that which is of the flesh at its very bestand admittance into that which is spiritual and Divine. That which is carnal comes not into communion with the spiritual Kingdom or Christwe need that the spiritual nature should rise above that which is merely natural. This is our prayerLord, spiritualize us! Elevate us! Make us to dwell in communion with God. Make us to know Him whom flesh and blood cannot reveal or discern. May the Spirit of the living God have full sovereignty over us and perfect in us the will of the Lord, for this is to be sanctified!

Sanctification is a higher word than purification, for it includes that word and vastly more. It is not sufficient to be negatively cleanwe need to be adorned with all the virtues. If you are merely moral, how does your righteousness exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees? If you pay your lawful debts, give alms to the poor and observe the rites of your religion, what do you do more than others whom you, yourselves, reckon to be in error?

Children of God should exhibit the love of God. They should be filled with zeal for His Glory. They should live generous, unselfish lives. They should walk with God and commune with the Most High. Ours should be a purpose and an aim far higher than the best of the unregenerate can understand. We ought to reach unto a life and a Kingdom of which the mass of mankind know nothing and care less. I am afraid that this spiritual sense of the prayer is one that is often forgotten. Oh that Gods Holy Spirit might make us to know it by experimentally feeling it in ourselves! May, Holiness to the Lord be written across the brow of our consecrated humanity!

Beloved, this prayer of our Lord is most necessary, for without sanctification how can we be saved, since it is written, Without holiness no man shall see the Lord? How can we be saved from sin if sin still has dominion over us? If we are not living holy, godly, spiritual liveshow can we say that we are redeemed from the power of evil?

Without sanctification we shall be unfit for service. Our Lord Jesus contemplated the sending of each one of us into the world even as the Father sent Him into the world. But how can He give a mission to unsanctified men and women? Must not the vessels of the Lord be clean?

Without sanctification we cannot enjoy the innermost sweets of our holy faith. The unsanctified are full of doubts and fears and do we wonder? The unsanctified often say of the outward exercise of religion, What a weariness it is! And no wonder, for they know not the internal joys of it, having never learned to delight themselves in God! If they walk not in the light of the Lords Countenance, how can they know the Heaven below which comes of true godliness? Oh, it is a prayer that needs to be prayed for me, for you, for this Church and for the whole Church of God! Father, sanctify them through Your truth.

II. Now I want you to notice, in the second place, FOR WHOM THIS PRAYER WAS OFFERED. It was not offered for the outside world. It would not be a suitable prayer for those who are dead in sin. Our Lord referred to the company of men and women who were already saved, of whom He said that they had kept Gods WordYours they were, and You gave them to Me. They were, therefore, already sanctified in the sense of being consecrated and set apart for holy purposes. And they were also sanctified, in a measure, in the sense of being made holy in characterfor the immediate disciples of our Lord, with all their errors and deficiencies were holy men. It was for the Apostles that Jesus thus prayed, so that we may be sure that the most eminent saints need still to have this prayer offered for themSanctify them through Your truth. Though, my Sisters, you may be Deborahs, worthy to be called mothers in Israel, yet you need to be made more holy. Though, my Brothers, you may be true fathers in God, of whom the Scripture says, truly, that we have not many, yet you still need that Jesus should pray for youSanctify them through Your truth.

These chosen ones were sanctified, but only to a degree. Justification is perfect the moment it is received, but sanctification is a matter of growth. He that is justified, is justified once and for all by the perfect work of Jesus, but he that is sanctified by Christ Jesus must grow up in all things into Him who is the Head. To make us holy is a life-work and for it we should seek the Divine operation every hour, for, He that has worked us for the same thing is God. We should rise to the utmost pitch of holy living and never content ourselves with present attainments. Those who are most pure and honorable have yet their shortcomings and errors to mourn over. When the Lord turns the light strong upon us, we soon see the spots upon our clothesit is, indeed, when we walk in the Light, as God is in the Light, that we see most our need of the cleansing blood of Jesus! If we have done well, to God be the Glory! But we might have done better. If we have loved much, to Gods Grace be the praise! But we ought to have loved more. If we have believed and believed steadfastly, we ought to have believed to a far higher degree in our Almighty Friend! We are still below our capacitiesthere is a something yet beyond us. O you sanctified ones, it is for you that Jesus prays that the Father may still sanctify you!

I want you to notice more particularly that these Believers, for whom our Lord prayed, were to be the preachers and teachers of their own and succeeding generations. These were the handful of seed-corn out of which would grow the Church of the future, whose harvest would gladden all lands. To prepare them to be sent out as Christs missionaries, they must be sanctified. How shall a holy God send out unholy messengers? An unsanctified minister is an unsent minister! An unholy missionary is a pest to the tribe he visits! An unholy teacher in a school is an injury, rather than a blessing to the class he conducts! Only in proportion as you are sanctified unto God can you hope for the power of the Holy Spirit to rest on you and to work with you, so as to bring others to the Saviors feet! How much may each of us have been hampered and hindered by lack of holiness! God will not use unclean instruments! No, He will not even have His holy vessels borne by unclean hands. To the wicked, God says, What have you to do to declare My statutes? A whole host may be defeated because of one Achan in the campand this is our constant fear. Holiness is an essential qualification to a mans fitness for being used of the Lord God for the extension of His Kingdom. Therefore our Lords prayer for His Apostles and other workersHoly Father, sanctify them.

Furthermore, our Lord Jesus Christ was about to pray, that they all might be one, and for this desirable result holiness is needed. Why are we not one? Sin is the great dividing element! The perfectly holy would be perfectly united. The more saintly men are, the more they love their Lord and one anotherand thus they come into closer union with each other. Our errors and our sins are roots of bitterness which spring up and trouble usand many are defiled. Our infirmities of judgment are aggravated by our imperfections of characterand our walking at a distance from our Godand these breed coldness and lukewarmness, out of which grow disunion and division, sects and heresies. If we were all abiding in Christ to the fullest, we would abide in union with each other and with Godand our Lords great prayer for the unity of His Church would be fulfilled!

Moreover, our Lord finished His most comprehensive prayer by a petition that we might all be with Himwith Him where He is, that we may behold His Glory. Full sanctification is essential to this. Shall the unsanctified dwell with Christ in Heaven? Shall unholy eyes behold His Glory? It cannot be! How can we participate in the splendor and triumphs of the exalted Head if we are not members of His body? And how can a holy Head have impure and dishonest members? No, Brothers and Sisters, we must be holy, for Christ is holy! Uprightness of walk and cleanness of heart are absolutely requisite for the purposes of Christian life, whether here or hereafter. Those who live in sin are the servants of sin! Only those who are renewed by the Holy Spirit unto truth, holiness and love, can hope to be partakers of holy joys and heavenly bliss!

III. I am compelled by shortness of time to be brief upon each point, but I must dwell for a little upon the third subject of consideration which is thisTO WHOM THIS PRAYER IS DIRECTED. Sanctify them through Your truth. No one can sanctify a soul but Almighty God, the great Father of Spirits. He who made us must also make us holy, or we shall never attain that character. Our dear Savior calls the great God, Holy Father, in this prayer, and it is the part of the holy God to create holiness, while a holy Father can only be the Father of holy children, for like begets like. To you that believe in Jesus, He gives power to become the sons of God. And a part of that power lies in becoming holy according to the manner and Character of our Father who is in Heaven. As we are holy, so do we bear the image of that Lord from Heaven who, as the second Man, is the FirstBorn to whom the many Brethren are conformed. The holy Father in Heaven will acknowledge those as His children upon earth who are holy. The very Nature of God should encourage us in our prayers for holiness, for He will not be slow to work in us to will and to do according to His perfect will.

Beloved, this sanctification is a work of God from its earliest stage. We go astray of ourselves, but we never return to the Great Shepherd apart from His Divine drawing. Regeneration, in which sanctification begins, is wholly the work of the Spirit of God. Our first discovery of wrong and our first pang of penitence are the work of Divine Grace! Every thought of holiness and every desire after purity must come from the Lord, alone, for we are, by nature, wedded to iniquity. So, also, the ultimate conquest of sin in us and the making of us perfectly like our Lord must be entirely the work of the Lord God, who makes all things new, since we have no power to carry on so great a work by ourselves. This is a creationcan we create? This is a resurrectioncan we raise the dead? Our degenerate nature can rot into a still direr putrefaction, but it can never return to purity or sweeten itself into perfectionthis is of God and God, alone! Sanctification is as much the work of God as the making of the heavens and the earth. Who is sufficient for these things? We go not even a step in sanctification in our own strength! Whatever we think we advance of ourselves is but a fictitious progress which will lead to bitter disappointment. Real sanctification is entirely, from first to last, the work of the Spirit of the blessed God, whom the Father has sent forth that He might sanctify His chosen ones. See, then, what a great thing sanctification is and how necessary it is that our Lord should pray unto His Father, Sanctify them through Your truth.

The Truth of God, alone, will not sanctify a man. We may maintain an orthodox creed and it is highly important that we should do so, but if it does not touch our heart and influence our characterwhat is the value of our orthodoxy? It is not the doctrine which, of itself, sanctifies, but the Father sanctifies by means of the doctrine! The Truth is the element in which we are made to live in order to holiness. Falsehood leads to sin, Truth leads to holinessbut there is a lying spirit and there is also the Spirit of Truthand by these the error and the Truth are used as means to an end. Truth must be applied with spiritual power to the mind, the conscience and the heart, or else a man may receive the Truth of God and yet hold it in unrighteousness! I believe this to be the crowning work of God in man, that His people should be perfectly delivered from evil. He elected them that they might be a peculiar people, zealous for good works. He ransomed them that He might redeem them from all iniquity and purify them unto Himself. He effectually calls them to a high and holy vocation, even to virtue and true holiness.

Every work of the Spirit of God upon the new nature aims at the purification, the consecration, the perfecting of those whom God, in love, has taken to be His own. Yes, moreall the events of Providence around us work towards that one end! For this our joys and our sorrows; for this our pains of body and griefs of heart; for this our losses and our crossesall these are sacred medicines by which we are cured of the disease of nature and prepared for the enjoyment of perfect spiritual health! All that befalls us on our road to Heaven is meant to fit us for our journeys end. Our way through the wilderness is meant to try us and to prove us, that our evils may be discovered, repented of and overcomeand that thus we may be without fault before the Throne of God at the last. We are being educated for the skies, being made meet for the assembly of the perfect. It does not yet appear what we shall be, but we are struggling up towards it and we know that when Jesus shall appear, we shall be like He, for we shall see Him as He is. We are risingby hard wrestling, long watching and patient waitingwe are rising into holiness! These tribulations thresh our wheat and get the chaff away! These afflictions consume our dross and tin to make the gold more pure! All things work together for good to them that love Godand the net result of them all will be the presenting of the chosen unto God, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing!

Thus I have reminded you that the prayer for sanctification is offered to the Divine Father and this leads us to look out of ourselves and wholly to our God! Do not set about the work of sanctification yourselves, as if you could perform it alone. Do not imagine that holiness will necessarily follow because you listen to an earnest preacher, or unite in sacred worship. My Brothers and Sisters, God Himself must work within you! The Holy Spirit must inhabit you and this can only come to you by faith in the Lord Jesus! Believe in Him for your sanctification, even as you have believed for your pardon and justification! He alone can bestow sanctification upon you, for this is the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

IV. This is a great subject, but I have but short time, so I have, in the last place, to notice with much brevity HOW SANCTIFICATION IS TO BE WORKED IN BELIEVERS. Sanctify them through Your truth: Your Word is truth. Beloved, observe how God has joined holiness and His truth together. There has been a tendency of late to divide truth of doctrine from truth of precept. Men say that Christianity is a life and not a creedthis is a part truth, but very near akin to a lie. Christianity is a life which grows out of the Truth of God. Jesus Christ is the Way, the Truth, as well as the Lifeand He is not properly received unless He is accepted in that threefold character.

No holy life will be produced in us by the belief of falsehood. Sanctification in visible character comes out of edification in the inner faith of the heart, or otherwise it is a mere shell. Good works are the fruit of true faith and true faith is a sincere belief of the Truth of God. Every Truth leads towards holiness. Every error of doctrine, directly or indirectly, leads to sin. A twist of the understanding will, sooner or later, inevitably bring a contortion of the life. The straight line of the Truth of God drawn on the heart will produce a direct course of gracious walking in the life. Do not imagine that you can live on spiritual carrion and yet be in fine moral health, or that you can drink poisonous error and yet lift up a face without spot before God! Even God, Himself, only sanctifies us by His Truth. Only that teaching will sanctify you which is taken from Gods Word! That teaching which is not true, nor the Truth of God, cannot sanctify you! Error may puff you upit may even make you think that you are sanctifiedbut there is a very serious difference between boasting of sanctification and being sanctified! And there is a very grave difference between setting up to be superior to others and being really accepted before God. Believe me, God works sanctification in us by His Truth and by nothing else!

But what is the Truth? There is the point. Is the truth that which I imagine to be revealed to me by some private communication? Am I to fancy that I enjoy some special Revelation and am I to order my life by voices, dreams and impressions? Brothers and Sisters, fall not into this common delusion! Gods Word to us is in Holy Scripture. All the Truth that sanctifies men is in Gods Word! Do not listen to those who cry, Lo here! and, Lo there! I am plucked by the sleeve almost every day by crazy persons and pretenders who think that they have Revelations from God. One man tells me that God has sent a message to me by himand I reply, No, Sir, the Lord knows where I dwell and He is so near to me that He would not need to send to me by you. Another man announces, in Gods name, a dogma which, on the face of it, is a lie against the Holy Spirit. He says the Spirit of God told him so-and-so, but we know that the Holy Spirit never contradicts Himself. If your imaginary Revelation is not according to this Word of God, it has no weight with us! And if it is according to this Word, it is no new thing!

Brothers and Sisters, this Bible is enough if the Lord does but use it and quicken it by His Spirit in our hearts. Truth is neither your opinion, nor mineyour message, nor mine! Jesus says, Your Word is truth. That which sanctifies men is not only truth, but it is the particular Truth of God which is revealed in Gods WordYour Word is truth. What a blessing it is that all the Truth that is necessary to sanctify us is revealed in the Word of God, so that we have not to expend our energies upon discovering the Truth of God, but may, to our far greater profit, use Revealed Truth for its Divine ends and purposes! There will be no more Revelationsno more are needed! The Canon is fixed and completeand he that adds to it shall have added to him the plagues that are written in this Book! What need of more when here is enough for every practical purpose? Sanctify them through Your truth: Your Word is truth.

This being so, the Truth which it is necessary for us to receive is evidently fixed. You cannot change Holy Scripture. You may arrive more and more accurately at the original text, but, for all practical purposes, the text we have is correct enoughand our old Authorized Version is a sound one. Scripture, itself, cannot be brokenwe cannot take from it nor add to it. The Lord has never re-written nor revised His Word, nor will He ever do so. Our teachings are full of errors, but the Spirit makes no mistakes. We have the Retractations of Augustine, but there are no retractations with Prophets and Apostles. The faith has been delivered once and for all to the saints and it stands fast forever. Your Word is truth. The Scripture, alone, is absolute Truth, essential Truth, decisive Truth, authoritative Truth, undiluted Truth, eternal, everlasting Truth! Truth given us in the Word of God is that which is to sanctify all Believers to the end of timeGod will use it to that end.

Learn, then, my Brothers, how earnestly you ought to search the Scriptures! See, my Sisters, how studiously you should read this Book of God! If this is the Truth of God and the Truth with which God sanctifies us, let us learn it, hold it and stand fast in it! To Him that gave us the Book, let us pledge ourselves never to depart from His testimonies. To us, at any rate, Gods Word is Truth. But they argue differently in the schools! Let them argue! But oratory with its flowery speech speaks otherwise! Let it speakwords are but air and tongues but clay! O God, Your Word is truth. But philosophers have contradicted it! Let them contradict it! Who are they? Gods Word is Truthwe will go no farther while the world stands. But then, let us be equally firm in our conviction that we do not know the Truth aright unless it makes us holy. We do not hold Truth of God in a true way unless it leads us to a true life. If you use the back of a knife it will not cutthe Truth of God has its handle and its bladesee that you use it properly. You can make pure water kill a manyou must use every good thing aright or it will not be good. The Truth of God, when fully used, will daily destroy sin, nourish Grace, suggest noble desires and urge to holy acts. O Sirs, I do pray that we may, by our lives, adorn the Doctrine of God our Savior in all things! Some do not. I say this to our shame and to my own hourly sorrow.

The one point of failure to be most deeply regretted would be a failure in the holiness of our Church members. If you act as others do, what witness do you bear? If your families are not graciously ordered; if your business is not conducted upon principles of the strictest integrity; if your speech is questionable as to purity or truthfulness; if your lives are open to serious rebukehow can God accept you or send a blessing on the Church to which you belong? It is all lies and deceit to talk about your being the people of God when even men of the world shame you! Your faith in the Lord Jesus must operate upon your lives to make you faithful and true! It must check you here and excite you thereit must keep you back from this and drive you on to thatit must constantly operate upon thought and speech and act, or else you know nothing of its saving power! How can I speak more distinctly and emphatically? Do not come to me with your experiences, your convictions and your professions unless you sanctify the name of God in your lives!

O Brothers and Sisters, we had better quit our professions if we do not live up to them! In the name of Him who breathed this prayer just before His face was encrimsoned with the bloody sweat, let us cry mightily unto the Father, Sanctify us through Your truth: Your Word is truth. As a people, we have stuck unto the Word of the Lord, but are we practically obeying it? We have determined, as a congregation, to keep the old ways and I, for one, as the minister, am solemnly bound to the old faith! Oh that we might commend it by our holiness! Nothing is the Truth of God to me but this one Bookthis Infallibly Inspired Writing of the Spirit of God! It is incumbent upon us to show the hallowed influence of this Book. The vows of God are on us, that by our godly lives we should show forth His praises who has brought us out of darkness into His marvelous light.

This Bible is our treasure! We prize each page of it. Let us bind it in the best fashion, in the best Morocco of a clear, intelligent faith. Then let us put a golden clasp upon it and gild its edges by a life of love, truth, purity and zeal. Thus shall we commend the volume to those who have never looked within its pages. Brothers and Sisters, the sacred roll, with its seven seals, must not be held in hands defiled and polluted! But with clean hands and pure heart we must hold it forth and proclaim it among men! God help us so to do for Jesus sake! Amen.

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Sermon #2144 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

BELIEVERS SENT BY CHRIST, AS CHRIST IS SENT BY THE FATHER   
NO. 2144

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, MAY 11, 1890, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**As You have sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.   
John 17:18.**

HERE is a great fact mentioned, namely, that the Father sent the Son into the world. Our Lords disciples believed this. Jesus says Himself, They have believed that You did send me. It is one of the first essentials of saving faith to believe in Christ as the Sent One of God. They had proved, in their own experience, that Jesus was sent of God, for they had found Him to be sent to them. Especially they knew this because they had found in Him eternal life. To them it had been eternal life to know the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom He had sent.

They had entered into the possession of a new and heavenly life and they rejoiced in it so that to them the fact that God had sent His Son into the world was indisputable. It was a fact upon which they based their salvation! It was their hope, their joy, their theme of thought and subject of conversation. They declared it with the accent of assurance. Our Lord based upon that fact another. He says to His Father, As You have sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. As surely as Christ was sent into the world by the Father, so surely are the saints sent into the world by Christ.

Note well that I say, the saintsI mean not the Apostles onlybut all Believers. I dare not limit the reference to what are called ordained ministers or Apostles, for I believe it includes all the chosen of God. Was the prayer, contained in this 17th chapter of John, for the Apostles only? I think not! Surely our Lord prayed for all whom the Father had given to Him and not for ministers only. Beyond question, our great Intercessor pleaded for all those whom the Father gave to Him and therefore it is of all these that He speaks in the words of our text. He mentions not only the officers, but the rank and file of the chosen host who have been called by Divine Grace to know Him as sent of God. He says to them all without exception, As the Father has sent Me, even so I send you.

I do not for a moment dispute the need of a special call to the office of pastor or elder in the Church of God. Nor do I question that there are officers in the Church of God upon whom peculiar responsibility restsbut no class of men may be exalted into a caste of Brahmins who are, alone, sent into the world by the great Head of the Church. We who spend our lives in teaching are your servants for Christs sake and we rejoice that you, also, have a high calling of God in Christ Jesus. If we have more

knowledge of Scripture or larger gifts of utterance, accept us as your fellow servants whose talents are cheerfully employed for your sakes! But if you have not these same talents, you have others and you are equally given to Christ, to be by Him sent into the world.

This is no trifle, but a very solemn business. To our Lord it was a special matter of prayer. It is here in that prayer which always seemed to me to be the core of the whole Bible. Our Lord pleads not only about our being saved, but about our being sent. There is something here which deserves our deepest thought. There are two petitions in our Lords prayer which bear upon this. First comes the petitionHoly Father, keep them. You cannot serve God unless He preserves you. You will never keep the Lords flock unless He first shepherds you. The Lord of the vineyard must keep the keepers or their vineyards will not be kept.

The other prayer immediately precedes the textSanctify them. You cannot go out into the world as the sent ones of Christ unless you are sanctified. God will use no unholy messengeryou must be consecrated and cleanseddevoted and dedicated to God, alone, or else you will not have the first qualification for the Divine mission. Christs prayer is, Sanctify them through Your Truth. The more Truth of God you believe, the more sanctified you will be. The operation of the Truth of God upon the mind is to separate a man from the world unto the service of God. Just in proportion as Truth is given up, worldliness and frivolity are sure to prevail.

A Church which grows so enlightened as to neglect the Doctrines of Grace also falls in love with the vain amusements of the world. It has been so in all past ages and it is sadly so today. But a Church which, in a living way, holds fast the Truth once and for all delivered to the saints will also separate itself from the ways of the worldin fact, the world and the worldly Church will shun itand push it into the place of separation. The more separated we are, after our Masters fashion, the more fit shall we be to do His bidding! Our Lord was evidently most careful as to our commission which He bases upon His own commission and declares to be as certain and real as His own sending by the Father.

He so values this that He prays, Father, keep them, and, Father, sanctify them. May those two prayers be heard for us and then we shall stand with our loins girt, our shoes on our feet, our lamps trimmed and our lights burningready to go forth at the command of the Most High to the very ends of the earth. Our mission by Jesus grows out of His mission by the Fatherand we may learn much about it by considering how the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.

I. I would open up this subject by asking you, first, WHAT OUR LORDS BEING SENT INVOLVED TO HIMSELF, for, to a large extent, there will be a parallel between His being sent and ours. The parallel is drawn by way of quality, not of equality. Christs commission is on a higher scale than ours, for He was sent to be a Propitiation and Covenant-Head and so came into positions which it would be presumption for us to dream of occupying. Still, there is a likeness, though it is only that of a drop in the sea.

Our Lords mission involved complete subjection to the Fathers will. He said, My Father is greater than Ithis did not relate to His essential Nature and dignity as God, but to the position which He took up in reference to the Father when He was sent to be our Savior. He that sends is greater than He that is sentthe Savior took up that subordinate position that He might do the Fathers will. From that time forth, so long as He remained under His commission, He did not speak His own words nor do His own deedsbut He listened to the Fathers willand what the Father said to Him He both spoke and did.

That is exactly where you and I have to place ourselves now, deliberately and unreservedly. Our Lord sends us and we are to be, in very deed, subordinate to His command in all things. We are no longer masterswe have become servants. Our will is lost in the will of our glorious Superior. If we are ambitious and our ambition is guided by wisdom, it will take us down to that basin and the towel and we shall be willing to wash the disciples feet to show that we are sent by our condescending Lord. We shall, from now on, have no respect unto our own dignity or interest, but shall lay ourselves out to serve Him to whom we belong. Whatever He says to us we shall aim to do. Although we are sons of God, yet now we are also servants and we would not do our own will but the will of Him that sent us.

Oh, to be sound on this point so as to yield our members in perfect obedience and even bring every thought into subjection to Christ! Oh, to die to self and live in Christ! Can you drink of this cup and be baptized with this Baptism? I trust you can and, if so, you shall fulfill the errand upon which He sends you. This meant for our Lord the quitting of His rest. He reigned in Heavenall angels paid Him homagebut when the Father sent Him, He left His high abode. He was laid in the manger, for there was no room for Him in the inn. Where the horned oxen fed, there must the Holy Child be cradled. The royalties of Heaven are left behindthe rest which He enjoyed in the bosom of the Father must be renounced for toil, hunger, thirst and wearinessand the death of the Cross.

Dear Friends, you may serve the Lord and yet be as happy as your Lord was. But if Jesus has sent you into the world you are not to seek ease or comfortyou are not even to make your own spiritual comfort the first object of your thought. How nice that evening at home would be! But you are sent and therefore must turn out to win souls. How delightful it would be to read that book through and to leave the class alone! But you must not, for you are sent to instruct and save. From now on you are to consider nothing but how you can answer the design of Him who has sent you. Your aim must be to do the utmost possible for your Lord.

The Christian who does much is still an idler if he could do more. We have never reached the point of diligence till we are doing all that lies in us and are, even then, wishing to do far more. Bought with His precious blood, the vows of the Lord are upon us and we renounce our natural love of ease that we may please Him who has sent us. When sent of God, the Savior also had to forego even Heaven itself. He was here on earth the

God-Man, the Mediator and He did not return to the splendor of His Fathers court till He could say, I have finished the work which You gave me to do and now, O Father, glorify You Me. We must not sigh for Heaven while so much is to be done on earth. The rest of Glory will come soon but just now we have to do with the work of Grace. Let us stick to our work here below and do it thoroughly, for our Lord has gone above and is preparing a place for us.

Is it not wonderful how God, even now, denies Himself for the salvation of men? Why does not our Lord come at once in His Glory? Why do we not see the millennial reign begin? It is because of the long-suffering of God He waits and puts off the closing scene because He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. He keeps back even the glorious Advent to give men space for salvation! That for which Jesus longs, and the Spirit longs, and the spouse longs, is kept back in mercy to the guilty!

The Bridegroom postpones His marriage day that men may be brought to Him by the Divine long-suffering. If Jesus can do this, surely we may well wait out of compassion to our fellow men. Even our hope of being forever with the Lord may wait a while. So long as there is another sinner for us to rescue we will remain in this land of our exile. That is what our Lord meansthe Father has sent Me from Heaven and kept Me out of Heaven for the sake of menand even so shall I detain you among the tents of Kedar for a while that you may bring in My redeemed through the Gospel. The words of our text are, As you have sent Me into the world and this implies affinity with men.

Our Lord was not sent to the edge of the world to look over the fence and converse hopefully from a distance. He was sent right into the world. He took on human Nature and became bone of our bone. We read, Then drew near unto Him all the publicans and sinners for to hear Him. He was a Man among men. In this way Jesus has sent you, my Brothers and Sisters, into families, into offices, into establishments, into places where you labor for daily bread among a company of ungodly men. Do not cry out because you have thus to mingle with them.

Your Lord was sent into the world, not, I say, to the outskirts of it, nor to some elevated mountain high above it from which He might look down. He was sent into the world in an emphatic sense and so are you sent, wisely sent, to tarry even among unconverted, infidel and impure men that you may do for Christ His great work and make known His salvation! He was sent into the world and this involved abiding in humiliation. The world knew Him not, therefore the world knows us not because it knew Him not. You are not sent into the world to be honored and pampered nor even to receive your righteous due. If God aimed at your immediate glorification He would take you to Heaven. But He aims at your humiliation, that you may be like His First-Born.

You are to have fellowship with the Only-Begotten in many ways and among the rest you are to be partakers of His suffering! Expect to be misunderstood, misrepresented, belied, ridiculed and so forthfor so was the Sent of the Father. You are to expect evil treatmentfor as the Father sent His Son into a world which was sure to treat Him ill, so has He sent you into the same world which will treat you in the same manner if you are like your Lord. Be not surprised at persecution but expect it and take it as part of the Covenant consequences, for as Ishmael mocked Isaac, so will the seed after the flesh persecute that which is born according to promise.

In a word, your being sent of Christ involves unreserved dedication to His work. When Christ came into the world He did nothing but what His Father sent Him to do. He had no secondary objective of any sort. From the reservoir of His being no little stream trickled away in wastethe whole of it went to turn the great mill-wheel of His life. The whole current and force of His Nature went in one way, working out one design. Now, as the Father sent Jesus, so has Jesus sent you to be from now on by occupation a Christian. You are to be consecrated wholly and alone to the one object for which Christ has set you apart.

There may be other lawful objectives but these you render subsidiary to the one objective of your life. You have but two eyes and those eyes looks to your Lord. From now on you belong to Christbody, soul and spirit from the morning light to the evening shade and through the night watches. There is not a hair of your head but what Jesus values, for He has put it down in the inventorythe very hairs of your head are all numbered. Give Him, then, every single power, however feeble. Give Him every pert of your nature, however insignificant. Let your whole being be the Lords for, you are not your own; you are bought with a price.

This is a high standard, says one. My Brothers and Sisters, it is none too high and it is sad that any should think it so. God help you to know that you are sent and clearly to perceive what your mission involves. We, too, are missioned from above! We, too, are to have a hand in the saving of the world!

II. Secondly, having thus shown you the parallel so far, I now ask you to CONSIDER WHY OUR LORD WAS SENT INTO THE WORLD. Our Lord came here with one design. Christ was not sent to teach a correct system of philosophy. He was not Plato, but Jesusnot a sage, but a Savior. He could have solved the problems of the universe but He did not even allude to them. He was not an Aristotle, ruling the world of human thought, although He could have done so easily had He chosen.

Blessed be His name, He came to save from sin and this no Plato or Aristotle could have done! All the sages and philosophers put together are not worth so much as the little finger of Christ! Christ entered into no rivalry with the academyHe came on a very different errand. Neither was our Lord sent to be an inventor or a discoverer. All the discoveries that have been made in modern times could have been at once revealed by Him but that was not His objective and He kept scrupulously to His one design.

He could have told us the secret of the Dark Continent but He was not sent for that end. He could have anticipated all that we have slowly learned and saved the world the long processes of experiment and observationbut this was not the objective of His mission. He did not come to be a conqueror. God gave us in Him neither Alexander nor Caesarof such slaughterers the world has always had enough and to spare. He conquers evil but not by the sword. Our Lord did not come even to be a politician, a reformer of governments, a rectifier of social economics. There came one to Him who said, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me. You might have supposed that the Lord would have arbitrated in that case but He did not do so, for He said, Who made Me a judge or a divider over you?

He kept to His one business and we shall be wise to do the same. Point me to a single instance in which He interfered with the government of Pilate or of Herod! Had He anything to say about the tyranny of Caesar? When He takes Caesars penny in His hand, He simply says, Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesars, and unto God the things that are Gods. He was none of Caesars for He belonged to God and to God alone! Should not Christian people take heed that they follow Christ in this unity of aim and purpose?

This I know, I am not sent to preach to you any new philosophical system nor to advocate any political party, nor to meddle with any of those social matters which can be better managed by others. It is mine to preach the Gospel of the Grace of God and this one thing I do! If you can serve Christ and your fellow man in any way, do itbut never get away from your one aim and purpose. If we are enabled to save mens souls by the Holy Spirit resting upon our teaching we may die content even though we have left 50 other excellent things undone. There are enough of the dead to bury the dead. Burying the dead is a good workbut this will be a labor more congenial to the dead around us than to ourselveslet us leave it to them.

We cannot do everythinglet us do that which we are sent to do. Oh, that every Christian would feel that whatever else he would like to be, his first business is to be a servant of Christ! Your first concern is to serve Christ and it ought to be your second concern to serve Christ! Then I would claim that it should be your third and I shall get far on in numbers before I should allow any other character to take a leading position. May no possible objective bear any comparison in your desires and endeavors in comparison with your resolve to glorify God your Savior!

Notice, further, that our Lord was not sent to be ministered unto, but to minister. I fear that many of His professed servants think they have been sent to be ministered unto. Their religion consists in coming to places of worship to be ministered unto. Through the week they would like to have very particular attention from the pastor and the Church officersand you hear them grumbling that they are not sufficiently looked after. Surely they must have been sent, not to minister, but to be ministered unto!

Brethren, let us give them as much as we can of our services for they evidently need them, but Jesus was not sent to be visited and waited on, and servedHe came to minister to others and He did so to the fullest! He could truly say, I am among you as He that serves. Beloved Friend, you know that it is more blessed to give than to receivetherefore feel it to be your joy to live as one who is sent by Jesus to be the servant of the Church and the winner of souls! Let us enquire what was Christs work upon earth. It was, first,

to teach. Wherever He went He was an instructor of the ignorant. He preached of the kingdom and of faith and of Divine Grace.

We are to teach. I do not know anything, says one. Then do not tell it but first go to the Lord and ask Him to teach you something. And as soon as ever you know the A B Cs of the Gospel, go and teach somebody that A B C. You need not teach him D E F and G H I till you have advanced so far yourselfbut teach all you are taught. Learn first, but when you have learned, then let others learn from you. As your Master, be teaching the Gospel everywhere. Forget not that He lived and His living was teaching. His actions were so many heads of His life-sermon. His every movement was instructive. He went about doing good. Make your life tally with your teaching and make your life to be a part of your teachingno, make it the best part of your discourse. The most solid and most emphatic teaching that comes from you should be what you do rather than what you say and Christ has sent you into the world for that end.

Our Lord came, also, to suffer for the cause of truth and righteousness. If you follow Him closely, you must expect to suffer, also. Do not cry out about it, as though some strange thing had happened to you. Take joyfully the spoiling of your good name. If Christ has sent you forth like sheep in the midst of wolves, wonder not that the wolf gives you a bite or twois it not his nature? Let the wolf howl, but do not trouble yourself about it for what else should a wolf do? When pain, weakness and bodily infirmity seize on you and you lie for days and weeks tossed with pain all through the sleepless nights, take it all patiently and say, I am sent to show patience, that men may see what Grace can do.

You are sent to save men. It is true that you have not to redeem them by bloodthat the Lord has done most effectually! You have not to suffer as a substitutefor His one Sacrifice has sufficed. But you are sent to seek and to save that which was lost by proclaiming salvation by Christ Jesus. Every man who is saved, himself, should feel that he is called at once to labor for the salvation of others! Your election is not only election to personal salvation but to personal service. You are chosen that, through your being saved, others may be called into the like felicity. View this very clearly and get it fixed in your mindsthen carry it out in your daily lives.

Ah, you say, our Lord might very well give Himself up to His work, for if He had not done so the whole world must have perished. Listen, your work is also indispensable. How is the work of Christ to be made effectual among the sons of men for their salvation? Must they not hear it that they may believe it? How shall they hear without a preacher? I venture to say

that as the salvation of man depended upon Christ, so, in another sense, the salvation of men at this hour depends upon the Church of God. If Believers do not go and preach Christ, who will? If you that love Him do not commend Him, who will? Do you think that the Houses of Parliament will ever meet together to consider the evangelization of the heathen? If the Government did take such work in hand, it could do nothing for it is not a fit agent and it would hinder rather than help the good design.

Do you think the worldlings, the skeptics, the critics will ever unite to spread the kingdom of Christ and save the souls of men? Do not dream it! If the Church of God does not go forth on her holy errand, nothing will be done. But it might be done by angels, says one. I know it might, but, unto the angels has He not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak. He has committed unto us the word of reconciliation, even to us who are menand we must attend to it, or great guilt will lie upon us. I should like every Christian to feel that he has to be the instrument of salvation to certain persons. It is all allottedthe whole country is measured and divided, and we have each our portion which we must conquer for our Lord.

If I belong to the tribe of Judah, I have to help my Brothers and Sisters to drive out the Canaanites from our portion. If you belong to the tribe of Issachar, or Benjamin, you must look to your own allotment and clear it of the enemy. Joshua is the leader, but every Israelite is in His army. Christ has power over all flesh, as the Head of the body, and He has given to each of His members a portion of His power so that each member of His body has power over some portion of the all flesh, and that power must be used in the giving of eternal life to as many as the Father has given to Jesus! God grant that you may feel this and may go to your work as Christ went to His!

III. This leads me a little further and I now invite you to CONSIDER HOW OUR LORD CAME, for this will show us how we ought to go forward when we are sent. First, our Lord came with alacrity. The work of our Redeemer was no forced work. He was sent, but He willingly came

*Down from the shining seats above   
With joyful haste He fled.*

Lo, I come to do Your will, O God, He said. He came cheerfully among the sons of men. You that are sent of Christ must always go gladly to your servicenever look as if you were driven to the field like oxen which love not the plow.

God does not delight in a slavish spirit. If we serve Christ because of the yoke of duty, we shall serve badly. But when our service is our pleasurewhen we thank God that to us is this Grace given that we should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christthen we shall labor wisely, zealously and acceptably. Next, our Lord came with authority. The Lord God had sent Him. He had the Father at His back. Be sure that when Jesus sends you, you are invested with authority and they that despise you do it at their peril. Your blunders and mistakes are not authorizedbut so far as you speak His Word with a desire for His Gloryhe that receives you receives Christ, even as our Lord said, He that receives Me receives Him that sent Me. God is with you, be not afraidyour Lord will not let your words fall to the ground.

Our Lord came with ability, too. What did His ability consist in? Mainly in thisThe Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me. This is also where your sufficiency must be found and you can have as much as you please of it. You cannot get every faculty of the brain, but you can have every influence of the Spirit. It may be you cannot reach the highest form of education or of utterance, but these things are not vital God can speak by your stammering tongue, even as in the case of Moses. You shall do the Lords work and do it well, if you are anointed of the Holy Spirit. He who does Christs work in Christs power works an abiding work which will eternally glorify God. He who sends us out into the world to carry the Gospel to every creature will give us Divine Grace to obey His bidding.

Our Lord came with absorption. Jesus came, as I have said before, to do what He was sent to do and nothing else. He meddled with nothing beyond His vocationevery thought of His Manhood, every power of His Godhead He devoted to fulfilling the errand on which He came. His zeal had eaten Him up. He was covered with it as with a cloak. The Man Christ was all on fire and all on fire with one desirethat He might finish the work which His Father had given Him to dofor this joy He endured the Cross, despising the shame.

Our Lord came with abiding resolve to go through with His mission to the end. He never thought of going back. He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem. He pressed through shame and through death to accomplish our redemption. In these days we shall not do much unless we have a desperate determination to persevere in the teeth of difficulties. Those who can go back will go back. Remember how Gideon proclaimed throughout the host that if any man was faint-hearted he might go home? So do we proclaim todaygo home if you are wavering! If you do not love Christ enough to be resolved to serve Him to the last, what is the good of you? You will break down and lose us the victory at some important crisis.

He that has been bought with the blood of Christ and knows it, feels that he must endure to the endfor only he that endures to the end shall be saved. We go because our Lords sending constrains us. Woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel! Woe is unto you if you do not teach the children, or speak to individuals, or write letters, or in some way fulfill your mission!

IV. Bear with me a little, while I bid you CONSIDER HOW OUR LORD BEHAVED AS THE SENT ONE. Oh, that we may learn from Him how to fulfill our own mission! Our Lord began early. While He was yet a youth, He said, Know you not that I must be about My Fathers business? As soon as ever a man is converted, he should enquire, Lord, what will You have me do? Young Believer, do not let many weeks pass over your head before you have attempted something for your Lord. I will correct that exhortationI wish you would not let a single day pass away without your

bearing testimony for your Master.

But, next, our Lord waited very patiently. He was 30 years old before He preached openly. We do not know all that He did in the workshop at Nazareth. Is it not possible that He supported His widowed mother by His labor? We do not know, but of this we are sure, that it is the first duty of many young men to look after their parents. It is the duty of all to show piety at home. Many Christian women will have done well if they have carried out home duties. She was a holy woman upon whose grave they placed this epitaph, She made home happy. This is what Jesus did for the first 30 years of His life. He was doing the Fathers will when He was a young Man at home.

Though He did not preach, yet while He was working and learning He was carrying out the purpose for which He was sent. When the time came for Him to commence His more public service, He sought proper entrance into it. He did not blunder into Gods work by a rush and a leapHe went to John to be baptized and to be publicly recognized as the Messiah. John was the porter and he opened the gate to the Good Shepherd who came in by the door and did not climb up some other way. He came to John who represented the prophetic chair of the Jewish Church and so He entered into His work as Minister in a lawful and proper way.

I like our young friends, when they feel their time has come for public service, to begin in right style and due order, carrying out the Lords mind in the Lords way. Willfulness in beginning may throw a man out of gear as to his future work and it argues a spirit ill-prepared for acceptable service. That being passed, see how He labored at His work. He was always doing the Fathers will. He worked all day and every day and everywhere, with everybody. Some Christian people can only render occasional service. They are very good at a Convention. They save up their holiness for meetings. At a religious gathering they are in fine form, but they are not everyday saints. The kind of person the Church needs most is the maid-of-allworkthe worker who can turn his hand to anything which Providence allots him and is glad to do so, however humbling it may be.

My venerated grandmother owned a set of choice china, which, I believe, is, part of it, in existence today. Why does it exist now? It has seen little service! It only came out on high-days and holidaysmaybe once in six months when ministers and friends came to tea. It was a very nice set of old chinatoo good for children to break. Some Christians are like that fine old wareit would not do to use them too often. They are too good for everyday. They do not teach their servants and try to win the poor people in their own neighborhood to Christbut they talk well at a Conference. Oh, you fine bits of egg-shell china, I know you! Dont fear! I am not going to break you. Yet I would somewhat trouble you by the remark that in the case of such ware as you are more pieces get broken in the cupboard than on the table!

You will last all the longer if you get to work for Christ in everyday work. Jesus was not sent out for particular occasions and neither are you. We use our Lord for a thousand hallowed purposes and even so will He use us from time to time if we are but ready and willing. Notice about our Lords service, that His prayers always kept pace with His work. This is where most of us fail. When our Lord had a long days work, we find Him taking a long nights prayer. I have so much to do, says one, that I could not be long in prayer. That is putting the case upwards the wrong way! When you have most to do, you have most need to prayand unless you keep up the proportion, your offering will fail in quality.

The holy incense was sweet before God because in that sacred compound there was a proportion of each spice. And so, in our lives, there must be a due measure of Word, work, prayer and praise. I may say of prayer what one said of salt in the Scripture, Salt without prescribing how much. Prayer can never be in excess. You can salt meat too much but you cannot salt your service too much with prayer. If you are accustomed to pray in your walk and works at all hours and seasons you do not err. There never will be in any of us a superfluity of devotion. God help you to be like His Son, who, though He was sent and had the Father with Him, yet could not live without prayer! May you not only feel your need of prayer but fill up that need abundantly!

Once more, in all that Jesus did He remained in constant fellowship with the Father. He said, He that sent Me is with Me. That is a beautiful sentence. Let me repeat itHe that sent Me is with Me. The great Father had never to call to Jesus and say, Come nearer. You are departing from Me. You are too busy with Mary and Lazarus and Peter and John and so You are forgetting Me. No, no. He did always the things that pleased God and He was always in communion with the great Father in everything that He did. Ah! says one, it is hard to commune with God and be very busy. Yes, but it will prove harder, still, to have been very busy and not to have dwelt with God. It is easy to do much when you walk with Godand easier, still, to make a great fuss and do nothing because the Lord is away.

To get near Omnipotence will not make you omnipotent, but it will make you feel Omnipotence working with you. Oh, that we might thus dwell with God as Jesus did, for He has sent us for this, even as the Father sent Him! I would leave with you four words. We are sent, therefore whenever we try to press Christ upon men we are not guilty of intrusion. We have sometimes known strangers asked in this place about their souls, by certain of our friends, and they have grown angry at such a question. This is very silly of them, is it not? But I hope the friend who meets with an angry answer will not be at all hurt.

You are not intrusive though the angry person says you are. You are sent and where Jesus sends you, you have a right to go. The postman frequently knocks at the door as late as ten oclock. I suppose you need to be asleep. Do you cry outHow dare you make that noise? No, he is the postmanan officer of Her Majestyand he is sent out with the last mail and must deliver the letters. You cannot blame him for doing that for which he is sent! Go and knock at the doors of the careless and the sleepy! Give them a startling word. Do not let them perish for lack of a

warning or an invitation. Go on without fearyour commission is your warrantif Jesus has sent you, you have a right to speak even to princes and kings!

Next, we are sent, therefore we dare not ran away. If Jesus bids us go forward, we must not retreat. If what we have preached and taught is of God, if we are ridiculed for it let us take no notice but steam ahead. Put more coals in the furnace! Get the steam up and go faster than ever in the same course. We defy the devil to stop us for we are sent! Next, we are sent, therefore we are sure to be helped. Our King never sends a servant on an errand at his own charges. Our own power fails us, but He never allows His power to fail us when engaged in His service. Those who are sent shall be sustained! But, if we are sent, remember, lastly, we have to give an account. Our Lord does not call for the timesheet every night, but a timesheet is kept, all the sameand there will be a day for passing in the checks and we shall have to answer for what we have done.

I speak not now to you ungodly ones, whose account will be terrible at that Last Great Day. God save you! May you believe on Him whom God has sent! But now I speak to Christian peopleyou will have to render in your account and may God grant you may not have to make a lamentable return in this fashionOn such a day so much wood, and on such a day so much hay, and on such a day so much stubble. Let there be down in your book nothing but gold, silver and precious stonesfor it must all be tried with fireand if you yourself are saved, if your work is burned up you will suffer loss. What pain to find your lifework to be a lot of wood, hay and stubble which will blaze furiously and die out in ashes!

You know what I meanso much time spent in planning frivolous amusements for the people, so much talent expended in teaching what is not the Gospel, so much zeal consumed upon matters which do not concern eternal thingsall this will burn. Beloved, do your Masters work! Win souls! Preach Christ! Expound your Bibles! Pray men to be reconciled to Godplead with men to come to Christ! This kind of work will stand the fire and when the Last Great Day shall dawn, this will remain to glory and honor! God bless you, Brethren, for Christs sake!

**PORTIONS OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 17.** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK257, 258, 262.  
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CHRISTS PRAYER FOR BELIEVERS   
NO. 3133

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1909.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT UNICORN YARD CHAPEL, SOUTHWARK,   
ON WEDNESDAY EVENING, AUGUST 29, 1855,

[ON BEHALF OF THE GOSPEL MINISTERS RELIEF SOCIETY.]

**Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also who shall believe on Me through their word.   
John 17:20.**

IN the very opening of this subject one feels inexpressibly delighted to see the wondrous love of our Savior towards His people. He here promises that He will intercede for each of them before His Fathers Throne and He declares that this intercession also rises for those who are yet uncalled, unconverted and unregenerated! Mark the depth of His affection He spends all His time in continually interceding for His people. I marvel at the condescension of Jesus Christ, that His peoples names are always on His lips. When we consider that notwithstanding all His exceeding Grace and affection towards them, they transgress and rebel, it appears amazing that He should mention their names, or that He should regard their persons! But when we remember that, day by day, in that land where there is no night, He who stands before His Fathers Throne bears perpetually on His breast their names deeply cut in the precious jewels and stones of the breastplate, and always with outspread hands, pleads for them, we cannot but admire His love for them and feel a deep veneration for that Divine Grace which makes Him declare, For Zions sake will I not hold My peace and for Jerusalems sake I will not rest until the righteousness thereof goes forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burns.

You must also note here the peculiar knowledge which our Savior, Jesus Christ, has of all His people, as well as His particular love for them, for He says He prays for those who are yet uncalled. Now, none of us who have faith in God, none of those called and led to believe in Jesus, are unknown to Him. He knows His redeemed as well in one condition as another. He knows which of two drunks shall turn and become one of His family. There are none so sunk in the depths of sin and wickedness that if they are His by the Covenant of His Grace, do not even now share in His intercession! He knows His Beloved when there is no visible mark by which to know them. He discerns His sheep when, to other people, they seem like wolves or goats. He recognizes His family when they are black as the tents of Kedar and He knows they shall be fair as the curtains of Solomon! He knows His children when they do not know themselves to be His, when they fancy they are lost beyond rescue, or when they foolishly conceive that they can save themselves. Yes, and when all hope fails themwhen it seems that the Lord does not know them and the Gospel does not know themwhen no Christian knows them and the minister can give them no comfortChrist knows them even then, for it is still written, I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for those whom You have given Me out of the world; those who have not yet believed; but who shall believe through the word of those who are already called.

Another thought before we pass to the subject, for we need to suggest a few of these thoughts just to start with, as they are in the text. The other thought is thismark how Jesus loves all His people with the same affection. He could not pray for those few who, in His lifetime, had believed on Him without suddenly (to speak after the manner of men), recollecting that these were but a handful and, therefore, He stirs Himself up and says, My Father, neither pray I for these, alone, but also for them who shall believe on Me through their wordas much as to say, These are not My special favorites because they are converted so early. I do not love these better than others. I pray also for those who shall yet be called. I pray as much for one of My people as for another. It is well said by the Apostle Paul, there is no difference. And verily, Beloved, there is no difference in the affection of God towards His children! There is an elect out of the elect, I will acknowledge, as to gifts and standing and as to the labor they may accomplish in this worldbut there is no election out of the elect as for a deeper extent of love! They are all loved alike! They are all written in the same book of eternal love and life. They were all purchased with the same precious blood of the Savior. One was not purchased with His foot, another with His hand, but all with His very hearts blood. They are all justified with the same righteousness, all sanctified by the same Spirit and they shall all enter the same Heaven! They are all saved by the same Grace, loved by the same love, heirs of the same inheritanceand Jesus Christ puts them all together when He says, Neither pray I for these alone, but for them, also, who shall believe on Me through their word.

I. Let us now proceed to the text. The first thing we learn from it is this, that GOD LOVES HIS PEOPLE BEFORE THEY BELIEVE ON HIM.   
Jesus Christ would never pray for those whom He did not love. He is no hypocrite in His prayers. Some people are. Many prayers are not worth buying. Indeed, they are not worth taking gratisthey are not prayers at all! I have heard some pray for their Brothers in the ministry and at the same time they do not act with them, or for them. We have seen many bow the knee in prayer for such-and-such a person and when they rise, their knees are unbent, but their hands are raised to strike the very person for whom they were praying! We have too many hypocritical prayers that are good for nothing! We might roll many into a parcel and nobody would pick them up in the streetsthey are worse than useless, they are absolutely wicked! For a man to bend his knees and utter the hypocritical language of affection before God which he never feels in his heart is little short of blaspheming God! We must have very light thoughts of God when we try to deceive Him with such prayers as these. But Jesus Christ never prayed a deceitful prayer. If He intercedes for any, He loves them. If He pleads for any, He has chosen them. If He asks His Father that they may be blessed, we are sure that He asks it from His heart. Christs prayers all come from His inmost soul. You never hear Him mentioning anyones name before the Throne of God whom He does not really love with an eternal affection. Hence, then, if Jesus Christ prayed for His people before they were called and before they believed and if His intercession implies loveHe must have loved His people before they believed on Him.   
This will very easily appear to you to be a Doctrine of Truth if we consider the Scriptures at large. Some men will talk against it as a wonderfully wicked Doctrine. I refer to those who believe in creature merit and who imagine that we are made children of God by some act of our own. But I think no sincere and earnest student of Scripture will ever believe that God commences to love His people when they begin to love Him! Such a thought would be utterly inconsistent with the Nature of God. Do you not know that God is an eternal, self-existent Being, that to say He loves now, is, in fact, to say He always did love, since with God there is no past and can be no future? What we call past, present and future, He wraps up in one eternal NOW. And if you say that He loves you now, you thereby say that He loved you yesterday, He loved you in the past eternity and He will love you foreverfor now with God is past, present and future! Those who talk of Gods beginning to love His people know not what they say, nor whereof they affirm. They might speak of man beginning to love. They might speak of angels beginning to love. But of God we never can since He, without beginning, had a deathless love in His heart. He has an affection which has no source except in Himself. He could not begin, for He is without beginning of years and without end of days! From everlasting to everlasting He is Godand from everlasting to everlasting His mercies extend to His people.   
That is an argument, I think, that none can answerthat God loved His wandering people not only because Christ intercedes for uncalled ones, but because, from the very Nature of God, He must have loved them forever if He loves them at all. But we do not need this proof that God loved His people before they believed. Go to Calvary and you shall see the greatest proof. Did my Savior die for me because I believed on Him? No! I was not then in existence. I was not even formed, and curiously worked in the lowest parts of the earth. Could the Savior, then, have died because I had faith when I was not in existence? Could that have been the origin of the Saviors love towards me? Oh, no! My Savior died for me long before I believed!   
But, you say, He foresaw that you would have faith and, therefore, He loved you. What did He foresee about my faith? Did He foresee that I would get that faith, myself, and that I would believe on Him of myself? No, my Friends, Christ could not foresee that because no Christian will ever say that faith came of itself without the gift and without the assistance of the Holy Spirit! I have met with a great many, and talked about the matter, but I never knew one who could put his hand on his heart and say, I believed in Jesus without the assistance of the Holy Spirit. I have seen many dying men and asked them this question, and never did I meet with such an one. God foresaw that He would give you faith and therefore loved youis not that absolutely absurd? It is as much as to say, I foresee I shall give a beggar a shilling when I go out of this place and, therefore, because I foresee that gift, I love him, or you foresee that you will give something tonight towards the Society for the Relief of Faithful Gospel Ministers and, therefore, you will then love Gods ministers because you foresee you will give them something! My gift is not the cause of my benevolence, but my benevolence is the cause of my giving it! God does not love His people because they have faithHe loved them long before. Faith is the gift of God. Does my natural father love me because he fed me and because he clothed me? No, he clothed and fed me because he loved mebut his love was prior to his gift. His gifts did not draw his love to me because he loved me before he gave them. And if any man says, God loves me because I can do this or that for Him, he talks nonsense! God cannot love me because of what He has given me Himself. You may say, He loves me because I love Him, but God gave you that love! God does not love you because you are so holyyou are holy because God loves you! And your holiness is Gods gift.   
In the very beginning, when this great universe lay in the mind of God like unborn forests in the acorn cuplong before the echoes waked the solitudes, before the mountains were brought forth and long before the light flashed through the skyGod loved His chosen creatures! Before there were creatures, when the ether was not fanned by the angels wings. When space itself had not an existence. When there was nothing save God aloneeven then, in that loneliness of Deity, and in that deep quiet and profundityHis heart moved with love for His chosen. Their names were written on His heart and then were they dear to His soul! Jesus loved His people before the foundation of the world, even from eternity. He purchased me with His blood. He let His heart run out in one deep gaping wound for me long before I loved Him! Yes, when He first came to me, did I not spurn Him? When He knocked at the door and asked for entrance, did I not drive Him away and do despite to His Grace? Ah, I can remember that I full often diduntil at last, by His effectual Grace, He said, I must, I will come inand then He turned my heart and made me love Him! But even until now I would have resisted Him had it not been for His Grace. Well, then, since He purchased me when I was dead in sins, does it not follow as a necessary and logical consequence that He must have loved me? And therefore, the Savior said, Neither pray I for these, alone, but for them also who shall believe on Me through their word.   
II. The second thing we learn from the text is THE USE OF A GOSPEL MINISTRY.   
Captious and quibbling persons will object, You say that God loves His people and, therefore, they will be saved. Then what is the good of your preaching? What is the good of your preaching? When I say that God loves a multitude that no man can number, a countless host of the race of men, do you ask me what is the good of preaching? What is the good of preaching? To fetch these diamonds of the Lord out of the dunghill, to go down to the depths, as the diver does, to fetch up Gods pearls from the place where they are lying! What is the good of preaching? To cut down the good corn and gather it into the garner. What is the good of preaching? To fetch out Gods elect from the ruins of the Fall and make then stand on the Rock, Christ Jesus, and see their standing sure! Ah, you who ask what is the good of preaching because God has ordained some to salvation, we ask you whether it would not be a most foolish thing to say, because there is to be a harvest, what is the good of sowing? There is to be a harvest, what is the use of reaping? The very reason why we sow and reap is because we feel assured there is to be a harvest! And if, indeed, I believed there was not a number who must be saved, I could not go into a pulpit again! Only once make me think that no one is certain to be saved and I will not care to preach! But now I know that a countless number must be saved, I am confident that Christ, shall see His Seed, He shall prolong His days. I know that if there is much to dispirit me in my ministry and I see but little of its effects, yet He shall keep all whom the Father has given Himand this makes me preach! I come into this Chapel tonight with the assurance that God has some child of His in this placenot yet calledand I feel confident that He will call someone by the use of the ministry, so why not by me? I know there are not a few souls whom God has given me through my ministry, not only hundreds, but thousands. I have seen some hundreds of those who profess to have been brought to God through my preaching at Park Street and elsewhere, and with that confidence I must go on. I know that Jesus must have a Seed. His people must increase and it is the very purpose of the ministry to seek them out and bring them into Gods fold. Our Savior tells us the use of the ministry is that they may believe on Me through

their word.   
There is one peculiarity about this. Christ says, They shall believe on Me through their word. Have you ever heard people call out about running after men? They say, You are all running after such-and-such a man. What then, would you have them run aftera woman? You say, The people go after one particular man. Whom else shall they go after? Some persons say, We went to such-and-such a place and the people there love their minister too much. That would be very dreadful, but it is not so. As for ministers being in danger of being ruined by too much love, it very seldom falls to their lot! Very generally they get quite as many kicks as anything elseand if they do get too much love in any particular place, they get too much of the reverse somewhere else. If we get a little sweet, somebody else is sure to put in much that is bitter. Is it not singular that Christ should say, They shall believe on Me through their word? Now, do Gods people believe on Christ through the word of the ministry? We know that our faith does not rest on the word of man, but on the Word of God. We do not rest on any man, yet it is through their word that is, through the word of the Apostlesand through the word of every faithful minister!   
I take it that the Gospel is the ministers own word when he speaks from experience. What is in the Bible is Gods Word. What God speaks to me by experience becomes my word as well as Gods. And it is then their word when ministers come into the pulpit with Gods Word in their hearts. I think a minister is not only called to preach what he finds in the Biblethe mere naked Doctrinesbut what he has experienced in his own heart, what he has tasted, felt and handled. If he does this, he will be greatly in danger of being called an egotist. Very likely he will use too many, Is. Well, he cannot preach John Smiths experience, or anybody elses experiencehe can only preach his ownso then he will have to say, I. But if he does not preach experimentally what he has felt, it will not be through his word! When we speak that which we know and testify that which we have seen and feltif we say we know the Savior will pardon sinners because He has pardoned usthen it is not only Gods Word, but it is also our word! If I say to a child of God, Go, and cast your burden on the Lord and you will find relief, for I have done so, then it is not only Gods Word, but my word.   
When he has proved the Saviors Word by experience, then it becomes the ministers word, as also when he has it manifested to him by the Holy Spirit. Some people say that these manifestations are all nonsense. I have heard many object to applied texts. Such men do not understand much about the real law of piety, or else they would see texts manifested to them at one time which they had never seen before. I know many of my ministering Brothers who now testify that they have sometimes taken a text and tried to break it. They have smitten it with a sledgehammer, but they could not get an atom off it. And they have had to throw it aside. But another time, my Friends, when that same text comes before us, though it seemed hard as granite when we took it up in our hands before, it now crumbles and breaks in pieces! Why? Because Gods Holy Spirit shines upon it, now, and He did not do so before! And we might have continued hitting it till we broke the head off our hammer and not a scrap would have come off itbut the Holy Spirits manifestation revealed the textand most texts are to be learned so! It is not often by sitting down in deep thought that we get at the meaningit is by leaving it until, in some hallowed hour of high spiritual communion, we get into the very secret chamber where the meaning of the text lies! In some solemn moment we dive down into the very depths where the meaning of the text is hidden. God teaches us the meaning and then it becomes our word! It is ours by application and we believe, my Brothers and Sisters, that sinners will be converted to God, not only by preaching the Gospel we find in the Bible, but by preaching the Gospel we find in our hearts, known and read of all men!   
Let us then come into our pulpits with this determination (I speak to my Brothers in the ministry), that by the help of God we will bring our own experience to bear upon it. We will sometimes talk of ourselves and not be ashamed of it, for whatever the Lord our God says unto us, not only in His Word, but by experience, and by His Spirit, that will we speak to the people.   
These two points I have mentionedfirst, God loves His people before they have faith. And, secondly, the ministry has its use in bringing men to faith by their word.   
III. Now, thirdly, notwithstanding this, GOD IS SUPERIOR TO THE MINISTRY AND DOES NOT REQUIRE IT. If He chose, He could do without His ministers.   
I have told you that ministers are necessary, in the present state of things, to bring men to the Lord Jesus Christ, that they may have faith in Him. But when I said they were necessary, I spoke as men speak. With God, ministers are not necessary. He could do without them. I thought today, as I walked along, God could do without me. I thought of many men who are preaching and I thought, God could do without themtake them all away and God could do without them. I thought of some members of my Church, very dear to me, who seem to be pillars of it, and I thought, What could I do without them? And then the thought came across my mind, God could do without them. The people of God would still be saved just as well without them, if God so pleased! God is enough in Himself, without the addition of any one of His preachers. When He made angels, it was not because He needed them. He could have accomplished His will without the wings of a flaming seraph and without the voice of a glorious cherub. When He made the stars, it was not because He needed them. He was Light, Himself, without the light of sun, moon, or stars. When He made man, it was not because He needed manit was because He would make himand for no other reason. There was no necessity for it. He would be the same eternal God were all His creatures dead. And if He were to blot out those lines of wisdom and Grace written in the universe, He would be just as glorious and great as ever! And God can do without His servants in the Gospel ministrybut this being a dispensation of means, He is not a God acting without means.   
God does not do without them, though He could if He would. God elected His people without ministers. He did not need any ministers to help Him in that. He redeemed His people without ministers. What great Divine could have helped Christ to redeem His people? Yes, more, He can, if He pleases, call His people without ministers, for we know how some have become the subjects of Grace by the reading of the Word, without the assistance of the ministry! And some in the Sunday school have received the words of eternal life. This should make our pride subside at once. I know it is a great honor and should comfort us much to know that God is making use of usbut He could, if He pleased, well enough accomplish His ends and purposes without you and without me! If tomorrow we were laid in our coffins and if our people should go out weeping because their pastors were dead, God has other men whom He could raise up. Or if He did not choose to raise other men up, He could attain His ends without us. And possibly there is a time coming when Gospel ministers shall not be neededwhen men shall need no man to say to his brother, Know the Lord, for all shall know Him, from the least even to the greatest! There are happy days coming when the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. When there shall be no need of the messengers upon the mountains to publish the glad tidings of salvation. When the sunshine of the Lord shall supplant our poor farthing rushlight and when Jesus shall come in His Glory, and all His holy angels with Him. And we shall have too much to do to stand and admire Him without standing up to preach to men concerning Him who is present in their midst!   
IV. But then, our fourth point is that GOD WILL NEVER DO WITHOUT HIS MINISTERS AS LONG AS THIS DISPENSATION LASTS because Jesus Christ said, Neither pray I for these alone, but for them, also, who shall believe on Me through their word. Hence it follows that there always will be, as long as this dispensation lasts, a people who are to be gathered and ministers to gather them in. As long as there are unsaved and unconverted persons who are the elect of God, there will be some ministers to preach to them. As long as there are those who are under conviction of sin, He will have some who will proclaim the message of pardon. Christ says in the text, Neither pray I for these, alone, but for them, also, who shall believe on Him through their word.   
Someone may object, and say, Yes, but their word signifies the word of the Apostles. Then another might ask, Are you the successors of the Apostles? There has been a vast deal of fudge in these days about the successors of the Apostles. We have people who pretend to be the successors of the Apostles. There are the Roman Catholics. But, I think, if Peter and Paul were to come and see those who claim to be their successors, they would think there was a mighty difference between themselves and them! By way of parable, suppose the Virgin Mary, Peter and Paul should come one Sunday and go to a certain cathedral? Well, when they entered, the Virgin would hear them singing together to her honor, and praise, and glory. She would nudge Peter and say, What are these people doing? They are worshipping me! My Son said to me, Woman, what have I to do with you? He never worshipped me! Let us get out of this place. But they stay a little longer and they hear one of them say that the Apostle Peter was the Head of the Churchand his successor, the Pope, was therefore the Head. Peter nudges the Virgin Mary and says, What a lie that is! I was never Head of the Church at all! Did I not fall into sin? I, the Head of the Church? A pretty Head I was! Soon afterwards, Paul hears them preaching justification by works. Lets go, he says, there is no Gospel here! I preached justification by faith without works, and they are preaching justification by works! And so, upon that, they all three of them leave! By-and-by, they come to a place where they hear the people singing, Glory, honor, praise and power be unto the Lamb that sits upon the Throne! And they hear them speak of those who were kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. Ah, says Peter, this is the right place, and here I will stay.

Those are the successors of the Apostles who are like the Apostles! Are those the successors of the Apostles who take our money from us by force to pay for their religion? Are those the successors of the Apostles who go to Brother So-and-Sos house and take away his table and his spoon, and his candlestick, to pay rates for a religion in which he does not believe? I have never read about a church-tax in Corinth, or about the Apostle Paul seizing some property of someone in Jerusalem! Such men successors of the Apostles? They may be in godliness, for holy men are sometimes very much mistaken, but I say again, those who are like the Apostles are their successorsnot men who are ashamed to speak to anybody else because they think they are above themnot those who cannot speak plain words! Have we not some ministers, to understand, whom you need to take a dictionary always to Chapel with you? Do you call them the successors of the Apostles? Your judgments answer, No. A downright honest man who speaks what can be understood, who declares Gods Gospel in unmeasured terms, as God would have him speak itHe is a successor of the Apostles! And it is through their word (the Apostles word, and the word of the successors of the Apostles), that men are to be saved! Successors of the Apostles! I am as much a successor of the Apostles as the Bishop of Bath, the Bishop of London, or the bishop of anywhere elseand perhaps more so. We are all bishops who are called of God, ordained by the Most High! We trace our ordination to the hands of the Almighty who has put His hands on our head! There will always be successors of the Apostles! The Christian ministry shall never cease till the last period of time! Never has there been a spiritual night so dark as that there have been no stars to illuminate itnever a sky so clouded that the sun could not shine through it. There always have been some lights and, until the last hour, there always shall be some who are girded with the strength of the Omnipotent and made strong in the almighty God, Jehovah, who shall testify their word, which is, after all, Gods Word, that thereby men shall be saved!   
Now, my dear Brothers and Sisters, having directed your attention to the fact that we are quite sure God will always have a ministry, and always use itand since a ministry, under God, is necessary, though He could do without them, what should we do for them? I will tell you what some people saystarve them. I do not say it is so here, or with my people, but it is so in many country villages. Unfortunately, there are many farmers who could afford to give much to the cause of God, who, while their servant Betty sits in the gallery and pays her shilling a quarter for her pew, the master only pays a shilling a quarter, too. But Christs ministers give themselves to the work because they feel they must preachand they would rather preach on dry bread than be silent!   
We have formed this Society just to help them. I can assure you if any one of our dear friends stood in the position I have occupied for a single year, when you come to cast up your income, if you felt any benevolence, you would have very little leftindeed, you would have nothing left if you listened to the claims made upon you!   
Now, one other thought. If God sends ministers into the world to preach His Gospel, how ill does it become us to hurt them! He that touches you, touches the apple of His eye. I have always felt very careful about touching a child of God. You know that there is nothing that puts a man so much on his mettle as to touch his children. I have seen a father calm and placid and very gentlesomeone has touched his childrenthe father flashed into his face at once! Do what you liketouch his property, or his house and he may be vexedbut touch his child and then his fury comes up at once! He cannot stand that. Oh, my Friends, a heavy responsibility rests on the heads of some, even of Gods people, if you view it in that light! Touch Gods people? Touch Gods chosen? Touch Gods favorites? Touch Gods darlings? Oh, let us take heed! We had better allow one to pass who professes to be a child of God, and is not, than that we should treat harshly or unkindly any of these who really are His! And I think if there is any difference in the case of Gospel ministers, this has a special force. We should, above all, seek not to injure their character by spreading evil reports against them. They will have enough of that from the wicked world! We had need be tender of them and plant a hedge around them to protect them in every way. They are the standard-bearers of Christendom and if the standard-bearer falls, what a disgrace it brings on everything! We ought to stand by them, pray for them, plead with God for them that He will hold up their hands.   
I have been talking about the Gospel ministry. What is it to do? Is it to bring men to faith in Christ? Now I am tonight to attempt to do it before I leave this place! Yes, and by Gods help, so I will.   
Now, a word or two very briefly to two or three characters. First, there is a man sitting here tonight who says he is no worse than others and who believes he shall enter Heaven as well as any other person. He says, I do not see why any man should set himself above me. My mission from Heaven is, under the Holy Spirit, to knock your works down and bring you to faith in Jesus Christ! Remember that it is written in Scripture, By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. You cannot get to Heaven by your works! You might as well seek to mount the stars on a tread wheel as to go to Heaven by works, for as you get up a step, you will always come down as low as before! If you cannot be perfect, God will not save you by works. If you could truly say, I never committed a sin in all my life and never had a wicked thought, and never shall have, possibly you then might be saved by works. But since that is impossible, if you trust in the law and hang yourself upon it, you shall find it will break by your weight. You stand on a sandy foundation and when the wind blows and the storm rises, you will be led to see it is a refuge of liesthat your confidence was ill founded, that your works were bad at the bottom, after all, and that though you fancied you were righteous, you were deceiving yourself and othersand must suffer the sentence of the wicked!   
Someone among you may say, I know that I am a very great sinner, but then I intend to reform. I shall turn to Christ and then I shall be saved. You intend to reform, do you? So did the damned in Hell once! You intend to reform? So doubtless did Judas when he went and cast down the money in the Temple! But instead of his reformation being good, he went out and hanged himself. You intend to reform? Your intention is like a bubble blown by the mouth of a child, who shall soon be broken in the air! You intend to reform? Your reformation is like the smoke of a chimney which the wind shall sweep away. Suppose you do reform and you really get better? You think Jesus Christ will save you and so you will get to Heaven between the two? Have you never heard the old proverb, Between two stools he came to the ground? Verily, I tell you, that if you trust in two things, you will be lost! Works cannot help you. Any man who trusts so much as a single hairs breadth to his works is a lost soul! He who trusts to the least atom of works, though it is so small that he cannot discern it, will be lost! It must be   
*Nothing in my hand I bring,   
Simply to Your Cross I cling*   
or else a man must be lost! For it is no use his trusting partly in works, and partly to the Savior. You must feel, I am quite stripped of everything.   
I love to find those who have not got anything good at all about them. Some like to find something good in men before they preach to them, but I like to find men who think there is nothing good in themand then to preach Gods Sovereign Mercy to them. You who have any good of your own, throw it away! You who have nothing, come to Christ! I advise you who think you are good, not to say you are so when you are before God. If you were in a hospital and needed to be attended to, what would you do? Would you write over your bed, or tell your doctor you were not so bad, after all? You would be rather inclined to appear worse than you really were! See if you can describe yourself worse than you really are. You may say, That is wicked advice. No, it is not, because I am quite sure you cannot do it. Go and write bad characters against yourselves tonight. I speak to you who know this is truenot to you who are deceiving yourselves with your own righteousness. You who now feel your need of a Savior, exaggerate that feeling before God, if it is possible. He who felt himself the most guilty of all sinners said, This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.   
If there is anyone here tonight who thinks himself, the chief of sinners, I have called him and God has called him! I wish he would act like a man I once saw in the County Court, when I was sitting there. He said, Make way! Make way! His Honor has called me. And He elbowed his way up, because the judge had called him! God says, Come now, and let us reason together, says the Lord: though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool. Say, Stand back, for God calls me and I will come! Sinner, it is Jesus you must rely on, and it is not yourself. It is nothing that you have, or can haveit is nothing that you do, or can doyou can be saved by Jesus Christ alone. Have faith in Him and rely on the Savior. Do you feel your need of a Savior? Then come and cast yourself upon Him! Leave off being anything and let Christ be everything! Leave off doing, and let Him do! Say   
*A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,   
On Christs kind arms I fall!   
He is my strength and righteousness,   
My Jesus and my all.*   
If any are awakened tonight by my words, I have not done it, nor has the sinner done itbut to Gods praise be it spoken! And to His name be all the glory!

Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307  
PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #668 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

UNITY IN CHRIST

NO. 668

**DELIVERED ON SUNDAY MORNING, JANUARY 7, 1866, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You;**

**that they also may be one in Us, that the world   
may believe that You sent Me.   
John 17:20, 21.**

FOR several years I have thankfully received the text of the first Sabbath in the year from a venerable clergyman of a parish in the suburbs of our city. Spared by a gracious Providence, my good Brother has sent me, with his Christian salutations, these two verses for my subject. As we have enjoyed together for several years a true communion of spirit in the things of God, I can only hope, that until one or the other of us shall be taken up to dwell above, we may walk together in holy service, loving each other fervently with a pure heart.

The most tender and touching prayer of the Master contained in this chapter opens up to us His inmost heart. He was in Gethsemane and His passion was just commencing. He stood like a victim at the altar where the wood was already laid in order and the fire was kindled to consume the sacrifice. Lifting up His eyes to Heaven, with true filial love gazing upon His Fathers Throne, and resting in humble confidence upon Heavens strength, He looked away for a moment from the strife and resistance unto blood which was going on below. He asked for that upon which His heart was most fully set. He opened His mouth wide that His God might fill it.

This prayer, I take it, was not only the casual expression of the Saviors desire at the last, but is a sort of model of the prayer which is incessantly going up from Him to the Eternal Throne. There is a difference in the mode of its offering. With sighs and tears He offered up His humble suit belowbut with authority He now pleads enthroned in Glory! But the plea is the samethat which He desired while still below is that which His soul pants after now that He is taken up and is glorified above. It is significant, Beloved, that the Savior should, in His last moments, not only desire the salvation of all His people, but should plead for the unity of the saved onesthat being saved they might be united.

It was not enough that each sheep should be taken from the jaw of the wolf. He would have all the sheep gathered into one fold under His own care. He was not satisfied that the members of His body should, each of them, be saved as the result of His deathHe must have those members fashioned into a glorious body! Unity lying so very near the Saviors heart at such a time of overwhelming trial must have been held by Him to be priceless beyond all price! It is of this unity that we shall speak this morningon this wisefirst of all, we will have a little to say upon the unity desired. Then upon the work necessarynamely, that the chosen be gathered in. Thirdly, upon prayer offered. Fourthly, upon the result anticipated, and fifthly, upon the question suggested.

I. First, then, UPON THE UNITY DESIRED. These words of the Savior have been perverted to the doing of a world of mischief. Ecclesiastics have fallen asleep, which, indeed, is their ordinary condition. And while asleep they have dreamed a dreama dream founded upon the letter of the Saviors words of which they discern not the spiritual sense. They have proved in their own case, as has been proved in thousands of others, that the letter kills, and only the spirit gives life.

Falling asleep, I say, these ecclesiastics have dreamed of a great confederation presided over by a number of ministers, these again governed by superior officers, and these again by others, and these topped at last by a supreme visible head who must be either a person or a council. This great confederacy, containing within itself kingdoms and nations, becomes so powerful as to work upon States, to influence politics, to guide councils and even to gather together and to move armies. True, the shadow of the Saviors teaching, My kingdom is not of this World, must have caused an occasional nightmare in the midst of their dream, but they dreamed on!

And what is worse, they turned the dream into a reality, and the time was when the professed followers of Christ were all one. When looking north, south, east, westfrom the center at the Vaticanone united body covered all Europe! And what was the result? Did the world believe that God had sent Christ? The world believed the very opposite! The world was persuaded that God had nothing to do with that great crushing, tyrannous, superstitious, ignorant thing which called itself Christianity.

And thinking men became infidels, and it was the hardest possible thing to find a genuine intelligent Believer north, south, east, or west. All professors were one, but the world believed notthe fact being that this was not the unity which Jesus had so much as thought of. It was never His intention to set up a great united body to be called a Church which should dominate and lord everywhere over the souls of men. He never intended a Church within its ranks, kings, princes and statesmen who might be worldly, ungodly, hateful, sensual, and devilish. It was never Christs design to set up a conscience-crushing engine of uniformity.

And so the great man-devised machine, when it was brought to perfection and set to work with the greatest possible vigor, instead of working out that the world should believe that the Father had sent Christ, worked out just thisthat the world did not believe anything at allbut became infidel, licentious, and rotten at the core! And the system had to be abated as a common nuisance and something better brought into the world to restore morality. Yet people dream that dream stilleven good people do so!

The Puritans, after they had been hunted and hauled to prison in this country, fled to New England, and no sooner had they seated themselves upon the shore than they began to say, We must all be one! There must be no schism! And the big whip was brought out for the Quakers back, and the manacles for the Baptists bleeding wrists, because these men, somehow or other, would not be one after this kind of fashion, but would think for themselves and obey God rather than man.

Nowadays Dr. Pusey dreams that the Anglican and the Russian Church may be united, and then perhaps the Romish may chime inand so once more all may be one. A mere dream! A mere chimera of a kindly but whimsical brain! If it should ever come to be a reality it would prove to be an upas tree at the roots of which every honest man must at once lay his axe. But what did the Savior mean, That they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me?

We must begin at the beginning. What were the elements of this unity which Christ so anxiously desired? The answer is very distinctly given us in this chapter. The unity was to be composed of the people who are here called they. That they all may be one. Will you let your eyes run down the chapter to see who they are? Look in the second verse: That He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him.

The unity, then proposed, is of persons specially given to Jesus by the Father! Not, then, of all men who happen to dwell in any particular province, district, or citybut a unity of persons who have received, not common life as all havebut life eternal. Special persons, then, who have been quickened by God the Holy Spirit and have been brought into vital union with the Person of the Lord Jesus are to be one.

Further, they are described in the sixth verse as persons to whom Gods name has been manifestedpeople who have seen what others never sawand have beheld what others cannot know. They are men given out of the world, so the verse tells uschosen men, taken out from the ordinary massnot, then, the multitude. Not kingdoms, states, empiresbut selected persons. They are persons who have been schooled and have learned unusual lessonsNow they have known that all things whatever You have given Me are of You. And they have learned their lesson well, for we find it written, They have kept Your Word. They have believed that You did send Me.

They are described in the ninth verse as being prayed for by Christ in a sense in which He never prays for the world at all. They are people, according to the tenth verse, in whom God is glorifiedin whom the name of Jesus shines with resplendent luster. Look the whole chapter through and you will discover that the unity which the Master intended was that of chosen persons who, by the Holy Spirit conferring life upon them, are led to believe in Jesus Christ! They are spiritual-minded men who live in the realm of spirit, prize spiritual things, and form a confederacy and a kingdom which is spiritual and not of this world.

Here is the secret. Carnal minds hear that Jesus is to wear a crown of pearlsthey find pearls in shellsthey try to join the oyster shells together and what strange thing they make! But Jesus will have no union of the shellsthe shells must be struck off as worthless things! The jewels, and the jewels, only, are to be joined together! It is rumored that the King is to wear a crown and that pure gold is to form that brilliant circlet. Straightway men bring their huge nuggets and would fashion the diadem of masses of rock, earth, quartz, and I know not what. But the King wears no such crown as that! He will refine the gold. He will melt away the earth. The crown is to be made of pure gold, not of the material with which that gold happens to be united.

The one Church of Godof what is it composed, then? Is it composed of the Church of England, the Congregational Union, the Wesleyan Conference and the Baptist body? No, it is not. Is not, then, the Church of England a part of the Church of Christ, and the Baptist denomination a part? No! I deny that these bodies, as such unrefined and in the gross, are a part of the great unity for which Jesus prayed. But there

are Believers united with the Church of England who are a part of the body of Christ. And there are Believers in all denominations of Christians. Yes, and many in no visible Church at all, who are in Christ Jesus, and consequently in the great unity.

The Church of England is not a part of Christs true body, nor any other denomination as such. The spiritual unity is made up of spiritual men, separated, picked out, cleared away from all the mass with which they happen to be united. I have spoken very boldly perhaps, and may be misunderstood. But I mean thisthat you cannot take out any visible Church, however pure, and say that as it stands it belongs to the spiritual unity for which Jesus prayed. There are in the visible Churches a certain number of Gods elect, and these are of the body of Jesus Christ. But their fellow professors, if unconverted, are not in the mystical union. Christs body is not made up of denominations, nor of presbyteries, nor of Christian societiesit is made up of saints chosen of God from before the foundation of the worldredeemed by blood, called by His Spirit and made one with Jesus.

But now, passing on, what is the bond which keeps these united ones together? Among others, there is the bond of the same origin. Every person who is a partaker of the life of God has sprung from the same Divine Father. The Spirit of God has quickened all the faithful alike. No matter that Luther may be very dissimilar from CalvinLuther is made and created a new creature in Christ Jesus by that same fiat which created Calvin. No matter that Juan de Valdes, in the same age, may hide himself in the Court of Spain and scarcely be recognized as a Believer, yet when we turn over his volume today we find in his, One Hundred Considerations, the very same spirit of Divine Grace which breathes in Calvins Institutes, or in Luthers Bondage of the Human Will.

And we discover there the same life in eachthey have been quickened by the same Spirit and made to live by the same energy! And though they knew it not, they were still one. No, moreall true Believers are supported by the same strength! The life which makes vital the prayer of a Believer today is the same life which quickened the cry of a Believer two thousand years ago. And if this world shall last so long as another thousand years, the same Spirit which made the tear trickle from the eyes of a penitent then is that which this day makes us bows before God Most High.

Moreover, all Believers have the same aim and object. Every true saint is shot from the same bow and is speeding towards the same target. There may be, there will be much that is not of God about the man, much of human infirmity, defilement and corruptionbut still the inward spirit within him which God has put there is forcing its way to the same perfection of holiness, and is, meanwhile, seeking to glorify God!

Above all, the Holy Spirit, who indwells in every Believer, is the true fount of oneness. Some of the Christians in this land of ours two hundred years ago were strangely different in outward manners from their Brethren of 1866. But when we talk with them through their old folios and octavos, we find, if we are the Lords people, that we are quite at home with them. Though the manifestation may vary, yet the same Spirit of God works the same Graces, the same virtues, the same excellenciesand thus helps all saints to prove themselves to be of one tribe.

I meet an Englishman anywhere in the wide world over and I recognize in him some likeness to myself. There is some characteristic or other about him by which his nationality is betrayed. And so I meet a Christian five hundred years back in the midst of Romanism and darkness, but his speech betrays him. If my soul shall traverse space in one hundred years to come, although Christianity may have assumed another outward garb and fashion, I shall still recognize the Christian! I shall still detect the Galilean brogue. There will be something which will show to me that if I am an heir of Heaven I am one with the past and one with the future yes, one with all the saints of the living God.

This is a very different bond from that which men try to impose upon each other in order to create union. They put straps round the outside. They tie us together with many knots and we feel uneasy. But God puts a Divine life inside of us and then we wear the sacred bonds of love with ease. If you get the limbs of a dead man you can tie them together and then if you send the body on a journey and the carriage jolts, a leg will slip out of its place and an arm may be dislocated. But get a living man and you may send him where you will and the ligatures of life will prevent his dropping asunder. In all the truly elect children of God who are called, and chosen, and faithful, there is a bond of Divine mysterious love running right through the whole. And they are one and must be onethe Holy Spirit being the life which unites them.

There are tokens which evidence this union and prove that the people of God are one. We hear much moaning over our divisions. There may be some that are to be deplored among ecclesiastical confederacies, but in the spiritual Church of the living God I am really at a loss to discover the divisions which are so loudly proclaimed. It strikes me that the tokens of union are much more prominent than the tokens of division.

But what are they? First there is a union in judgment upon all vital matters. I converse with a spiritual man and no matter what he calls himself, when we talk of sin, pardon, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and such like themes, we are agreed. We speak of our blessed Lord. My Friend says that Jesus is fair and lovely: so do I. He says that he has nothing else to trust to but the precious blood: nor have I anything else. I tell him that I find myself a poor, weak creature: he laments the same. I live in his house a little while: we pray together at the family altaryou could not tell which it was that prayedCalvinist or Arminian. We pray so exactly alike and when we open the hymn book, very likely if he happens to be a Wesleyan he chooses to sing, Jesus, lover of my soul. I will sing it, and then next morning he will sing with me, Rock of Ages, cleft for me.

If the Spirit of God is in us we are all agreed upon great points. Let me say that among true saints the points of union, even in matters of judgment, are ninety-nine, and the points of difference are only as one. In experimental points, as face answers to face, so does the heart of man to man. Only get upon experimental topics concerning soul-dealings with Godleave the letter and get to the spirit, crack the shells and eat the kernel of spiritual truthand you will find that the points of agreement between genuine Christians are something marvelous!

But this union is to be seen most plainly in union of heart. I am told that Christians do not love each other. I am very sorry if that is true, but I rather doubt it, for I suspect that those who do not love each other are not Christians. Where the Spirit of God is there must be love, and if I have once known and recognized any man to be my Brother in Christ Jesus, the love of Christ constrains me no more to think of him as a stranger or foreigner, but a fellow citizen with the saints.

Now I hate High Churchism as my soul hates Satan. But I love George Herbert, although George Herbert is a desperately High Churchman. I hate his High Churchism, but I love George Herbert from my very soul and I have a warm corner in my heart for every man who is like he is. Let me find a man who loves my Lord Jesus Christ as George Herbert did and I do not ask myself whether I shall love him or not! There is no room for question, for I cannot help myselfunless I can leave off loving Jesus Christ, I cannot cease loving those who love Him!

Here is George Fox, the Quakera strange sort of body it is truegoing about the world making much noise and stir. But I love the man with all my soul because he had an awful respect for the Presence of God and an intense love for everything spiritual. How is it that I cannot help loving George Herbert and George Fox who are, in some things, complete opposites? Because they both loved the Master! I will defy you, if you have any love to Jesus Christ, to pick or choose among His people. You may hate as much as you will the shells in which the pearls lie, and the dross with which the gold is mixed, but the true, the precious blood-bought gold, the true pearl, Heaven-dyed, you must esteem! You must love a spiritual man wherever you may find him.

Such love exists among the people of God, and if anybody says it does not I can only fear that the speaker is unfit to judge. If I come across a man in whom there is the Spirit of Christ, I must love him. If I did not I should prove I was not in the union. Oneness in judgment, in experience, and in heart are some of the evidences of this union. But if you want more plain and palpable union, which even carnal eyes can see, note the unity of Christian prayer. Oh, how slight the difference there! Well-taught Believers address the Throne of Grace in the same style, whatever may be the particular form which their Church organization may have assumed.

So is it with praise. There, indeed, we are as one, and our music goes up with sweet accord to the Throne of the heavenly Grace. Beloved, we are one in actiontrue Christians anywhere are all doing the same work. Here is a Brother preaching. I do not care about that white thing he has on, but if he is a genuine Christian, he is preaching Christ Crucified. And here am I, and he may not like me because I have not that white rag on, but still I delight to preach Christ Crucified. When you come to the real lifework of the Christian, it is the same in every case, it is holding up the Cross of Christ.

Oh, you say, but there are many Christians in the world preaching this and that and the other. I am saying nothing of them or about them. I am saying nothing about their ecclesiastical belongings. I am saying nothing about those who merely cling to the Church. I am speaking of the

elect, the precious ones, the simpleminded Christ-taught men and women. Their motive of action is the same and there is among them a true union which is the answer to our Lords prayer. He did not plead in vain what He sought He has obtainedand the truly quickened are this day one, and shall evermore remain so.

I think I hear someone saying, But I cannot see this unity. My answer is, One reason may be because of your lack of information. I saw a large building the other day being erected. I do not know that it was any business of mine, but I did puzzle myself to make out how that would make a complete structure. It seemed to me that the gables would come in so very awkwardly. But I dare say if I had seen a plan, there might have been some central tower or some combination by which the wings, one of which appeared to be rather longer than the other, might have been brought into harmony. The architect, doubtless, had a unity in his mind which I had not in mine.

So you and I have not the necessary information as to what the Church is to be. The unity of the Church is not to be seen by you todaydo not even think itthe plan is not worked out yet. God is building over yonder and you only see the foundation. In another part the top stone is all but ready but you cannot comprehend it. Shall the Master show you His plan? Is the Divine Architect bound to take you into His studio to show you all His secret motives and designs? Not so! Wait awhile and you will find that all these diversities and differences among spiritually-minded men, when the master plan comes to be worked out, are different parts of the grand whole! And you, with the astonished world, will then know that God has sent the Lord Jesus!

I go into a great factory. There is a wheel spinning a way in which it is perfectly indifferent and careless of every other wheel. There is another wheel going in an opposite direction! All sorts of motions concentric and eccentricand I say, What an extraordinary muddle this all seems! Just soI do not understand the machinery. So when I go into the great visible Church of God, if I look with the eyes of my spirit I can see the inner harmony. But if with these eyes I look upon the great outward Church, I cannot see it, nor will it ever be seen till the hidden Church shall be made manifest at the appearing of the Lord.

The reason why you do not see the unity of the Church may be because of the present roughness of the material. See yonder a number of stones here, a number of trees. I cannot see the unity. Of course not. When these trees are all cut into plankswhen these stones are all squaredthen you may begin to see them as a whole. The various stones of the Divine building of the Church are all out of shape at presentthey are not polished. We shall never be one till we are sanctified. The unity of Christ is a unity of holy, not unholy beings. And as we, each of us, grow more and more prepared by the work of Christ for our own place, we shall discover more and more the unity of the Church.

Perhaps, too, let me say, we cannot see the unity of the Church because we ourselves cannot see anything. Is that a hard saying? Who can bear it? There are thousands of professors who cannot see anything. Do not suppose, dear Friends, that the unity of the Church is a thing that is to be seen by these eyes of ours. Never! Everything spiritual is spiritually discerned. You must get spiritual eyes before you can see it. Many people say there is no unity. I should be astonished if there were any which they could see or feel! They are not in Christ themselves. Their hearts have never felt what spiritual life meanshow should they be able to understand that into which they have never entered?

See what carnal-mindedness does with Christs teaching. Christ teaches His people that they must eat His flesh and drink His blood. Carnal-Mind Says, I know what that means. And straightway he runs to the pantry and brings out a loaf of bread and a cup of wine. Spiritual men weep at such ignorance. Jesus says, That they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me. I know what that means, says Carnal-MindThey are all to worship after the same fashion, and use the same ritual. That is all poor Carnal-Mind knows about it! He confuses the outward with the inward and misses the Lords meaning.

But, Beloved, you know better than this! You do know, I trust, and feel this very day in your soul that the true saints of the living God are one with each other at this very moment. You understand that they recognize and discover this unity in proportion as they become like their Lord and Master, and are conformed to His image, and made fit for the place which they are to occupy. Just as Professor Owen can take up a bone, and from that one bone can discover the whole structure of the entire animal, I do not doubt but what there is a mutual dependence and consistency between every Christian and his fellows. And it is such that if we understood the science of spiritual comparative anatomy, as we may do in Heaven, we should be able to form from any one Christian the fashion of the entire Church of God from the mutual dependence of one upon the other!

But it would not be according to the fashion of the beast that was, and now is, and is yet to come, which calls itself the Church of Christ, and is nothing better than Antichrist. It would take the fashion of the Lord from Heaven, of whose body we are members.

II. I have talked too long upon this matter of unity to spare much time for the other points, and therefore only a hint at them. The second head was to be, THE WORK THAT IS TO BE DONE BEFORE THIS UNITY CAN BE COMPLETE. There are many chosen ones who have not yet believed in Jesus Christ and the Church cannot be one till these are saved. Here is work to be donework to be done by instruments. These chosen ones are to believethat is a work of Divine Grace, but they are to believe through our work. Brethren, if you would promote the unity of Christs Church, look after His lost sheepseek out wandering souls.

If you ask what is to be your work, the answer is in the textit is to be concerning Christ. They are to believe in Him. Every soul that believes in Christ is built into the great Gospel unity in its measure, and you will never see the Church as a whole while there is one soul left unsaved for whom the Savior shed His precious blood. Go out and teach His Word! Tell of the doctrines of Grace as He has given you ability. Hold up Christ before the eyes of men and you will be the means in Gods hand of bringing them to believe in Himand so the Church shall be built up and made one.

Here is work for the beginning of the year! Here is work till the end of the year! Do not sit down and scheme and plot and plan how this denomination may melt into the otheryou leave that alone. Your business is to go and

*Tell to sinners round*

*What a Savior you have found,*   
for that is Gods way of using you to complete the unity of His Church. Unless these are saved the Church is not perfect. That is a wonderful text that, They without us cannot be made perfect. That is to say, saints in Heaven cannot be perfect unless we get there. What? The blessed saints in Heaven not perfect except the rest of Believers come there? So the Scripture tells us, for they would be a part of the body and not a whole body they cannot be perfect as a flock unless the rest of the sheep come there.

They beckon us from the battlement of Heaven and say to us, Come up here, for without you we cannot be one as Jesus Christ is one with His Father. We are an imperfect body till you come. And we, from our position of Grace, turn round to the sinful world and we say to the chosen of God from among that sinful world, Come to Jesus! Trust Jesus! Believe in Him! For without you we cannot be perfect, nor can the heavenly ones themselves be, for there must be one complete Church! The city must be walled all roundif there is one gap in the wall the city will not be one. Come, then, put your trust in Jesus, that His Church may be one.

III. The third point was to be, HERE IS PRAYER OFFERED. Beloved, Christ prays for the unity of His Church that all saints who have gone to Heaven in days gone bythat all saints who live nowthat all who ever live may be brought into the unity of the one life in Himself. I fear We do not attach enough importance to the power of Christs prayer. We think of Joshua fighting in the valley, but we forget our Moses with hands outstretched upon the hill.

We are looking at the wheels of the machinego back to our old figureand we are thinking that this wheel, and that, and the other, is wanting more oil, or not working exactly to its point. Ah, but let us never forget the engine, that mysterious motive force which is hidden and concealed, upon which the action of the whole depends! Christs prayer for His people is the great motive force by which the Spirit of God is sent to us and the whole Church is kept filled with life! And the whole of that force is tending to this one thingunity! It is removing everything which keeps us from being one. It is working with all its Divine Omnipotence to bring us into a visible unity when Christ shall stand in the latter days upon the earth.

Beloved, let us have hope for sinners yet unconverted! Christ is praying for them! Let us have hope for the entire body of the faithful! Christ is praying for their unity, and what He prays for must be effected! He never pleads in vain! He prays that the Church may be one, and it is one! He prays that they may be perfect and complete, and it shall be amidst eternal hallelujahs!

IV. Then, there was THE RESULT ANTICIPATED FROM THE WHOLE. That the world may believe that You have sent Me. The effect of sight of the complete Church upon human minds will be overwhelming. Angels and principalities will look at Christs perfect Church with awe. They will all exclaim, What a marvel! What a wonder! What a masterpiece of Divine power and wisdom! When they saw the foundation laid in the precious blood of Christ, they gazed long and wistfullybut when they see the whole Church complete, every spire and pinnacle, and the great top-stone brought out with shouting, all built of precious jewels and pearls, fashioned like the similitude of a palacewhy they will make Heaven ring again and again!

When the world was made they sang for joy. But how shall the vaults of Heaven echo when the Church is all complete and the new creation shall have been perfected? What will be the effect upon men? Astonishment will be the effect upon angels, but what upon men? Why the world, that wicked world which rejected Christ, that wicked crucifying world which would have none of Him and which now will have none of His peoplethat wicked world which hates His saints and has strived with all its might to pluck down the walls of His Church will BELIEVE! They will be compelled to believe that God has sent His Son!

They will bite their tongues with rage! They will gnash their teeth with horror! But there will be no doubt about it. Do not suppose that the world will ever be convinced so as to believe in Christ and to be saved by the unity of the Church. It is not anticipated in this chapter that the world ever will be saved! That is not dreamed of the whole chapter throughthe world is spoken of as something for which Christ does not praywhose enlightenment is not anticipated. But that world, though it weeps, and wails, and curses, and abhors, shall be made distinctly to recognize the divinity of Christs mission when it shall see the entire unity of the Church!

Why, before my astonished gaze this morning there seems to me to rise up as from a great sea of confusion a wondrous building! I see the first stone sunk into the depths of that sea dyed with blood. I see the top of it just emerging above lofty waves of strife and confusion. Now I see other stones built on that, all of them dyed with bloodthe first Apostlesall of them martyrs. I see stone rising upon stone as age succeeds age. At first nearly all the foundations are laid in the fair vermilion of martyrdom, but the structure rises! The stones are very differentthey come from Asia, Africa, America, Europethey are taken from among princes and from among peasants.

These stones are very diverse. Perhaps while they were here they scarcely recognized that they belonged to the same building, but there they areand for 1860 years that building goes on, and on, and on buildingevery stone being made ready! We know not how many more years that masterly edifice will take, but at the last, despite all the frowns of Hell and all the power of devils, that edifice will be completednot a single stone being lost, not one elect child of God being absentand not one of those stones having suffered any injury nor been put out of its place! And the whole so fair, so matchless, such a display of power and wisdom and love, that even the hateful ones whose hearts are hard as adamant against the Most High will be compelled to say God must have sent Christ! They cannot restrain that confession when all the Church shall be one as the Father is one with Christ. O happy day!

V. The concluding suggestion was to be thisARE WE PARTS OF THAT GREAT UNITY? There is the question! It is not this morning, Are you members of a Christian Church? I know how you get at it, you say, Well, a certain number of Churches are evangelical and orthodox. They make up orthodox Protestantism. Now, I am a Baptist. Very well. I am a Baptist, and the Baptist churches are orthodox, therefore I am a Christian. I am an Episcopalian, and Episcopacy is one branch of Protestantism. Very well, I am a Protestant, I am a Christian.

Ah, that is your carnal way of talking! You may be very grievously mistaken if that is your argument. But if you can go another way to work and say, I have received eternal life for I have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ and I am given of the Father unto Him. Why then, Beloved, you come at it directly! Being one with Christ you are one with His people! But do not, when you are looking for this unity, look for an outward but for an inward thing. Do not look for a matter that is to be written on sheets of paper, on rolls and bookslook for a bond written on hearts, and consciences, and souls!

Do not be looking for all saints in one room, but in Christ! All living upon heavenly bread, and drinking of the wines on the lees well refined that come from Christ Jesus. Look for a spiritual union and you will find it! If you look for the other thing you will not find it, and if you did find it, it would be a great and awful thing from which you might pray God to deliver His Church. As spiritual men, look for spiritual unitybut first begin by asking whether you are spiritual yourselves. Have you been born into the family? Have you been washed with the blood? Have you passed from death unto life? If not, even if you could be in the body you would be as a dead substance in the body working a fester, a gangrenenecessitating pain and sufferingyou would be a thing accursed to be cast away.

But are you alive by the life of Christ? Does God dwell in you, and do you dwell in Him? Then, my dear Brother, give me your hand! Never mind about a thousand differences if you are in Christ and I am in Christ! We cannot be two, we must be one. Let us love each other fervently with a pure heart. Let us live on earth as those who are to live together a long eternity in Heaven. Let us help each others spiritual growth. Let us aid each other as far as possible in every holy, spiritual enterprise which is for the promotion of the kingdom of the Lord.

And let us chase out of our hearts everything which would break the unity which God has established. Let us cast from us every false doctrine, every false thought of pride, enmity, envy, bitterness that we, whom God has made one, may be one before men as well as before the eyes of the heart-searching God.

May the Lord bless us, dear Friends, as a Church. May He make us one, and keep us so. It will be the dead stuff among us that will make the divisions. It is the living children of God that make the unity! It is the living ones that are bound together. There will be no fear about that Christs prayer takes care of usthat we shall be one. As for those of you who are joined with us in visible fellowship and are not one with Christ, may the Lord save you with His great salvation, and His shall be the praise. Amen and Amen.

Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #1472 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE GLORY, UNITY AND TRIUMPH OF THE CHURCH   
NO. 1472

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, MAY 4, 1879, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**And the Glory which You gave Me, I have given them; that they may be one, even as We are One: I in them, and You in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that You have sent**

**Me and have loved them, as You have loved Me.   
John 17:22-3.**

SOME words serve many uses and have many meanings. We are very apt to make mistakes if we give the same sense in all places to the same word. The word, world, throughout Scripture is used with a very remarkable variety of meaning and one had need to have his wits about him and to read carefully in order to know what is the precise force of the term in each place where it occurs. In the text before us it is evident that Christ had a view to the worldHe desired that the world might know that the Father had sent Him and might know, also, that God had loved His people even as He had loved His Son. From the somewhat altered expression in the 21st verse, we feel convinced that our Lord did not limit His desires for the world to its having a bare knowledge of these facts, but wished that it should also believe them, for thus runs the verseThat the world may believe that You have sent Me.

He wished, then, that this world might do exactly what He elsewhere says His own disciples had already doneO righteous Father, the world has not known You: but I have known You, and these have known that You have sent Me. Certainly there is a world for which Jesus did not pray, for He said, I pray for them: I pray not for the world, yet here there is a world for which, if He does not actually pray, He yet prays that certain gracious events may occur in order that certain results may be produced upon the world.

I say again, the word, world, therefore, has many shades of meaning ranging from that jet black meaning in which the, world lies in the Wicked One and, that other, love not the world, neither the things that are in the world, upward to the milder senses in John 1:10, He was in the world and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. And yet higher to the brighter meaning, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ. It is not in the worst sense that our text speaks of the world, but in the same manner as we find it used in such passages as these, The Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world. God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. And again in 1 John 2, And He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

It is certain that, God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life, and we cannot suppose that the great Redeemer would re

fuse to pray for those for whom He was given. I understand in this particular place by the word, world, the whole mass of mankind upon the face of the earth who are not as yet converted. Among them there is an elect part, for our Lord speaks of some men who shall yet believe on Him through the word of His servants, but these, at this present moment, are undistinguished from the rest. I understand here by the word, world, all as yet unrenewed out of the whole living family of manand on account of these our Lord would have His believing people brought into that admirable condition which we shall now attempt to describe.

For the sake of the world He would have the Church in a high state of holy beauty and strength. May His gracious prayer be answered in all of us by the working of the Holy Spirit! I trust that I may say of all of you, my Beloved in Christ, that you are living with this objective. At any rate, I know that you desire to live for the Glory of our Lord Jesus and the salvation of men. We would make all men see what is the fellowship of this mystery, for we would have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the Truth of God. Our wish is to bring multitudes to the Savior and to conquer province after province of this revolted world for King Jesus. Let the whole earth be filled with His Glory is a prayer which we

cannot, dare not, would not fail to pray!

Half the world would be a poor reward for the Redeemers travail. The earth is the Lords and the fullness thereof. Even here, where He was despised and rejected of men, our Lord must reign with fullness of Glory, having dominion from sea to sea and from the river even to the ends of the earth! This is the consummation towards which we are tending, by the Grace of God. We are striving earnestly for it, according to His working, which works in us mightily. Daily we labor to bring others into subjection to that blessed Sovereignty under which we delight to dwell!

In this place our Lord tells us that this desirable end is to be brought about by a marvelous unity which, described in our text, is a unity of men with Christ, a unity of these men in Christ with one another and the unity of Christ Himself with the eternal Father. I in them, and You in Me, that they may be made perfect in one. Let us speak about this unity this morning, always keeping in mind the drift, end and objective of it, namely, that the world may believe that God has sent the Lord Jesus.

First, then, let us think upon the great means of that unity And then, secondly, upon the unity itself. Lastly, let us more fully consider the effect to be produced by it.

I. First, then, let us reflect upon THE GREAT MEANS OF THE UNITY which Christ proposes here. It lies, in a nutshell, The Glory which you gave Me I have given them, with this objective, that they may be one, even as We are One. Here our blessed Lord does not speak of what He will give to His disciples, though there is a Glory which is laid up for them which the faithful shall receive at the lastbut He mentions a Glory which He has already given them. This could not be the incommunicable Glory of His Godhead, for that was His by Nature and not by the Fathers gift. He speaks throughout the whole of His prayer in the capacity of the Mediator who is both God and Man in one Person and the Glory which He says He had given to His people is a Glory which the Father had given to Him in His complex Person as Incarnate God.

We are to regard, therefore, our Lord Jesus Christ as speaking here as Immanuel, God With Us, who, though He counted it no robbery to be equal with God, had made Himself of no reputation and taken upon Himself the form of a Servant. He appeared on earth as the Son of Man, the Son of Godbut even in that condescending capacity He was surrounded with a Glory of which John speaks in his first chapter, And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His Glory, the Glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth. As the Word made flesh, the Father has given our Lord exceeding Glory. The explanations of the words before us are as many as the words themselves and I suppose there is a measure of truth in each of them. I do not think it possible in one sermon, perhaps not in a hundred, nor even in a thousand, to bring out all that is intended here! Therefore I shall not attempt any such a task, but shall only follow one narrow track of practical thought, even as one passes through a field of corn along a narrow pathway gathering a few ears as he moves along.

It seems to me that a main part of the Glory of our Lord, when on earth, lay in the moral and spiritual Glory of His Character. He was, indeed, glorious in holiness and this is evidently the Glory which He transfers to us. See the second Epistle to the Corinthians, the third chapter and 18th verse, But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the Glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. To the same effect are Peters words in his first Epistle, If you are reproached for the name of Christ, happy are you, for the Spirit of Glory and of God rests upon you. The essence and cause of the Glory which the Father gave the Son was, first of all, that He endowed Him with the Holy Spirit. God gives not the Spirit by measure unto Him; the Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand (John 3:34, 35).

The Holy Spirit descended upon our Lord in His Baptism and abode upon Him so that in the power of the indwelling Spirit He lived, spoke, acted and in all that He did, the Spirit of God was manifest! In Him was fulfilled the Word of the Lord by the Prophet Isaiah, And there shall come forth a Rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of His roots: and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make Him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord. In this Spirit there is Glory, for the Prophet further says, His rest shall be glorious.

Now this Glory, our Lord Jesus has given to all His disciples. Upon each true disciple, the Spirit of God rests according to his measure. If we have not the anointing to the fullest, it is either from lack of capacity or by reason of our own sin, for the Spirit of God is given to the saintsHe dwells with us and shall be in us always. My Brothers and Sisters, I would to God we realized this, that the Glory of the Holy Spirit which was given to Christ is also given to us, so that it is ours to think, to feel, to speak, to act under His guiding influence and supernatural power! What are we apart from the Holy Spirit? How can we hope to convince even one man, much less the world, that God has sent His Son unless the Holy Spirit is with us?

But if He will come and I trust He has come upon many of usif He will take possession of every faculty and rule and reign in us in all the splendor of His holinessthen we shall, indeed, become a power for the conversion of mankind! Behold the Lord Jesus has given us this Spirit and in that power let us forever live. Owing to this endowment of the Holy Spirit, there rested upon Jesus Christ a wondrous Glory in many respects. One of His first Glories was that as Man He knew the name and Character of God. He knew what no man knows unless it is revealed to him by the Holy Spirit, namely, the Nature, attributes and mind of God. The pure in heart shall see God, and those pure eyes of His had seen God to the fullest!

Has He not given us that same vision of the Father? Yes, for He tells us, He that has seen Me, has seen the Father. And again in the sixth verse, I have manifested Your name unto the men which You gave me out of the world. Our eyes have been opened by the blessed Spirit of God to see the invisible and our understandings have been strengthened to know the incomprehensible! Now, according to the language of the Apostle, we, know God, or rather are known of God. No man has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him. Not to the fullest have we beheld the Father, but still, according as we have received this Glory which rested upon Christ we have been made to know the Father! And now we have access to the heavenly; we are familiar with the Divine; we speak with the Most High and delight ourselves in the Lord!

As we gaze into the unspeakable Glory, we discern something of the holiness, the justice and the wisdom of Jehovah and we behold yet more of His great mercy and abounding love. We were once blinded, but now it is our Glory that we see and know the Lord our God! Henceforth we become like our Lord in another beam of His Glory, for we, also, begin to manifest the Divine name unto the sons of men who dwell around us! The Church, like the moon, reflects the Glory of the great Father of Lights and so is glorious with the borrowed splendor which her Lord puts upon her. Christs knowledge of the Father is given to us and we endeavor to make it known to others. If men would see God, let them look at Jesus, for there is He to be seen! And, with bated breath, we addlet them look at Christs people, for there, also, is God revealed! It is the Glory of the saints that they are the mirrors of the Divine Character! And when they wear the Glory which Jesus has given them, they manifest the eternal name unto those whom the Lord has ordained to bless by their means!

The Glory of our Lord consisted, next, in the power of the Spirit in His receiving, keeping and giving forth the Word of God. Our Lord Jesus was a full Revelation of the mind of God. The Law was given by Moses, but Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ. He knew the plan of Godthat blessed method of infinite loveand He imparted it to His followers. I have given unto them the Words which You gave Me; and they have received them. The depository of the Divine Word was Christand this was greatly to His Glory. Is not the logos, THE WORD, one of the brightest of His titles? But now, this day, He has given to us the Word, speaking it into our souls and, from now on we are to hold forth the Word of Life in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation.

Would you know the mind of God? It is not merely in a bookit is still incarnated in men in whom the Spirit of the Lord is present! Still does the Lord make known His mind and will by the earnest, fervent teaching, pleading and lives of those in whom the Spirit of God dwells! Do you think this to be a small Glory? Why, my Beloved, the Glory of possessing the Spirit of God; the Glory of knowing the eternal God; the Glory of having received His Word is such as distinguishes the chosen man above his fellows infinitely more than all the crowns, titles and decorations which monarchs can bestow! Tell me not of your stars and garters, your ribbons and your crossesto be made partakers of the Holy Spirit and guardians of the Truth of God is a greater Glory than the princes of this world can so much as imagine!

This Glory of the Lord Jesus also lay in the sanctification of His blessed Person. He said, For their sakes I sanctify Myself. Look at how consecrated to God He was from His childhood till He said, It is finished! What holiness shone upon His very brow where a guileless soul unveiled itself in brave sincerity! You could not have been with Him at a funeral or at a marriage banquet, in a sick chamber or in the midst of a crowd, in the presence of carping adversaries or in the bosom of His family of 12 without being charmed by that Divine Holiness which hedged Him round about! There was about Him a sweetness of unspeakable affection and a majesty of unsullied purity which made Him glorious above all the sons of men! His enemies spat upon Him, but that very spit was the unconscious homage which malignant evil pays to conquering goodness!

The ungodly crucified Him, but even in that very act there was a sort of confession that they were baffled and confused and could not stand before Him! They cried, Crucify Him! Crucify Him! because His perfect purity rendered their own wickedness inexcusable and lashed their conscience with reflections which could not be borne. Our Lords moral Glory was great, for He was the pattern and paragon of everything that is lovely and of good reputeand He was wholly sanctified unto God! This is the Glory which He gives to us! His prayer is, Sanctify them through Your Truth: Your Word is Truth.

His disciples live unto holiness and are known as a people zealous of good works. I have to speak as I find matters laid down in the Word of God and if you do not find them to be so in yourselves, my Brothers and Sisters, then you must judge yourselves by the Word of God so that you are not judged at the last and condemned! So it is that those who have truly received Christ become a special, marked and separated people. They are as much consecrated to God as the priests were under the old dispensation and, therefore, they live for God, they live unto God and their whole being is subjected to the mind of God! This is a high state of Grace, but nothing less than this ought to content any Christian!

Well, then, our great Master gives us, next, the Glory of His own mission. As You have sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. It is the Glory of Jesus that He is the Messiah, the Sent Oneand now, behold, He sends all His servants to be messiahs or missionaries to mankind! Christ Jesus was sent to reveal the Father, sent to reclaim the wandering souls of men, sent to seek and to save the lost and this is exactly what every true Christian is sent into the world to do he is commissioned to reveal God in his every act and word! He is commissioned to win back rebellious hearts! He is commissioned to save the

sons of men and bring them up out of the horrible pit into which their sins have cast them!

This is a Glory, indeed, for they that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars forever and ever. What a promise is that, And saviors shall come up on mount Zion, and the kingdom shall be the Lords. Every Christian man, according to his measure, becomes among his race what Jesus was when He was here below, the Friend of men, the Seeker of the lost. Again, I trust your glad hearts appreciate this Glory, for let me say it is such a Glory that if it involves much strict living and much self-denial if it involves much disgrace, misrepresentation, reproachand even should it involve death by martyrdom, blessed is the man upon whom all these things come because the spirit of Glory and of Christ rests upon him!

The true glory of any man is the man himself, the character he bears and not the estate which he possesses. My Brothers and Sisters, can I hope that you have a resplendent spiritual character? Dare I hope to win the same myself? Let us look again at this Glory of the Son of God! Christ Jesus was the Man of men, the model Man, the most manly Man in all respects and yet He was, of all men, the most fully subordinated to the Divine Law and the most obedient in all things to the Fathers will! See your calling, my Brethren! You, too, are not to be common men, nor to belong to the herd that run foolishly after their own lustsbut you are to be model men, manly and brave, yet always submissive to the great Father of your spirits. We are to be such men that those who look upon us may wish that there were such as we are.

Jesus was especially a model in His perfect self-abnegation. What did He seek for Himself? A kingdom? Yes, but a kingdom whose crown was made of thornsa kingdom of suffering love. What did He live for? That He might be glorified? Yes, but that He might be glorified by saving others while refusing to save Himself! His crowning Glory is that He humbled Himself and made Himself of no reputation and became obedient to death, even the death of the Cross! Such shall you and I be if we have the Glory of Christ resting upon uswe shall give up, forever, all self-seeking, all desire to shine, all wish to be great, all craving to be richand we shall live not unto ourselves, but unto Him that died for us!

We are to live for Gods Glory and for Christs purpose in the conviction of the world and if we do, the Spirit of Glory will be resting upon us. The matchless Man of Nazareth had this Glorythat He was one with God. The objectives, aims and thoughts of God were His objectives, aims and thoughts. His life ran parallel with the path of the Most High. This Man was accepted of Godthe love of God ever rested upon HimHe had access to God, He could speak with the Father when He would and answers out of the excellent Glory were vouchsafed Him. He was prevalent with God, for His prayers brought down and still bring down countless blessings upon the sons of men! He was the Son of God and He overcame the world in the power of His sonship.

Now, this Glory which the Father gave Him, He has given us, that we, too, may be accepted; that we, too, may have access; that we, too, may have prevalence in prayer; that we, too, may have the Spirit of adoption and that we, too, may trample upon sin and overcome the hosts of darkness. This is the Glory which rests upon all the faithful! Mark well that wherever this Glory is seen, true unity is developed. Suppose I were to find a man living in the likeness of Christ with this spiritual Glory conspicuous upon him? It may be that he is poor and illiterate, but what of that? Suppose he is a coal heaverthe Glory of his character will be, none the less, more conspicuous than the dust! Then let us find another man on whom the same spiritual Glory rests and we will suppose that he is an earl, a supposition which, thank God, is not an impossible one!

The Glory will be none the more dim because of the good mans honors. There, then, are the twocoal heaver and coroneted. And does it need half an eye to see that the Glory of each is one? The holy consecration in each case is the same and the degrees of rank do not affect the essential beauty of either! Is it not the same life which dwells in all saintly bosoms and the same love which prompts each holy deed? In a princess or in a dairymans daughter; in a scholar or in a peasant, the glory of a high character is one. If you found among a savage tribe a single convert, truly consecrated to Christ and living unto God according to the measure of his light, his manners might be rude and his knowledge slender, but there would be upon him the same kind of Glory which you would mark as adorning a polished, educated Christian lady who, in the midst of her circle, spends a lovely life for Jesus.

Should the untutored convert die by the spear of the savage whose soul he sought to bless, he is written in the same roll of martyrs as that which bears the names of bishops and Apostles. Holiness is everywhere most precious! Unselfishness is in any instance beyond all price! Let us see love to God and love to men and they are everywhere alike and reveal a oneness of inward life! In fact, oneness with Him who is the true life of men! If you bring a company of common Christians together and they begin discoursing and discussing, I dare say they will jangle and debate world without end! But if you could select a number of those upon whom the Glory rests which the Father gave to His Son, I will guarantee you this, that within a short time they will be all on their knees together, or singing together, or engaged in some form of loving fellowship!

The people who are not one with each other are those who are not one with Christ! But once filled with His Spirit, we are one of necessity. You cannot help it, it is scarcely a matter of dutyit becomes a matter of necessity that you who have the love of Christ within you should love the Brothers and Sisters! Spiritual men are so essentially one, that like two drops which close together, they have an increasing tendency to unite. Spiritual men may wear different denominational names and may differ in their conscientious convictions on some matters, but these things do not hinder unionthey rather give a zest to it! If the Glory which the Father gave to Christ is resting upon these, they have discerned the mystical unity which encompasses them all and they are delighted to acknowledge it by deeds of brotherly love rendered with spontaneous cheerfulness, blessing him who performs them and those who receive the benefits!

Beloved, those in whom Christ lives are not uniform, but one. Uniformity may be found in death, but this unity is life! Those who are quite uniform may yet have no love to each other, while those who differ widely may still be truly and intensely one. Our children are not uniform, but they make one family. Sons born at the same birth may exhibit a remarkable difference of character and yet the father may be seen in both and they may be

equally one in the family circle and in all the love which makes home the abode of happiness. So it is with all Believersborn of the same everlasting Father, they are one in spirit, one in character, one in objective, one in aimyes, one in the fullest sense.

At this moment, despite apparent differences, the whole host of the spiritual are one and they press forward as with the tramp of one man against the common foe. I speak not of professors. I speak not of the external church. I speak not of the mixed multitude that come up out of Egypt and debase the character of our Israel! I speak of those of whom Christ could say to His Father, The Glory which You have given Me I have given themthese are one as the Father and the Son are One, but mere professors are not!

II. Time flies too rapidly, alas, and therefore we must, with great brevity, think upon the second point, namely, THE UNITY ITSELF. As I have remarked, it is not uniformity. This our Lord says nothing of. Though we are one body in Him, yet all the members have not the same officethe eye is very different from the earand the foot has not the same form as the hand. Neither does He speak of any formal organization by which unity is to be secured. How many have tried to create a mechanical union and have made confusion worse confusion! Their eagerness for unity has threatened to dash everything to shivers! The very first step towards a visible unity of the Church is, with most men, that

they shall fix a standard of what the Church ought to be and cut off everybody who will not conform to their idea!

See how certain Brothers, to show how they hate sectarianism, invent a new sect and diligently earn from their fellow-Believers the character of being more bitter and bigoted than any other professors! The oddities of non-sectarians are the scandal of the age! They have talked of union and scattered the saints right and left. Let us follow practical methods and we shall find them in the unity which the text describes.

First, it is writtenI in them. Christ lives in His people and we are to act so, in the power of the Holy Spirit, that onlookers shall say, Surely Christ lives again in that man, for he acts out the precepts of Jesus. Did you notice how he bore the insult? Did you notice how he laid himself out to oblige and to serve? Did you observe how, without introducing religious talk, he gradually steered the conversation towards that which is to edification? Do you see how, if he stays in a hotel, or if he sojourns in a family, or if he sits in a workroom, his presence is soon felt by the pleasure which he diffuses, the confidence which he inspires? He is everyones friend when he is neededthe servant of all, the example of all. His voice is always for peace and if he does, now and then, speak upbraidingly, mens consciences admit that he is just. Such a man honors his Lord by reminding men of Him.

Our first consideration should not be, Now I am here, how can I be comfortable? but, I am here, how can I please others for their good? How can I relieve the distressed, help the weary, or cheer the sad? It is a grand thing to do good in little ways. It is a glory to be the sweetener of life at home, the self-forgetting friend of all around. The world, before long, confesses that Christ is in such a man! The true Christian is Jesus come to life! His name implies thishow is he a Christian who is not like Christ? We commonly say that the oil upon the head runs down to the skirts of the garmentis it so? Is the love of Jesus, the generosity of Jesus, the zeal of Jesus, the gentleness of Jesus, the consecration of Jesus to be seen in us? If so, the Glory of Jesus rests on us! But if not, we have need to begin again and do our first works.

The next point of the union is. You in Me. That is, God is in Christ. This is manifestly true, for you cannot read the life of Christ without seeing God in Him. Come, now, said one to an unbeliever, what do you think of the life of Christ? I am free to confess, said the other, that it seems to me to be a very marvelous life and in every way worthy of praise. You do not, however, think Jesus Christ to be God? No, I do not. But suppose, said the Christian, that God had been here among men in human formcould He have acted more purely or more benevolently? No, said the other, If I admit the possibility of such a thing, I am not able to conceive of anything more divinely good. Why, then, said the Christian, do you not see that in very deed God was in Christ Jesus and He was One with God? So we believe and we rejoice greatly to hear our Lord say, I and my Father are One. See, then, the unity of Christ in us and God in Christ Jesus!

This brings about the union of Believers with the Fatherbeing one with Christ and Christ being One with the Father. The point is reached for which our Lord prayed, That they all may be one; as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that You have sent Me. Couple this with Believers being one with each other and you get the being, made perfect in one, of which our text speaks. If you and I are one in Christ and one with Christ, then we are one with God, seeing Christ is One with Godand thus not in some few characteristics are we alike and one in name, but in life, in aim and in desire!

Brothers and Sisters, if you and I are living for the same design which our Lord lived for and if the very life which quickens us is the life of Jesus, then, since Jesus lives always for the same thing which God purposes and works out, then surely there is a grand unitythe likes of which is not found in the universe! This has great depths in it, which is grounded upon a mystical, spiritual union, but I leave the depths of doctrine, just now, to speak upon the experimental and practical Truths of God which grow out of the matter of fact.

Moved by the same love of holiness; inspired by the same spirit of love, tenderness and kindness, the eternal Fathers will is the will of the Son and the Spirit works in us to will and to do according to the good pleasure of the Lord. According to the measure of Grace, the members of the body feel and move in union with the Head, who also is in union with the Father. Your kingdom come is Gods will thrilling through all the members of the body of Christ. Death to sin, destruction of strife, the end of injustice, the chasing away of every form of errorthese are the common objectives of the Father and of all those whom He has begotten. The propagation of the Truth of God, the increase of love, the reign of gentleness and peace among menthese are the mind of God, the mind of Christ and the mind of all the saintsand so are we one with each other by ties spiritual and Divine!   
III. I could not enlarge upon that subject though I wished to do so, for

I must now notice THE EFFECT WHICH THIS PRODUCES according to our Lords prophecy and prayer. First, it will convict the world of the Truth of Christs missionThat the world may know that You have sent Me. How will they know it? Why, when they see such characters as I have so feebly tried to paint! When they see men who are no longer selfish, hard and ungenerouswhen they see men no longer governed by their passions, no longer earth-boundwhen they see loving men, men who desire that which is holy, just and good! When they see men living for God, the world will say, Their Master must have been sent of God.

Such men as these, alas, are so uncommon. And they are so precious when we find them that if the Lord Jesus has created such by His teaching and His Spirit, by their fruits may we know them, even as we know His people and He is manifestly sent of God. And then, Brothers and Sisters, not only will their characters convince the world, but their unity will convince it because the ungodly world will say, We see the glory of Christianity in the poor man and we see the same in the rich man. We see a glory about a Christian prince and we see the same glory about a Christian needle woman! And we observe that when these people meet each other there is a Divine union among them, for they are one. Surely their Master must be sent of God.

Christian people have things to talk about which others do not understand and they pursue one common objective which others disregard. Whether they have little or much, they yield their all to one common cause and objective. Whether possessed of little ability or great ability, they are alike consecrated. One spirit breathes in them! See how they love one another! Even the world can see that while its great ones are always contending, these dwell in love! The world can easily see that while common men emulate each other and strive as to who shall be the greatest, these only strive to serve the common cause, to help each other and to stoop for their fellows good! The world cannot help perceiving the divinity of the mission of Christ which has produced this perfect love and union among His followers. Then do they say, assuredly God must have sent their Leader, Christ Jesus, or He could not have produced such results.

Do you ask me where we see this? I reply that it is far too little seen, but when we shall see it in the whole Church, then will the world be convinced! Oh, my Brethren, only fancy a Church of the size of this, put down in this south of London, made up of holy men and holy women like Christ, who, with all their imperfections, as to the general bent and current of their lives are living unto God and for the Glory of Christ and for the good of their fellow men! Picture such a Church in perfect unity and I tell you it would present an argument for Christianity which would infinitely surpass all the books of analogy and evidence which have ever been written! This would be a nut which the adversary could not crack! It would baffle all his criticisms and syllogisms!

One individual Christian has often presented to the most desperate unbeliever a difficulty which has staggered him. I could be altogether an atheist, said one, if it were not for my aged mother. While I see her peace of mind, her holy living, her gentle, quiet temper, I cannot but believe that there is a power in religion which I cannot understand. If we would convince the world, my Brothers and Sisters, it must be by the Glory which God has given to His Son resting upon each and all of us and so compacting us together, fusing us into one mass of living union! Only in the foundation of unity in Christ can the battle be won!

But the world is also to be convinced of the Fathers love to usAnd have loved them as You have loved Me. Shall we ever convince them of that? Yes, when the world sees bodies of truly consecrated men and women living together in holy love, then they will also see much joy, much peace, much mutual consolationand they will perceive that the very stars in Heaven fight for them, that the Providence of God makes all things work together for their goodand that the Lord has a special care over them as a shepherd has over his flock. Then they will say, These are the people that God has blessed. Look how He loves them! They perceive, however, that they have to suffer and that they are afflicted and despisedand so they come to say, God seems to love them just as He loved His Son, whom He did not spare from suffering, pain and grief, but whom He upheld under alland so they learn that God has the same special regard for those Christ-like ones that He has for their Master and Lord. They shall be made to see this! It will be forced upon them!

Moreover, as these men and women grow more and more like Jesus the world will conclude that since God loved Jesus, He must love those who are like Christ! Why, do not even the ungodly, though they would be loath to confess it, take a kind of delight in a high and noble character? They have an admiration for it and their conscience tells them that God admires those in whom His Christ has produced it. They cannot avoid the feeling that God loves holy and loving peopleand that it is great love on His part to make them what they are. So far the world becomes convinced.

But somebody may say, What does our Lord mean by the worlds knowing and believing this? I answer that, doubtless, a part of the world will be convinced that Christ was sent of God. And part will be convinced that God loves His people. And yet they will stand out in obstinacy against God, for to the end even the Gospel, itself, will be a savor of death unto death to some!

Well, you and I have answered the purpose of God even upon such characters when it comes to pass that they are without excuse. But it is evident from this chapter that there is another part of the world who will not only know and believe historically, but will do this spirituallythat part of the world comprehended in our Lords prayerNeither pray I for those alone, but for them, also, who shall believe on Me through their word. And I take it, Brothers and Sisters, that when the day shall come that Christians are Christians, then we shall see great masses of the world convinced of the Truth of Christianity and large numbers of the world suppliant at Jesus feet!

The Christianity which is presented to the public gaze I would not be unduly censorious, but I fear it is often a Christianity which the world does well to despise. When the Jew went to Rome and asked for Christianity, he saw the Christians, so called, worshipping the Virgin Mary and images of saints and relics and bones and I know not what. And he justly said, The Lord has said to Israel, The Lord your God is one God, and, You shall not make unto yourself any graven image, nor the likeness of anything that is in Heaven above nor in the earth beneath. You shall not bow down to them nor worship them. On the strength of such revelation the Jew rejected the Christianity of Rome and he did well. Dont you

agree?

Now, here comes another Christianity which has lately displayed itself to many heathen nations. It comes with the Bible in its knapsack and the Martini-Henry rifle in its hand. Is not this a fine combination for conversion? Jesus comes before the Zulu riding upon a Gattling gun! Of course, these poor heathen know nothing about our political combinations, but if they suppose that Christians are invading their land, will they, therefore, love Christ? Missionaries, here is a difficulty for you to explainhow will you deal with it? You come from a Christian nation, a nation which enjoys the unspeakable privilege of a national Church, a nation which salutes the savages in Christs name with shot and shell!

Will they receive Christianity coming in such guise? If they do not, small blame can we pour upon themthey will be only acting according to the light of reason and common sense! If there shall ever come a Christianity which suffers long, is kind, does no evil but seeks good to its neighbor; which teaches love to God and love to man; which seeks not its own, but lays itself out for others, then I do not say that an ungodly world will be enamored of it if left to itself, but I do believe that the Spirit of God will go forth with it and will convict men of sin and of righteousness and of judgmentand then shall the scattered family of Adam accept the one true faith and enter into a league of amity with each otherand there shall be Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good-will towards men! Love conquers all. Love is the logic which convinces!

Notice two passages of Scripture with which I finish. One thing you want the world to know is that you are the Disciples of Christ. By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love one to another. Does our Lord wish the world to be convinced? How does He, Himself, act? Hear Him! But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave Me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence. Love, you see again, proves the unity of the Son with the Father! And here again, in this second text, it is the love of the Father to the chosen which is to be the sign unto the world. Therefore, let love abound. Let it be all the weapons of our war!

I know I have preached very feebly to you this morning upon such a theme. The subject is a great deal too much for my limited capacity, but it is good for us to feel how little we are, how low we are. It is good to look above our struggling selves to something much beyond our present attainments. I lie prostrate on my face before the Lord and confess that I have not yet attained all that I have set forth to you and, I suspect, that your confession is very like my own. Let us not be discouraged, for by Grace we are on the way and we will not rest till we reach the goal! O for Grace so to live unto God in Christ Jesus that the world shall never be able to answer the argument of our lives! Help us, O Spirit of the Lord! Amen.

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THE REDEEMERS PRAYER   
NO. 188

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON SABBATH MORNING, APRIL 18, 1858, BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE MUSIC HALL, ROYAL SURREY GARDENS.

**Father, I will that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory, which You have given Me: for You loved Me before the foundations of the world.**

**John 17:24.**

WHEN the high priest of old entered into the most holy place, he kindled the incense in his censer and waving it before him he perfumed the air with its sweet fragrance and veiled the mercy seat with the denseness of its smoke. Thus was it written concerning him, He shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the Lord and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small and bring it within the veiland he shall put the incense upon the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is upon the testimony, that he die not.

Even so our Lord Jesus Christ, when He would once for all enter within the veil with His own blood to make an atonement for sin, did first offer strong crying and prayers in this 17th chapter of John. We have, as it were, the smoking of the Saviors pontifical censer. He prayed for the people for whom He was about to die and before He sprinkled them with His blood, He did sanctify them with His supplications. This prayer, therefore, stands pre-eminent in Holy Writ as the Lords Prayerthe special and peculiar prayer of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And if, as an old Divine has it, it is lawful to prefer one Scripture above another, we may say, though all is gold, yet this is a pearl in the gold. Though all are like the heavens, this is as the sun and stars. Or if one part of Scripture is more dear to the Believer than any other, it must be this which contains his Masters last prayer before He entered through the rent veil of His own crucified body. How sweet it is to see that not Himself, but His people, constituted the staple of His prayer! He did pray for Himselfhe said, Father, glorify Me! But while He had one prayer for Himself, He had many for His people. Continually did He pray for them Father, sanctify them! Father, keep them! Father, make them one!

And then He concluded His supplication with, Father, I will that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am. Melancthon well said there was never a more excellent, more holy, more fruitful and more affectionate voice ever heard in Heaven or in earth, than this prayer.

We shall first notice the style of the prayer. Secondly, the persons interested in it. And thirdly, the great petitions offeredthe last head constituting the main part of our discourse.

I. First, notice THE STYLE OF THE PRAYERit is singularit is, Father, I will. Now, I cannot but conceive that there is something more in the expression, I will than a mere wish. It seems to one, that when Jesus said I will, although perhaps it might not be proper to say that He made a demand, yet we may say that He pleaded with authority. He was asking for that which He knew to be His own and uttering an, I will as potent as any fiat that ever sprang from the lips of the Almighty. Father, I will. It is an unusual thing to find Jesus Christ saying to God, I will.

You know that before the mountains were brought forth, it was said of Christ, in the volume of the book it is written of Me, I delight to do Your will, O God. And we find while He was on earth, that He never mentioned His own will, that He expressly declared, I came not to do My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me. It is true you do hear Him when addressing men, saying I will, for He says, I will, be you clean. But in His prayers to His Father He prayed with all humility

*With sighs and groans He offered up,   
His humble suit below.*

I will, therefore, seems to be an exception to the rule. But we must remember that Christ was now in an exceptional condition. He had never been before where He was now. He was now come to the end of His work. He could say, I have finished the work which you gave Me to do, and therefore, looking forward to the time when the sacrifice would be complete and He should ascend on high, He sees that His work is done and takes His own will back again and says, Father, I will. Now, mark that such a prayer as this would be totally unbecoming in our lips. We are never to say, Father, I will. Our prayer is to be, Not my will, but Yours be done.

We are to mention our wishes, but our wills are to subside to the will of God. We are to feel that while it is ours to desire, it is Gods to will. But how pleasant, I repeat, it is to find the Savior pleading with such authority as thisfor this puts the stamp of certainty upon His prayer. Whatsoever He has asked for in that chapter He shall have beyond a doubt. At other times when He pleaded as a Mediator, in His humility He was eminently successful in His intercessions. How much more shall His prayer prevail now that He takes to Himself His great power and with authority cries, Father, I will. I love that opening to the prayer. It is a blessed guarantee of its fulfillment, rendering it so sure that we may now look upon Christs prayer as a promise which shall be assuredly fulfilled.

II. Thus much concerning the style of the prayer. And now we NOTICE THE PERSONS FOR WHOM HE PRAYED. Father, I will that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am. This was not an universal prayer. It was a prayer including within it a certain class and portion of mankind who are designated as those whom the Father had given Him. Now we are taught to believe that God the Father did, from before the foundation of the world, give unto His Son Jesus Christ a number whom no man can number, who were to be the reward of His death, the purchase of the travail of His soulwho were to be infallibly brought unto everlasting Glory by the merits of His passion and the power of His resurrection.

These are the people here referred to. Sometimes in Scripture they are called the elect, because when the Father gave them to Christ He chose them out from among men. At other times they are called the Beloved, because Gods love was set upon them of old. They are called Israel. For like Israel of old, they are a chosen people, a royal generation. They are called Gods inheritance, for they are especially dear to Gods heart. And as a man cares for his inheritance and his portion, so the Lord cares especially for them.

Let me not be misunderstood. The people whom Christ here prays for are those whom God the Father out of His own free love and sovereign good pleasure ordained unto eternal life and who, in order that His design might be accomplished, were given into the hands of Christ the Mediatorby Him to be redeemed, sanctified and perfected and by Him to be glorified everlastingly. These people and none others are the object of our Saviors prayer. It is not for me to defend the doctrine. It is Scriptural that is my only defense. It is not for me to vindicate God from any profane charge of partiality or injustice. If there are any wicked enough to impute this to Him, let them settle the matter with their Maker. Let the thing formed, if it have arrogance enough, say to Him that formed it, Why have You made me thus? I am not Gods apologist, He needs no defender. Who are you, O man, that replies against God? Has He not, like the potter, power over the clay, to make one vessel to honor and another to dishonor?

Instead of disputing, let us enquire who are these people? Do we belong to them? Oh, let each heart now put the solemn query, Am I included in that happy throng whom God the Father gave to Christ? Beloved, I cannot tell you by the mere hearing of your names. But if I know your character, I can tell you decisivelyor rather, you will need no telling, for the Holy Spirit will bear witness in your hearts that you are among the number. Answer this questionHave you given yourselves to Christ? Have

you been brought, by the constraining power of His own free love, to make a voluntary surrender of yourself to Him?

Have you said, O Lord other lords have had dominion over me. But now I reject them and I give myself up to You?   
*Other refuge have I none;   
Hangs my helpless soul on You.*

And as I have no other refuge, so I have no other Lord. Little am I worth, but such as I am, I give all I have and all I am to You. It is true, I was never worth Your purchasing, but since You have bought me, You shall have me. Lord, I make a full surrender of myself to You. Well, Soul, if you have done this, if you have given yourself to Christ it is but the result of that ancient grant made by Jehovah to His Son long before the worlds were made. And, once again, can you feel today that you are Christs? If you can remember the time when He sought you and brought you to Himself, you say with the spouse, I am my Beloveds.

Can you now from your inmost soul say, Whom have I in Heaven but You and there is none upon earth that I desire beside You? If so, trouble not your minds about election, there is nothing troublesome in election to you. He that believes is elected, he who is given to Christ now, was given to Christ from before the foundation of the world. You need not dispute Divine decrees, but sit down and draw honey out of this rock and wine out of this flinty rock. Oh, it is a hard, hard doctrine to a man who has no interest in it, but when a man has once a title to it, then it is like the rock in the wilderness, it streams with refreshing water whereat myriads may drink and never thirst again.

Well does the Church of England say of that doctrine, it is full of sweet, pleasant and unspeakable comfort to godly persons. And though it is like the Tarpeian rock, from where many a malefactor has been dashed to pieces in presumption, yet it is like Pisgah, from whose lofty summit the spires of Heaven may be seen in the distance. Again, I say, be not cast down, neither let your hearts be disconsolate. If you are given to Christ now, you are among the happy number for whom He intercedes above and you shall be gathered among the glorious throng, to be with Him where He is and to behold His glory.

III. I very briefly pass over these two points, because I desire to dwell upon the third, which is THE PETITIONS WHICH THE SAVIOR OFFERS. Christ prayed, if I understand His prayer, for three thingsthings which constitute Heavens greatest joy, Heavens sweetest employment and Heavens highest privilege.

1. The first great thing He prayed for is that which is Heavens greatest joyFather, I will that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am. If you notice, every word in the sentence is necessary to its fullness. He does not sayI pray that those, whom You have given me, may be where I am. But, with Me where I am. And he does not only pray that they might be with Him, but that they might be with Him in the same place where He is. And mark, He did not say He wished his people to be in Heaven, but with Him in Heaven, because that makes Heaven, Heaven. It is the very essence and marrow of Heaven to be with Christ.

Heaven without Christ would be but an empty placeit would lose its happiness, it would be a harp without strings. And where would be the music?A sea without water, a very pool of Tantalus. He prayed, then, that we might be with Christthat is our companionshipwith Him where He isthat is our position. It seems as if He would tell us that Heaven is both a condition and a statein the company of Christ and in the place where Christ is.

I might enlarge very much on these points, but I just throw out the raw material of a few thoughts, that will furnish you with topics of meditation in the afternoon. Let us now pause and think how sweet this prayer is, by contrasting it with our attainments on earth. Father, I will that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am. Ah, Brothers and Sisters, we know a little of what it is to be with Christ. There are some happy moments, sweet pauses between the din of the continued battles of this wearied life. There are some soft times, like couches of rest, wherein we do repose. There are hours when our Master comes to us and makes us, or ever we are aware, like the chariots of Aminadab. It is true, we have not been caught up to the third Heaven, like Paul, to hear words which it is unlawful for us to utter. But we have sometimes thought that the third heavens have come down to us.

Sometimes I have said within myself, Well, if this is not Heaven, it is next door to it. And we have thought that we were dwelling in the suburbs of the celestial city. You were in that land which Bunyan calls the land Beulah. You were so near to Heaven that the angels did flit across the stream and bring you sweet bunches of myrrh and bundles of frankincense, which grow in the beds of spices on the hills and you pressed these to your heart and said with the spouse, A bundle of myrrh, is my Well-Beloved unto me. He shall lie all night between my breasts, for I am ravished with His love and filled with His delights. He has made Himself near to me, He has unveiled His countenance and manifested all His love.

But, Beloved, while this gives us a foretaste of Heaven, we may nevertheless use our state on earth as a complete contrast to the state of the glorified above. For here, when we see our Master, it is but at a distance. We are sometimes, we think, in His company but still we cannot help feeling that there is a great gulf fixed between us, even when we come the nearest to Him. We talk, you know, about laying our head upon His

bosom and sitting at His feet. But alas, we find it, after all, to be very metaphorical compared with the reality which we shall enjoy above. We have seen His face, we trust we have sometimes looked into His heart and tasted that He is gracious, but still long nights of darkness lay between us.

We have cried again and again with the bride, Oh, that you were as my brother, that sucked the breasts of my mother! When I should find you without, I would kiss you; yes, I should not be despised. I would lead you and bring you into my mothers house, who would instruct meI would cause you to drink of spiced wine of the juice of my pomegranate. We were with Him but still He was in an upper room of the house and we below. We were with Him but still we felt that we were absent from Him, even when we were the nearest to Him.

Againeven the sweetest visits from Christ, how short they are! Christ comes and goes very much like an angel. His visits are few and far between with the most of us and oh! so shortalas, too short for bliss. One moment our eyes see Him and we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, but again a little time and we do not see Him. Our Beloved withdraws Himself from us. Like a roe or a young hart He leaps over the mountain of division. He is gone back to the land of spices and feeds no more among the lilies

*If today He deigns to bless us   
With a sense of pardoned sin,   
He tomorrow may distress us,   
Make us feel the plague within*

Oh, how sweet the prospect of the time when we shall not see Him at a distance, but face to face. There is a sermon in those words, face to face. And then we shall not see Him for a little time, but

*Millions of years our wondering eyes,   
Shall over our Saviors beauties rove;   
And myriad ages well adore,   
The wonders of His love.*

Oh, if it is sweet to see Him now and then, how sweet to gaze on that blessed face forever and never have a cloud rolling between and never have to turn ones eyes away to look on a world of weariness and woe! Blest days! When shall You come, when our companionship with Christ shall be close and uninterrupted?

And let us remark, again, that when we get a glimpse of Christ, many step in to interfere. We have our hours of contemplation when we draw near to Jesus, but alas, how the world steps in and interruptseven our most quiet momentsthe shop, the field, the child, the wife, the head, perhaps the very heart, all these are interlopers between ourselves and Jesus. Christ loves quiet. He will not talk to our souls in the busy market place, but He says, Come, my Love, into the vineyard, get you away into the villages, there will I show you My love.

But when we go to the villages, behold the Philistine is there, the Canaanite has invaded the land. When we would be free from all thought except thoughts of Jesus, the wandering band of Bedouin thoughts come upon us and they take away our treasures and spoil our tents. We are like Abraham with his sacrifice. We lay out the pieces ready for the burning but foul birds come to feast on the sacrifice which we desire to keep for our God and for Him alone. We have to do as Abraham did; When the birds came down upon the sacrifice, Abraham drove them away.

But in Heaven there shall be no interruption, no weeping eyes shall make us for a moment pause in our vision, no earthly joys, no sensual delights, shall create a discord in our melody. There shall we have no fields to till, no garments to spin, no wearied limbs, no dark distresses, no burning thirsts, no pangs of hunger, no weeping of bereavement. We shall have nothing to do or think upon but forever to gaze upon that Sun of Righteousness with eyes that cannot be blinded and with a heart that can never be weary. To lie in those arms foreverthroughout a whole eternity to be pressed to His bosom, to feel the beatings of His ever faithful heart. To drink His love. To be satisfied forever with His favor and full with the goodness of the Lord! Oh, if we have only to die to get to such delights as thesedeath is gain, it is swallowed up in victory!

Nor must we turn away from the sweet thought that we are to be with Christ where He is, until we have remembered that though we often draw near to Jesus on earth, yet the most we ever have of Him is but a sip of the well. We sometimes come to the wells of Elim and the seventy palm trees, but when sitting beneath the palm trees we feel that it is just like an oasistomorrow we shall have to be treading the burning sands with the scorching sky above us. One day we sit down and we drink from the sweet soft spring. Tomorrow we know that we have to be standing with parched lips over Marahs fount and crying, Alas, alas! It is bitter. I cannot drink thereof.

But oh, in Heaven we shall do what holy Rutherford sayswe shall put the well head to our lips and drink right on from that well that never can be drained. We shall drink to our souls utmost full. Yes, as much of Jesus as the finite can hold of infinity shall the Believer receive. We shall not then see Him for the twinkling of an eye and then lose Him, but we shall see Him forever. We shall not eat of manna that shall be like a small round thing, a coriander seed, but the manna whereof we feed shall be mountains, the broad hills of foodthere we shall have rivers of delight and oceans of ecstatic joy.

Oh, it is very hard for us to tell with all that we can guess of Heaven how large, how deep, how highhow broad it is. When Israel ate of that one fair branch which came from Eshcol, they guessed what the clusters of Canaan must be. And when they tasted the honey they guessed the sweetness. But I warrant no man in all that host had any idea of how full that land was of fertility and sweetnesshow the very brooks ran with honey and the very rocks did teem with fatness. Nor can any of us who have lived the nearest to our Master form more than the faintest guess of what it is to be with Jesus where He is.

Now all that to help my feeble description of what being with Jesus is if you have faith in Christ, just think over this fact, that in a few more months you will know more about it than the wisest mortal can tell. A few more rolling suns and you and I shall be in Heaven. Go on, O Time, with your swiftest pinions fly! A few more years and I shall see His face. O can you say, my Hearer, I shall see His face? Come, you gray-headed one, nearing the goal of life, can you with confidence say, I know that my Redeemer lives? If you can say that, it will fill your soul with joy. I can never think of it without being moved to tears. To think that this head shall wear a crownthat these poor fingers shall strike the harp-strings of everlasting songthat these poor lips, which now faintly tells the wonders of redeeming grace, shall join with cherubim and seraphim and rival them in melody. Is it not too good to be true? Does it not seem sometimes as if the very greatness of the thought overwhelmed our faith?

But true it is and though too great for us to receive it, it is not too great for God to give. We shall be with Him where He is. Yes, Johnyou lay your head upon your Saviors bosom once and I have often envied you. But I shall have your place by-and-by. Yes, Mary. It was your sweet delight to sit at your Masters feet while Martha was cumbered with her much serving. I, too, am too much cumbered with this world. But I shall leave my Marthas cares in the tomb and sit to hear your Masters voice. Yes, O spouse, you did ask to be kissed with the kisses of His lips and what you asked for poor humanity shall yet see. And the poorest, mean and most illiterate of you, who have trusted in Jesus, shall yet put your lips to the lips of your Savior, not as Judas did, but with a true Hail, Master! you shall kiss Him. And then, wrapped in the beams of His love, as a dim star is eclipsed in the sunlight, so shall you sink into the sweet forgetfulness of ecstasy which is the best description we can give of the joys of the redeemed. Father, I will that they whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am. That is Heavens sweetest joyto be with Christ.

2. And now the next prayer is, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me. This is Heavens sweetest employment. I doubt not there are many joys in Heaven which will amplify the grand joy with which we have just started. I feel confident that the meeting of departed friends, the society of Apostles, Prophets, priests and martyrs, will amplify the joy of the redeemed. But still the sun that will give them the greatest light to their joy will be the fact that they are with Jesus Christ and behold His face. And now there may be other employments in Heaven but that mentioned in the text is the chief one, That they may behold My glory. O for the tongue of angels! O for the lips of Cherubim! For one moment to depict the mighty scenes which the Christian shall behold when he sees the glory of his Master, Jesus Christ!

Let us pass as in a panorama before your eyes the great scenes of glory which you shall behold after death. The moment the soul departs from this body it will behold the glory of Christ. The glory of His Person will be the first thing that will arrest our attention. There will He sit in the midst of the Throne and our eyes will first be caught with the glory of His appearance. Perhaps we shall be struck with astonishment. Is this the visage that was more marred than that of any man? Are these the hands that once rude iron tore? Is that the head that once was crowned with thorns? Oh, how shall our admiration rise and rise and rise to the very highest pitch, when we shall see Him who was

*The weary Man and full of woes   
The humble Man before His foes,*   
now King of kings and Lord of lords!

What? Are those fire-darting eyes the very eyes that once wept over Jerusalem? Are those feet shod with sandals of light the feet that once were torn by the flinty acres of the Holy Land? Is that the Man, who scarred and bruised was carried to His tomb? Yes, tis He. And that shall absorb our thoughtsthe Godhead and the Manhood of Christ. The wondrous fact that He is God over all blessed forever and yet Man, bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh. And when for an instant we have noted this, I doubt not the next glory we shall see will be the glory of His enthronement.

Oh, how will the Christian stop at the foot of His Masters Throne and look upward and if there could be tears in Heaven, tears of rich delight will roll down his cheeks when he looks and sees the Man enthroned. Oh, says he I often used to sing on earth, Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him! King of kings and Lord of lords! And now I see Him, up those hills of glorious light my soul does not dare to climb. There, there He sits! Dark with insufferable light His garments appear. Millions of angels bow themselves around Him. The redeemed before His Throne prostrate themselves with rapture. Ah, we shall not deliberate many moments but taking our crowns in our hands we shall help to swell that solemn pomp and casting our crowns at His feet, we shall join the everlasting song, Unto Him that has loved us and washed us from our sins in His blood, unto

Him be glory forever and ever.   
Can you imagine the magnificence of the Savior? Can you conceive how  
thrones and princes, principalities and powersall wait at His beck and   
command? You cannot tell how well the tiara of the universe does fit His   
brow, or how the regal purple of all worlds does gird His shoulders. But  
certain it is, from the highest Heaven to the deepest Hell, He is Lord of  
lordsfrom the furthest east to the remotest west, He is Master of all. The   
songs of all creatures find a focus in Him. He is the grand reservoir of

praise. All the rivers run into the sea and all the hallelujahs come to Him,  
for He is Lord of all. Oh, this is Heavenit is all the Heaven I wishto see   
my Master exaltedfor this has often braced my loins when I have been  
weary and often steeled my courage when I have been faint. The Lord  
also has highly exalted Him and given Him a name which is above every  
name; that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, both of things in   
Heaven and things on earth and things under the earth.   
And then the Believer will have to wait a little while and then he shall   
see more glorious things yet. After a few years, he will see the glories of  
the latter day. We are told in prophecy that this world is to become the   
dominion of Christ. At present, idolatry and bloodshed and cruelty and   
lusts do reign. But the hour is coming when this Augean stable shall be   
cleansed once and forever, when these huge shambles of Aceldama shall  
yet become the temple of the living God. We believe that in those times   
Christ with solemn pomp will descend from Heaven to reign upon this   
earth.   
We cannot read our Bibles and believe them literally without believing  
that there are bright days coming, when Christ shall sit upon the Throne  
of His father David, when He shall hold His court on earth and reign  
among His ancients gloriously. But oh, if it is so, you and I shall see it, if   
we belong to the happy number who have put their trust in Christ. These   
eyes shall see that pompous appearance, when He shall stand in the latter  
day upon the earth. My eyes shall see Him and not anothers. I could almost weep to think that I have lost the opportunity of seeing  
Christ on earth as crucified. I do think the twelve Apostles were very   
highly favored, but when we shall see our Savior here and shall be like   
our Head, we shall think that all deficiencies are made up in the eternal   
weight of glory. When from the center to the poles the harmony of this   
world shall all be given to His praise, these ears shall hear it and when all   
nations shall join the shout, this tongue shall join the shout, also. Happy  
men and happy women who have such a hope, so to behold the Saviors   
glory.   
And then, after that a little pause, a thousand years shall run their   
golden cycle and then shall come the judgment. Christ, with sound of   
trumpet, in pomp terrific, shall descend from HeavenAngels shall form   
His bodyguard surrounding Him on either hand. The chariots of the Lord  
are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels. The whole sky shall be   
clad with wonders. Prodigies and miracles shall be as rife and as plentiful  
as the leaves upon the trees. The earth shall totter at the tramp of the   
Omnipotent. The pillars of the heavens shall stagger like drunken men  
beneath the weight of the eternal splendorHeaven shall display itself in   
the sky, while on earth all men shall be assembled. The sea shall give up  
its dead.   
The graves shall yield their tenants from the cemetery and the graveyard and the battlefield. Men shall start in their thousands. And every eye   
shall see Him and they who have crucified Him. And while the unbelieving   
world shall weep and wail because of Him, seeking to hide themselves   
from the face of Him that sits upon the Throne, Believers shall come forward and with songs and choral symphonies, shall meet their Lord. Then  
shall they be caught up together with the Lord in the air and after He has   
said, Come, you blessed they shall sit upon His throne, judging the   
twelve tribes of Israel. They shall take their seats as assessors upon that  
awful judgment bench. And when at the last He shall say, Depart, you   
cursed, and His left hand shall open the door of thunder and let loose the  
flames of fire, they shall cry, Amen.   
And when the earth shall vanish and men shall sink into their appointed doom, they, gladly seeing the triumph of their Master, shall shout  
again, again, again the shout of victoryHallelujah, for the Lord God has   
triumphed over all.   
And to complete the scene, when the Savior shall ascend on high for   
the last time, His victories all completed and Death himself being slain,   
He, like a mighty conqueror about to ride through Heavens bright streets,   
shall drag at His chariot wheel Hell and death. You and I, attendants at   
His side, shall shout the Victor to His throne and while the angels clap  
their bright wings and cry, the Mediators work is done, you and I *Louder than they all shall sing   
While Heavens resounding mansions ring, With shouts of Sovereign Grace.*   
We shall behold His glory! Picture whatever splendor and magnificence   
you please if you do but conceive it rightly, you shall behold it. You see people in this world running through the streets when a king  
or a queen ride through them. How they do climb to their housetops to see   
some warrior return from battle. Ah, what a trifle! What is it to see a piece   
of flesh and blood though it is crowned with gold? But oh, what is it to see the Son of God with Heavens highest honors to attend Him, entering within the pearly gates, while the vast universe resounds with Hallelujah!   
for the Lord God Omnipotent reigns.   
3. I must close by noticing the last point, which is this in our Saviors   
prayerHeavens greatest privilege is also included. Mark, we are not only  
to be with Christ and to behold His glory, but we are to be like Christ and   
to be glorified with Him. Is He bright? So shall you be. Is He enthroned?   
So shall you be. Does He wear a crown? So shall you. Is He a priest? So  
shall you be a priest and a king to offer acceptable sacrifices forever.   
Mark, that in all Christ has, a Believer has a share. This seems to me to   
be the sum total and the crowning of it allto reign with Christto ride in   
His triumphal chariot and have a portion of His joy. To be honored with   
Him, to be accepted in Him, to be glorified with Him. This is Heaven, this   
is Heaven, indeed!   
And now, how many of you are there here who have any hope that this   
shall be your lot? Well said Chrysostom, The pains of Hell are not the   
greatest part of Hell. The loss of Heaven is the weightiest woe of Hell. To  
lose the sight of Christ, the company of Christ, to lose the beholding of His   
gloriesthis must be the greatest part of the damnation of the lost. Oh, you that have not this bright hope, how is it that you can live? You   
are going through a dark world, to a darker eternity. I beseech you stop  
and pause. Consider for a moment whether it is worth while to lose   
Heaven for this poor earth. What? Pawn eternal glories for the pitiful   
pence of a few moments of the worlds enjoyments. No, stop I beseech you!  
Weigh the bargain before you accept it. What shall it profit you to gain the   
whole world and lose your soul and lose such a Heaven as this? But as for  
you who have a hope, I beseech you hold it fast, live on it, rejoice in it *A hope so much Divine,   
May trials well endure,   
May purge your soul from sense and sin,   
As Christ the Lord is pure.*   
Live near your Master now, and so shall your evidences be bright. And   
when you come to cross the flood, you shall see Him face to face and what   
that is, only they can tell who enjoy it every hour.

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Sermon #1892 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

WHY THEY LEAVE US

NO. 1892

A SERMON SUGGESTED BY THE DEATH OF CHARLES STANFORD, D.D., MINISTER OF DENMARK PLACE CHAPEL, CAMBERWELL.

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, MARCH 21, 1886, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Father, I will that they, also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My Glory, which You have given Me: for You loved Me   
before the foundation of the world.   
John 17:24.**

THE prayer of the Savior rises as it proceeds. He asked for His people that they might be preserved from the world, then that they might be sanctified and then that they might be made manifestly one. And now He reaches His crowning pointthat they may be with Him where He is and behold His Glory! It is well, when in prayer, the spirit takes to itself wings. The prayer that swings to and fro like a door upon its hinges may admit to fellowship, but that prayer is more after the Divine pattern which, like a ladder, rises rung by rung, until it loses itself in Heaven!

This last step of our Lords prayer is not only above all the rest, but it is a longer step than any of the others. He here ascends, not from one blessing which may be enjoyed on earth, to another of higher degree, but He mounts right away from all that is of this present state into that which is reserved for the eternal future. He quits the highest peaks of Grace and, at a single stride, His prayer sets its foot in GloryThat they, also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am.

There is also this to be noticed concerning this Divine prayer, that not only does it rise as to its subject, but it even ascends as to the place which the Intercessor appears to occupy! Has it not been so with yourselves in prayer, at times, that you have hardly known where you were? You might have cried with Paul, Whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell. Do not these words of our Lord Jesus remind you of this? Was He not carried away by the fervor of His devotion? Where was He when He uttered the words of our text? If I follow the language, I might conclude that our Lord was already in Heaven! He says, Father, I will that they, also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My Glory. Does He not mean that they should be in Heaven with Him? Of course He does, yet He was not in HeavenHe was still in the midst of His Apostles, in the body upon earthand He had yet Gethsemane and Golgotha before Him before He could enter His Glory!

He had prayed Himself into such an exaltation of feeling that His prayer was in Heaven and He, Himself, was there in spirit. What a hint this gives to us! How readily may we quit the field of battle and the place of agony and rise into such fellowship with Godthat we may think and speak and act as if we were already in possession of our eternal joy! By the ardor of prayer and the confidence of faith, we may be caught up into Paradise and there utter words which are beyond the latitude of earth and are dated from the Delectable Mountains.

Nor is this all, for still the prayer rises, not only as to its matter and place, but, in a very amazing way it also takes to itself a higher style. Before, our Lord had asked and pleaded, but now He uses a firmer wordHe says, Father, I will. I would not force that word so as to make it bear an imperious or commanding meaning, for the Savior speaks not so to the Father, but still, it has a more elevated tone about it than asking. Our Lord, here, uses the royal manner rather than the tone of His humiliation. He speaks like unto the Son of God! He addresses the great Father as One who counts it not robbery to be equal with Him, but exercises the prerogative of His Eternal Sonship. He says, I will. This is a tone which belongs not to us except in a very modified degree, but it teaches us a lesson.

It is well in prayer, when the Holy Spirit helps us, not only to groan out of the dust as suppliant sinners, but to seek unto our Father in the spirit of adoption with the confidence of childrenand then, with the promise of God in our handswe may, with consecrated bravery, lay hold upon the Covenant Angel, and cry, I will not let You go unless You bless me. Importunity is a humble approach to this Divine, I will. The will consecrated, educated and sanctified may and must reveal itself in our more spiritual petitions, just as, with equal correctness, it hides away when the pleading is for temporal things and whispers, Not as I will, but as You will. The Lord pours upon His pleading servants, at times, a kind of inspiration by which they rise into power in prayer and have their will of the Lord! Is it not written, Delight yourself in the Lord and He shall give you the desires of your heart? We come, at last, to feel that the desires of our heart are inspired by His Spirit, and then that we have the petitions which we have asked of Him!

There ought to be much for our edification in a text like this, which in subject, place and style rises to such an elevation! It is the apex of this wonderful pyramid of prayerthe last rung of the ladder of the Light of God. O Spirit of the Lord, instruct us while we behold it!

I have taken this text because it has taken hold on me. Our beloved Brother, Charles Stanford, has just been taken from us. I seem to be standing as one of a company of disciples and my Brothers are melting away. My Brothers, my comrades, my delights are leaving me for the better land. We have enjoyed holy and happy fellowship in days of peace and we have stood shoulder to shoulder in the battle of the Lordbut we are melting away. One has gone. Another has gone. Before we look round, another will have departed. We see them for a moment and they vanish from our gaze. It is true they do not rise into the air like the Divine Master from Olivet, yet they do rise, I am persuaded of that! Only the poor body descends and that descent is for a very little while. They rise to be forever with the Lord! The grief is to us who are left behind.

What a gap is left where stood Hugh Stowell Brown! Who is to fill it? What a gap is left where stood Charles Stanford! Who is to fill it? Who among us will go next? We stand like amazed men. Some of us stood next in the rank with those who have been taken. Why this constant thinning of our ranks while the warfare is so stern? Why this removal of the very best when we so much need the noblest examples? I am bowed down and could best express myself in a flood of tears as I survey the line of graves so newly dug! But, by Gods Grace, I restrain myself from so carnal a mode of regarding the matter and look upon it in a clearer light. The Master is gathering the ripest of His fruitand well does He deserve them! His own dear hands are putting His apples of gold into His baskets of silver and as we see that it is the Lordwe are no longer bewildered.

His Word, as it comes before us in the text, calms and quiets our spirits. It dries our tears and calls us to rejoicing as we hear our heavenly Bridegroom praying, Father, I will that they, also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am. We understand why the dearest and best are going. We see in whose hand is held the magnet which attracts them to the skies. One by one they must depart from this lowland country to dwell above in the palace of the King, for Jesus is drawing them to Himself! Our dear babes go Home because He gathers the lambs with His arm and carries them in His bosom. And our ripe saints go Home because the Beloved is come into His garden to gather lilies. These words of our Lord Jesus explain the continual Home-going. They are the answer to the riddle which we call death.

I am going to talk of how our honored Brothers and Sisters are not because God takes them. And I shall be happy if my words shall prepare us to exercise a holy readiness to see the grand request of our Redeemer fulfilled, even though it costs us many a sorrowful parting.

I. Let us begin as our text begins and thus the first thought about the continual gathering to the house above will be THE HOME WORDthe rallying wordFather. Observe, our Lord had said, Holy Father, and toward the close of the prayer He said, O Righteous Father, but in commencing this particular petition, He uses the word, Father, by itself. This relationship is, in itself, so dear that it agrees best with the loftiest petition. I like to think of that name, Father, as used in this connection. Is it not the center of living unity? If there is to be a family gathering and reunion, where should it be but in the fathers house? Who is at the head of the table but the father? All the interests of the children unite in the parent and he feels for them all.

From the great Father, the Lord Jesus, Himself, came forth. We do not understand the Doctrine of the Eternal Affiliationwe adore the mystery into which we may not pry. But we know that as our Lord Jesus is Godand-Man-Mediator, He came forth from the Father and unto the Fathers will He submitted Himself in so doing. As for us, we come distinctly of that Fatherit is He that made us, and not we, ourselvesand, better and brighter fact still, of His own will He begat us by the Word of Truth. We were born a second time from Heaven and from our Heavenly Father our spiritual life is derived.

The whole of this sermon through, I want to show you that it is right that we should part with our Brothers and Sisters and joyfully permit of their going Home. And surely I may at once ask youWhat can be more right than that children should go home to their Father? From Him they came! To Him they owe their life! Should they not always tend towards Him and should not this be the goal of their being, that they should, at last, dwell in His Presence? To go away from the Father and to live apart from Him is the sorrow of our fallen nature as it plays the prodigal. But the coming back to the Father is restoration to life, to peace, to happiness! Yes, all our hopeful steps are towards the Father! We are saved when, by believing in the name of Jesus, we receive power to become the sons of God. Our sanctification lies in the bosom of our adoption. Because Jesus comes from the Father and leads us back to the Father, therefore is there a Heaven for us! Therefore, whenever we think of Heaven, let us chiefly think of the Father, for it is in our Fathers House that there are many mansionsand it is to the Father that our Lord has gone, that He may prepare a place for us!

FATHER! Why, it is a bell that rings us Home! He who has the spirit of adoption feels that the Father draws him Home and he would gladly run after Him. How intensely did Jesus turn to the Father! He cannot speak of the Glory where He is to be without coupling His Father with it. Brothers and Sisters, it is in the Father that we live and move and have our being! Is there any spiritual life in the world which does not continually proceed from the life of the great Father? Is it not by the continual work of the Holy Spirit from the Father that we remain spiritual men? And as from Him we live, so for Him we live, if we live aright! We wish so to act as to glorify God in everything! Even our salvation should not be an ultimate end with any of uswe should desire to glorify God by our salvation! We look upon the doctrines that we preach and the precepts which we obey, as means to the Glory of God, even the Father.

This is the consummation which the First-Born looks for and to which all of us who are like He are aspiring, namely, that God may be All in All that the great Father may be had in honor and may be worshipped in every place. Since, then, we are from Him, of Him, to Him and for Him, this word, Father, calls us to gather at His feet! Shall any one of us lament the process? No! We dare not complain that our choicest Brethren are taken up to gladden the great Fathers House. Our Brother is gone and we ask, Where is he gone? And when the answer comes, He is gone to the Father, all notion of complaint is over! To whom else should he go? When the great First-Born went away from us, He told His sorrowing followers that He was going to their Father and His Fatherand that answer was enough. So, when our friend, or our child, or our wife, or our Brother is gone, it is enough that he is with the Father. To call them back does not occur to us, but rather we, each one, desire to follow after them

*Father, I long, I faint to see*

***The place of Your abode!   
Id leave Your earthly courts and flee   
Up to Your seat, my God.***

A child may be happy at school, but he longs for the holidays. Is it merely to escape his lessons? Ah, no! Ask him and he will tell you, I want to go home to see my father. The same is equally true and possibly more so, if we include the feminine form of parentage. What a home cry is that of, Mother! The sight of that dear face has been longed and hungered for by many a child when far away. Mother or father, whichever you will, they are blended in the great Fatherhood of God. Let it but be said that anyone has gone to his father and no further question is asked as to the right of his going there. To the father belongs the first possession of the child should he not have his own child at home? The Savior wipes our tears away with a handkerchief which is marked in the corner with this word Father.

II. Secondly, I want your thoughts upon THE HOME IMPETUS. The force which draws us Home lies in the word, I will. Jesus Christ, our most true God, veiled in human form, bows His knee and prays and throws His Divine energy into the prayer for the bringing Home of His redeemed. This one irresistible, everlastingly almighty prayer carries everything before it. Father, I will that they, also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, is the centripetal energy which is drawing all the family of God towards its one Home.

How shall the chosen get Home to the Father? Chariots are provided. Here are the chariots of fire and horses of fire in this prayer. I will, says Jesus, that they be with Meand with Him they must be! There are difficulties in the waylong nights and darkness lie betweenhills of guilt, forests of trouble and bands of fierce temptations. Yet the pilgrims shall surely reach their journeys end, for the Lords, I will, shall be a wall of fire round about them. In this petition I see both sword and shield for the Church militant. Here I see the eagles wings on which they shall be borne up till they enter within the golden gates! Jesus says, I will and, who is he that shall hinder the homecoming of the chosen? As well hope to arrest the marches of the stars of Heaven!

Examine the energy of this, I will, for a moment, and you will see, first, that it has the force of an intercessory prayer. It is a gem from that wonderful breastplate of jewels which our great High Priest wore upon His breast when He offered His fullest intercession. I cannot imagine our Lords interceding in vain. If He asks that we may be with Him where He is, He must assuredly have His request! It is written, that, He was heard in that He feared. When with strong crying and tears He poured out His soul unto death, His Father granted the requests of His heart. I do not wonder that it should be sohow could the Best Beloved fail of that which He sought in intercession from His Father God! Mark, then, that the force of irresistible intercession is drawing every blood-bought soul into the place where Jesus is. You cannot hold your dying babe, for Jesus asks for it to be with Him. Will you come into competition with your Lord? Surely you will not! You cannot hold your aged father, nor detain your beloved mother beyond the time appointed, for the intercession of Christ has such a force about it that they must ascend even as sparks must seek the sun!

More than intercession is found in the expression, I will. It suggests the idea of a testamentary bequest and appointment. The Lord Jesus is making His last will and testament and He writes, Father, I will that they, also, whom You have given Me, be with Me. No man who makes his will likes to have it frustrated. Our Saviors testament will assuredly be carried out in every jot and tittle and, if for no other reason, yet certainly for this cause, that though He died and thus made His will valid, yet He lives, again, to be His own Executor and to carry out His will. When I read in our Lords testament the words, Father, I will that they be with Me, I ask, Who is to hold them back? They must, in due time, be with Him, for the will of the ever-blessed Savior must be carried outthere can be no standing against a force of that kind!

Nor is this allthe words read to me, not only like intercession and testamentary decree, but there is a strong expression of desire, resolve and purpose. Jesus desires it and says, I will. It is a deliberate desirea forcible, distinct, resolute, determined purpose. The will of God is supreme Law. It needs not that He should speakHe does but will or purpose and the thing is done. Now read my textI will that they be with Me. The Son of God wills it! How are the saints to be hindered from what the Lord wills? They must rise from their beds of dust and silent clay they must rise to be with Jesus where He is, for Jesus wills it! By your anxious care you may seek to detain themyou may sit about their bed and nurse them both night and daybut they must quit these dark abodes when Jesus gives the signal! You may clutch them with affectionate eagerness and even cry in despair, They shall not go, we cannot bear to part with them!but go they must when Jesus calls.

Take back your naughty hands which would detain them, for naughty they are if you would rob your Savior! Would you cross His will? Would you set at nothing His testament? You could not if you would! You would not if you could! Rather be inclined to go with them than think to resist the heavenly attraction which raises them up. If Jesus says, I will, then it is yours to say, Not as I will, but as You will. They were never so much mine as they are Yours. I never had so much right to them as You have who have bought them. They never so truly could be at home with me as they will be at Home with You in Your own bosom. So my will dissolves itself into Your will and I say with steadfast resignation, Let them go.

Brothers and Sisters, you perceive the forces which are bearing away our beloved ones. I see tender hands reaching after us this morning. They are invisible to sense, but palpable to faith. Cords of love are being cast about the chosen and they are being drawn out secretly from their fellows. Would you break those bands asunder and cast those cords from us? I beseech you, think not so, but let that pierced hand which bought the beloved ones seek out its own purchase and bring them Home. Should not Jesus have His own? Do we not bow our knee and pray for Jesus, Your will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven?

III. But now I want to conduct you farther into the text. We have had the Home word and the Home bringing impetusand now let us carefully note THE HOME CHARACTER. Father, I will that they, also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am. The description isThey, also, whom You have given Me. The Greek is somewhat difficult to translate. The translators of the Revised Version were, no doubt, excellent Greek scholars, and if they had known a little more English, they might have come a little nearer to a perfect translation, but they do not always appear to think the common English reader to be worthy of their consideration. This is their translation in the present instanceFather, that which You have given Me, I will that, where I am they, also, may be with Me. This, to speak plainly, sounds very much like nonsense! It is the translation which a boy would present to his tutor at school, but it is of small use to the general reader. It is literal, no doubt, but literalisms are often another proof that the letter kills. Translators into the English tongue might have contrived to have given us words with a meaning in them! I merely quote the version to show you that there is here a something in the singular as well as persons in the plural. Father, I will concerning that which You have given Me, that they may be with Me where I am.

Our Lord looked upon those whom the Father gave Him as oneone body, one Church, one brideHe willed that as a whole, the Church should be with Him where He is. Then He looked again and saw each of the many individuals of whom the one Church is composed and He prayed that each, that all of these, might be with Him and behold His Glory. Jesus never so prays for the whole Church as to forget a single member! Neither does He so pray for the members, individually, as to overlook the corporate capacity of the whole. Sweet thought! Jesus wills to have the whole of what He bought with His precious blood with Him in HeavenHe will not lose any part. He did not die for a part of a Church, nor will He be satisfied unless the entire flock which He has purchased shall be gathered around Him.

But while the Lord looks at those whom His Father gave Him as one body, He looks upon you and me and each Believer here as a part of that great unityand His prayer is that all of us may be with Him. I believe that He prays as much for the least as for the greatest, as much for Benjamin, as for Judah, as much for the despondent as for those who are fully assured. The prayer is one of great breadth and comprehensiveness, but yet it is not the prayer which those who believe in Universalism would put into His mouth. He does not pray that those who die unbelievers may be with Him where He is, neither does He will that souls in Hell should one day come out of it and be with Him in Glory. There is no trace of that doctrine in holy writthose who teach such fables draw their inspiration from some other source! The new purgatory, in which so many have come to believe, is unknown to Holy Scripture. No, our Lords prayer is distinctly for those whom the Father gave Himfor everyone of these, but for no others. His, I will, concerns them only.

I feel right glad that there is no sort of personal character mentioned here, but onlyThose whom You have given Me. It seems as if the Lord, in His last moments, was not so much looking at the fruit of Grace as at Grace, itself. He did not so much note either the perfections or the imperfections of His people, but only the fact that they were His by the eternal gift of the Father. They belonged to the FatherYours they were. The Father gave them to JesusYou gave them to Me. The Father gave them as a love token and a means of His Sons glorificationYours they were and You gave them to Meand now our Lord pleads that because they were the Fathers gift to Him, He should have them with Him. Does anybody quibble as to Christs right to have those with Him who were His Fatherswhom His Father gave to Him and whom He, Himself, actually took into His own possession? No, they ought to be with Him, since they are His in so Divine a manner!

If I possess a love-token that some dear one has given me, I may rightly desire to have it with me. Nobody can have such a right to your wedding ring, good Sister, as you have yourself! And are not Christs saints, as it were, a signet upon His finger, a token which His Father gave Him of His good pleasure in Him? Should they not be with Jesus where He is, since they are His crown jewels and His Glory? We, in our creature love, lift up our hands and cry, My Lord, my Master, let me have this dear one with me a little longer. I need the companionship of one so sweet, or life will be misery to me. But if Jesus looks us in the face and says, Is your right better than Mine? we draw back at once! He has a greater part in His saints than we can have. O Jesus, Your Father gave them to You of old. They are His reward for the travail of Your soul and far be it from us to deny You! Though blinded by our tears, we can yet see the rights of Jesus and we loyally admit them. We cry concerning our best beloved, The Lord has taken away and blessed be the name of the Lord. Does not the text sweetly comfort us in the taking away of one and another, since it shows how they belong to Christ?

IV. And now, advancing another step, Christ reveals to us something concerning THE HOME COMPANIONSHIP in the Glory Land. Those who are taken away, where have they gone? The text says, I will that they, also, whom You have given Me be with Me where I am; that they may behold My Glory.

By this language we are impressed with the nearness of the saint to Christ in GloryThat they may be with Me. Think for a momentwhen our Lord used these words and John took them down, the disciples were with Him. They had left the supper table where they had feasted together. The Master had said, Arise, let us go from hereand it was in the very midst of them that the Lord Jesus offered this choice prayer. Learn, then, that in Heaven the saints will be nearer to Christ than the Apostles were when they sat at the table with Him or heard Him pray! That was a nearness which might consist only in place and their minds might still be, as they often were, far away from Him. But up in Heaven we shall be one with Him in sympathy, in spirit, in conscious fellowship! We shall be with Jesus in the closest, clearest and most complete sense. No fellowship on earth can reach to the plenitude of the communion which we shall enjoy above. With Himforever with the Lordthis is Heaven! Who would wish to detain from such companionship those whom we love?

Yet do not drop the thought of place, lest you refine away the essence of the prayer. Let us see the spiritual clearly, but let us not, on that account, make the sense less real, less matter of fact. To the prayer that His saints may be with Him, our Lord added the words, May be with Me where I am. Our bodies will rise from the dust, and they must occupy a place that place will be where Jesus is! Even spirits must be somewhere and that somewhere with us is to be where Jesus is! We are to be, not metaphorically and fancifully, but really, truly, literally with Jesus! We shall enjoy an intense nearness to Him in that blessed place which the Father has prepared for Him and which He is preparing for us. There is a place where Jesus is revealed in all the splendor of His majesty, amid angels and glorified spiritsand those whom our Lords will has taken away from us have not gone into banishment in a mysterious land, neither are they shut up in a house of detention till there is a general jail deliverybut they are with Christ in Paradise!

They serve Him and they see His face. Who would be so cruel as to keep a saint from such a fair country? I would desire all good for my children, my relatives, my friendsand what good is better than to be where Jesus is? Are you not glad to hear of the promotion of those you love? Will you quarrel with God because some of your dearest ones are promoted to the skies? The thought of their amazing bliss greatly moderates our natural grief. We weep for ourselves, but as we remember their companionship with the Altogether Lovely One, a smile blends with our tears!

Notice the occupation of those who are with JesusThat they may behold My Glory. I do not wonder that Jesus wants His dear ones to be with Him for this purpose, since love always pines for a partner in its joys. When I have been abroad and have been specially charmed with glorious scenery, I have, a hundred times, felt myself saying, almost involuntarily, How I wish that my dear wife could be here! I would enjoy this a hundred times more if she could but see it! It is an instinct of affection to seek fellowship in joy. The Lord Jesus is truly Human and He feels this unselfish desire of every loving human heart and, therefore, says, Father, I will that they, also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, that they may behold My Glory.

Our Lord graciously permits His disciples to have fellowship with Him in His suffering and, therefore, He is all the more desirous that they should participate in His Glory. He knows that nothing will be a greater joy to them than to see Him exalted! Therefore He would give them this highest form of delight. Was not Joseph delighted when he said to his brothers, You shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and still more so when he could actually show his father how great was his power, how exalted was his rank? It is joy for Jesus to let us behold His joy and it will be Glory for us to behold His Glory! Should not the redeemed ascend to such blessed delights? Would you hinder them? How unselfish it is on our Lords part to think Himself not fully glorified till we behold His Glory!

How unselfish He will make us, also, since it will be our Glory to see His Glory! He does not say that He is going to take us Home that we may be in Glory, but that we may behold His Glory! His Glory is better to us than any personal gloryall things are more ours by being His! Glory apart from Him is not Glory! Beloved, even as our Lord seems to lose Himself in His people, His people hide themselves away in Him. It is His Glory to glorify themit is their glory to glorify Himand it will be the glory of glories for them to be glorified together! Who would not go to this Heaven? Who would keep a Brother or Sister out of it an hour?

Observe the fellowship which exists in the Glory Land. Read the verse That they may behold My Glory, which You have given Me. What a blending of Persons! Where did our Lords Glory come from? You gave it to Me, says Jesus. Hence it is the Fathers Glory passed over to the Son! Yet Jesus calls it, My Glory, for it is truly His own. The saints are to behold this and it will be their glory to see it. Here we have the Father and the Elder Brother, and the many Brethren and a wonderful communism of interests and possessions. It is always so in a loving family. There we draw no hard and fast lines of meum and teum. All yours are mine and mine are yours. We ask not, Whose is this? Or, Whose is that? when we are at home! If you were to go into a strangers house, you would not think of taking this or that. But as your fathers own son, you make yourself at home and no one enquires, What are you doing?

Bridegroom and bride do not quarrel about property whether it is his or hers. Laws have been made, lately, to settle different estates for those who are onethis is well enough when love is gonebut true conjugal love laughs at all that can make separate that which God has joined together! The wife says, That is mine. No says the caviler, it is your husbands. Her answer is, and therefore it is mine. In that blessed union into which Divine Love has admitted us, Christ is ours and we are Christs. His Father is our Father. We are one with Him. He is one with the Father and, therefore, all things are ours and the Father, Himself, loves us. All this will not only be true in Heaven, but it will there be realized and acted on!

So when the Lord brings His people Home, we shall be one with Him and He one with the Fatherand we, also, in Him, one with the Father, so that we shall then find boundless glory in beholding the Glory of our Lord and God! My text has baffled me. I am beaten back by its blaze of light! Forgive me. I had a thought, but I cannot express it. The fire of my text burns with such fervent heat that it threatens to consume me if I draw nearer to it. Easily could I step into Heavenso I feel at this moment!

V. I must end by speaking of THE HOME ATMOSPHERE. None of us can wish our departed friends back from their thrones. Since they have gone to be where Jesus is and to enter so fully into the most blissful fellowship with Him and the Father, we would not have them return, even, for an instant to this poor country! We only wish that our turn for migration may soon come. We would not be too long divided from our fellows. If some of the birds have gone to the sunny land, let us plume our wings to follow them. There will be only a little interval between our parting and our everlasting meeting. Look at the many who died before we came into the world. Some of them have been together in Heaven now for thousands of years! To them it must seem that they were only divided by a moments interval. Their continents of fellowship have made the channel of death seem but a streak of sea. Soon we shall take the same view of things!

Breathe the Home atmosphere. Jesus tells us that the atmosphere of His Home is loveYou loved Me before the foundation of the world. Brothers and Sisters, can you follow me in a great flight? Can you stretch broader wings than the condor ever knew and fly back into eternity before the beginning of it? There was a day before all days, when there was no day but the Ancient of Days! There was a time before all time, when only God WASthe Uncreated, the Only-Existent One. The Divine Three Father, Son and Spirit lived in blessed consort with each Other, delighting in each Other. Oh the intensity of the Divine Love of the Father to the Son! There was no world, no sun, no moon, no stars, no universe, but God, aloneand the whole of Gods Omnipotence flowed forth in a stream of love to the Sonwhile the Sons whole Being remained eternally One with the Father by a mysterious essential union.

How came all this which we now see and hear? Why this creation? Why this fall of Adam? This redemption? This Church? This Heaven? How came it all about? It needed not to have been, but the Fathers love made Him resolve to show forth the Glory of His Son. The mysterious volume which has been gradually unfolded before us has only this one design the Father would make known His love to the Son and make the Sons glories to appear before the eyes of those whom the Father gave Him! This Fall and this Redemption and the story as a wholeso far as the Divine Purpose is concernedare the fruit of the Fathers love to the Son and His delight in glorifying the Son! Those myriads, those white-robed myriads, harping to music infinitely deepwhat do they all mean? They are the Fathers delight in the Son! That He might be glorified forever, He permitted that He should bear a human body, should suffer, bleed and die so that there might come out of Him, as a harvest comes from a dying and buried corn of wheat, all the countless hosts of elect souls, ordained forever to a felicity exceeding bounds!

These are the bride of the Lamb, the body of Christ, the fullness of Him that fills all in all. Their destiny is so high that no language can fully describe it! God only knows the love of God and all that it has prepared for those who are the objects of it. Love wraps up the whole in its cloth of gold. Love is both the source and the channel and the end of the Divine act. Because the Father loved the Son, He gave us to Him and ordained that we should be with Him. His love to us is love to the Son. Not for your sakes do I do this, O House of Israel; be ashamed and be confounded. Because of the boundless, ineffable, infinite love of the great Father toward His Son, He has, therefore, ordained this whole system of salvation and redemption, that Jesus in the Church of His redeemed might everlastingly be glorified!

Let our saintly ones go Home, Beloved, if that is the design of their going. Since all comes of Divine Love and all sets forth Divine Love, let them go to Him who loves themlet Divine Love fulfill its purpose of bringing many sons unto Glory! Since the Father once made our Lord perfect by His sufferings, let Him now be made perfectly glorious by the coming up of His redeemed from the purifying bath of His Atonement! I see them rise like sheep from the washing, all of them gathering with delight at the feet of that great Shepherd of the sheep!

Beloved, I am now lost in the subject. I breathe that heavenly air! Love surrounds all and conquers grief. I will not cause the temperature to fall by uttering any other words but thisHold your friends lovingly, but be ready to yield them to Jesus. Detain them not from Him to whom they belong. When they are sickfast and praybut when they are departed, do much as David did who washed his face, ate and drank. You cannot bring them back again. You will go to themthey cannot return to you. Comfort yourselves with the double thought of their joy in Christ and Christs joy in them! Add the triple thought of the Fathers joy in Christ and in them! Let us watch the Masters call. Let us not dread the questionwho next and who next? Let none of us start back as though we hoped to linger longer than others. Let us even desire to see our names in the celestial conscription! Let us be willing to be dealt with just as our Lord pleases. Let no doubt intervene. Let no gloom encompass us. Dying is but going Homeindeed, there is no dying for the saints!

Charles Stanford is gone! Thus was his death told to meHe drew up his feet and smiled. Thus will you and I depart. He had borne his testimony in the light, even when blind. He had cheered us all, though he was the greatest sufferer of us all! And now the film has gone from the eyes and the anguish is gone from the heart and, blessed be God, he is with Jesus! He smiled! What a sight was that which caused that smile! I have seen many faces of dear departed ones lit up with splendor. Of many I could feel sure that they had seen a vision of angels. Traces of a reflected Glory hung about their countenances. O Brothers and Sisters, we shall soon know more of Heaven than all the divines can tell us!

Let us go home, now, to our own dwellings, but let us pledge ourselves that we will meet again. But where shall we appoint the trysting place? It would be idle to appoint any spot of earth, for this assembly will never come together again in this world! We will meet with Jesus, where He is, where we shall behold His Glory. Some of you cannot do this. Turn from your evil ways! Turn to the right, where stands that Cross, and keep straight on and you will come to Jesus in Glory. Blessed be the name of the Lord! Amen.

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THE RIGHTEOUS FATHER KNOWN AND LOVED   
NO. 1378

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, OCTOBER 14, 1877, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**O righteous Father, the world has not known You. But I have known You, and these have known that You have sent Me. And I have declared unto them Your name, and will declare it; that the love with which You have loved Me may be in them, and I in them. John 17:25, 26.**

THESE are the last sentences of our Lords most wonderful prayer. May they not be regarded as the flower and crown of the whole intercession? Minds usually burn and glow and reach their highest fervor as they proceed and it will not be wrong to conceive of the Savior as having here reached the climax of His pleading, the summit of His supplication. He has kept the best wine until now and brings forth His richest sentences last. How, then, shall our slender ability attain to the height of this great argument?

It is far beyond our little skill to draw forth all the sweets which lie within these words like ointment in a box of alabaster. For their full consideration, a lifetime would be too brief and the mind of the most Gracetaught Believer too feeble! Here are great deeps which neither reason nor thought can fathom nor experience fully know. Only the scholars of the New Jerusalem who have, for ages, studied the manifold wisdom of God in the glorious work of redemption and, perhaps not even they, would be able to discover all that the Savior meant by these most simple but yet most pregnant words.

Johns Gospel is always easy for the child to read, but it is always hard for the man to understand. And these two verses, which are almost entirely made up of words of one syllable, contain mysteries which baffle the most enlightened understanding. When I consider what they veil, I am constrained to cry out, O the depths! I can only hope to present to you a few grains of gold which have been washed down by the streams of meditationI cannot take you to the secret mines from which the treasures have been borne. It shall need your own experience and the personal teaching of the Holy Spirit for you to know the height and depth of the Truths of Gods spoken here. And even then it shall require death and resurrection and a sight of the Eternal Glory to qualify you wholly to comprehend them!

There are two things in the text manifest to every careful reader. There is, first, a knowledge which is exceedingly peculiar and inestimably preciousO righteous Father, the world has not known You. But I have known You, and these have known that You have sent Me. In connection with this knowledge you will observe that there is a great Teacher who

first knows for Himself that which He teachesI have known You. And then He communicates His knowledge And I have declared unto them Your name, and will declare it. That fruitful theme shall furnish the first topic of our meditation. May the Holy Spirit lead us into it.

The second part of the text is not knowledgeit is that to which all Divine knowledge is intended to lead, namely, love. The 26th verse speaks of wonderful discoveries of a love of infinite excellenceThat the love with which You have loved Me may be in them. And you notice that in order to bring that love home to us, there is a Divine Indweller who goes with it, and without whom it could not be! As a Teacher is required to bring us the choice knowledge, so an Indweller is necessary to infuse into us the infinite loveAnd I in them. Jesus must teach us or we shall not know the Father. He must dwell in us or we shall not rejoice in His love.

Thus our first subject is Divine knowledge and the Divine Instructor. Our second subject is indwelling love and the indwelling Lord. The two are one! The blessed Person of our Lord Jesus is so connected with both and so unites both that the subject is one! To know God in Christ Jesus is to love Himand to be loved of Him is the cause of our being made to know Him! When Jesus declares the Fathers name, we both know and love. And when we see the Father in the Son we are filled both with instruction and affection.

I. Our text speaks of A KNOWLEDGE OF INFINITE VALUE AND ITS TEACHER. What is that knowledge? Jesus tells us in verse 26I have declared unto them Your name. God has made man and, naturally, man ought to know his Maker. The creature should acquaint itself with its Creator. The subject should know the name of his King. But by reason of the blindness of our heart, through the depravity engendered by the Fall and, also, by reason of each mans personal sin, there is none that understands, there is none that seeks after God.

Whatever else fallen man desires to know (and by nature he is always ready to eat of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil), yet he desires not to know his God, but says to Him, Depart from us. We desire not the knowledge of Your ways. Yet it is evident that a man can never be in a proper state till he knows his God and is at peace with Him. A man who is totally ignorant of God must be in a dark state of mindand since he loves that darknessit is plain that his mind is biased against good. His willful ignorance of God proves his enmity to Him. While man is opposed to God he cannot be happy, holy, or safe. How can he be, when he fights against One who is perfect holiness and love?

Our Lord Jesus Christ, therefore, in coming to save us, makes it a part of His office to reveal the Father to us. He brings us the knowledge of the Glory of God, for it shines in His own face. God was manifest in the flesh. Man must know God in order to be saved and, therefore, the Lord Jesus of old promised in the 22nd Psalm, I will declare Your name unto My brethren, and here, in our text, He confesses, I have declared unto them Your name, and will declare it. By the term, name, He means the existence of God, the Nature of God, the Character of God, the work of God, the Revelation of God, for the word, name is a peculiarly expressive word in Scripture and comprehends all that by which a person is properly described. In this case it comprehends the whole of God and our Lord Jesus Christ has come to make God known to us to the fullest.

He says, If you had known Me, you would have known My Father, also. This should suggest to each of us a searching question, Do I know the Lord? If you do not, it is quite certain that our Lords Words apply to you, you must be born again. Without a knowledge of God, you bear evidence that you are still in Natures darkness and in the natural alienation of your spirit. You belong to that world which lies in the Wicked One, of which our Lord said, O righteous Father, the world has not known You. O that by the teaching of the Holy Spirit you may yet know the Father!

In verse 25 there is a testing name given to God, a name by which we may decide whether we know the name of the Lord or not. What is that? I call your particular attention to it, for my whole subject turns upon it. It is thisO righteous Father. I know of no other place in Scripture where God is called by that name. In this prayer Jesus had not addressed His Father by that title before. He had spoken of Him as, Father, and also as, Holy Father, but here, alone, it isO righteous Father. I say that the knowledge of this name may serve as a test as to whether you truly and spiritually know God, or have only a notional and outward idea of Him. If you know Him aright, you know and understand what is comprehended under those two simple words which are so remarkable when found in combinationrighteous Father.

He is righteoushaving the attributes of a Judge and Ruler. He is just, impartial, by no means sparing the guilty. He is Fathernear of kin, loving, tender, forgiving. In His Character and in His dealings with His people He blends the two as they were never combined before! How can the judge and the father be found in one? When guilty men are concerned, how can both characters be carried out to the fullest? How is it possible? There is but one answer and that is found in the Sacrifice of Jesus which has joined the two in one! In the Atonement of our Lord Jesus mercy and truth are met togetherrighteousness and peace have kissed each other. In the sacred Substitution we see declared how God is righteous, and yet, Fatherin the sublime transactions of Calvary He manifests all the love of a tender Fathers heart and all the justice of an impartial Rulers sword!

This is the knowledge which our Lord has come to declare among the men whom He has chosen out of the world. And He assures us, first, that this is peculiar knowledge. O righteous Father, the world has not known You. The heathen world knew nothing of a righteous Fatherit scarcely knew God as Fatherthough here and there a line of a heathen poet might speak of men as the offspring of God, the true idea of Divine Fatherhood was unknown to sages and philosophers. As to the righteousness of God, they had but clouded notions. A future judgment and a system of rewards and punishments they saw by the light of natural conscience. But true righteousness in the governing of the universe they had not discoveredthey knew not because they did not wish to know.

Their gods were generally monsters of iniquity. As to righteousness and love being combined, they imagined no such thing! The idea of a god who should be at once sternly righteous and yet infinitely tender had not occurred to them. How could it? Being themselves unrighteous, they sought not after a righteous God! He was not at all in their thoughts. Being themselves cruel and loveless, they could not discover a Deity whose name is Love. All the wisdom of antiquity went to fabricate gods of quite another kind. The world, by wisdom, knew not the God who is called righteous Father. It is more humbling to have to add that the Christian world does not know God as a righteous Father, either, but persists in forsaking this grand, glorious and Scriptural view of Him.

Mark you, I draw a very grave distinction between the Christian Church and the Christian world! The Christian world is a conglomeration of good and evilthe embodiment of the unreal and unspiritual which, nevertheless, desires to bear the Christian name. It is the world pretending to be the friend of Christ and you know how hollow is the pretense. The Christian Church, made up of the men taught of God and born of the Spirit, is another matter! There we have something very different, for these know the righteous Father. Skeptics labeled as, thinkers, reject the evangelical idea of God and the Atonement which that idea involves. Worldly wisdom talks of the universal fatherhood of God, and babbles forever about that mere dream, that fiction of folly against which the Bible is a plain and pointed protest.

Universal Fatherhood, indeed, when our Lord Jesus said, If God were your Father you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God. You are of your father, the devil, and the lusts of your father you will do. Is it not described as a special wonder of love that we should be called the sons of God? (1 John 3:1.) Did not the Holy Spirit say by His servant John, In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil; whoever does not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loves not his brother? The philosophic Christian world knows an effeminate, indiscriminate fatherhood, but not, the righteous Father. It will not bow before the majesty of His justice.

According to the tenor of its teaching, sin is a misfortune, transgression a mere trifle, and the souls that suffer for willful guilt are objects to be pitied, rather than to be blamed! The worlds thinkers are continually drawing upon our feelings to make us pity those who are punishedbut they have little to say in order to make us hate the evil which deserved the doom. Sin, according to them, does not, of itself, demand punishment, but penalties are to be exacted or remitted for the general good, if, indeed, they are to be executed at all! All necessary and inevitable connection between guilt and its punishment is denied. They dare to call justice, revenge, and speak of atonement as if were a compensation for private annoyance.

The Christian world does not seem to have learned the Truth that a God all mercy were a God unjust, and that a God unjust would soon be discovered to be a God without lovein fact, no God whatever. Righteous Father! This is the peculiar Revelation which is received by those who have been taught of the Holy Spiritand to this day Jesus Christ may say, O righteous Father, the world has not known You. Men kick against the doctrine of the Atonement, they quarrel with Substitution, they are fierce in their sarcasms against the mention of the precious blood of Christ and sneer superciliously at those who hold fast the old Truths of God. They stumble at this stumbling stone and strive evermore to overthrow this rock of the Truth of God! And yet, depend upon it, this is the test question by which we shall know whether a man knows God aright or knows Him not!

There is much in this knowledge which renders it very distinctive, for it reveals the condition of the mind which receives it. A man who knows God as, righteous Father, shows that he has some knowledge of himself. He has perceived the sin within his nature and it has burdened him. The righteousness of God has appeared to him in its threatening form and he had been bowed before it under a sense of his guilt. You can see, too, that the man also knows something of his Savior. He has evidently seen the Son, or else he would not know the Father, for of old Jesus said, No man comes unto the Father but by Me. He has seen Gods great Gift to man and learned His boundless love!

His knowledge of the righteous Father shows that his heart has submitted itself to the justice of God. He has been in the place where David stood when he said, Against You, You only, have I sinned and done this evil in Your sight; that You might be justified when You speak, and be clear when You judge. He has evidently bared his back to the lash of punishment and felt that he deserved all the blows which it could lay upon him. Inasmuch as it knows the Lord as a righteous Father you can see that the heart has learned to trust God, for no man calls Him, Father, in spirit and in truth till first he possesses a living faith and some kindling of Divine love. Submission and trust compose a condition of character which is peculiar to a renewed soul, but will surely be found in a man if he is, indeed, saved, for it is the mark of being saved from self-justification and from the hatred bred by despair.

When we see in a man an unconditional submission to the justice of God and yet a trustful hopefulness in His boundless love, we may be sure that he is a renewed man. He cries, You are righteous, O my God, and if You destroy me, I can say nothing. But, Father, You will not destroy me, for I perceive that you are Love. Though I see You grasp Your sword of fire, yet do I trust You, for I still believe You to be gracious and loving. The knowledge described in the text is not only peculiar to those who are taught of God, but it reveals peculiarities in them which Grace has implanted there. They believe because they are Christs sheep and know His voice. The life within them receives the living Truth of God. They would not have come to know the righteous Father unless there had been a change in their character worked by the Spirit of Godand that once done, they know Him as of necessity.

I would next say that this knowledge is eminently consolatory. It is but little that I know, but I feel that I would cheerfully part with it all so long as I may be allowed to retain the knowledge contained in these two words, righteous Father. This is my life, my light, my love, my delight, my

Heaven! If all the productions of wit and wisdom throughout all past ages could be as effectually consumed as the Alexandrian library when it was burned to ashes. If man did but retain the knowledge of these two words, righteous Father, he might be content to see the whole mass pass away in smoke! To know the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom He has sent, is the climax, the essence, the sum total of wisdom! I said that it was consolatory and so it is to the last degree. For a man to know that God is his Father is delightful beyond measure!

To feel that God forgives him as the father forgave the prodigal. To know that He has received him into His heart and home as the father did his once lost boy is unspeakably delightful! But when we further learn that all this is done without the violation of justicethat all this deed of Grace is done righteouslyand so done that even Justice demands it should be done, then are we full of wondering love! Beloved, God is as just in loving His sinful people as He could have been in manifesting His displeasure towards them! He is as just in forgiving as He could have been in punishingand this is the glory of the whole matter! This being understood, we see our position in Christ Jesus to be unassailable. We see that Justice cannot punish us, for Jesus has borne our penalty! It cannot demand more at our hands, for our great Substitute has rendered to it the full tale of obedience. In Christ Jesus, God is just and yet our Justifier! We are so safe that we begin to challenge opposition and cry, Who shall lay anything to the charge of Gods elect? We take up a triumphant note and sing with exceeding joy, If God is for us, who can be against us! If God is righteous and yet my Father, then I am saved and saved in such a way that the attributes of God are glorified by

my salvation and, therefore, I am most securely and certainly saved! Why should I not rejoice?

One more fact about this knowledge of God as a righteous Fatherit is a knowledge which causes its possessor to enjoy much fellowship with Jesus. Notice how our Lord puts it. O righteous Father, the world has not known You. But I have known You, and these have known that You have sent Me. I have known You. Ah, yes, of old the Son of God knew the glorious Character of the Godhead! Being Himself God, He knew that justice was an essential attribute of Deity, which never, never could be tarnished or made to yield a hairs breadth! And He knew, also, that God is Love and that His love would never cease to be His special glory and delight! He knew of old that, speaking after the manner of men, these two attributes were each resolved to suffer no eclipse. He knew that each of them must keep its place.

God must be just, and must be a Father. Consequently, when dealing with sinners, He must smite and He must spare. Our Lord saw how these two necessities stood like the eternal hills and how our doom seemed to roll betweenand it was He who condescended, for our sakes, to bring these two together by His own endurance of justice and manifestation of love. He determined to take upon Himself our Nature and bear our sin which was the cause of the quarrel! And then, by enduring the punishment of our sins, He magnified justiceand to an equal degree glorified love. He came, He saw and solved the difficultyand now the Judge is as righteous as if He were not love and the Father is as loving as if righteousness had never been offended! This grand Character of God as righteous Father was so dear to our Lord and so much admired by Him that He died to maintain and vindicate it! And when you and I come to know it, I am sure we so much delight in it that we feel we would sooner die than give up this Truth of God!

This great Revelation of God is not a dogma that may or may not be acceptedit must be so! I do, in my soul, believe this Truth of God to be an article of a standing or of a falling of a Christian Church. If you put away the doctrine of the Substitutionary Sacrifice of Christ, you have disemboweled the Gospel and torn from it, its very heart! Angels need no longer sing glory to God in the highest and peace on earth if it is not true the union of the Divine Glory and human salvation is found in Jesus! The glad news dwindles down very lamentably if the Atonement is denied! But it cannot be disprovedGod is just and yet the Justifier of him that believes! Christ has died that this Truth of God may be clear and His people live to declare it and feel that it were worth a thousand martyrdoms to maintain it! Herein we have fellowship with Christ, for He knows the righteous Father and rejoices in Himand we know the righteous Father, too, in Christand love and bless Him and wonder at Him every day more and more.

Thus I have, to the best of my power, described the invaluable knowledge. May we all be taught of the Lord and all know Him, from the least to the greatest.

Now, this knowledge comes to us by a Teacher. That Teacher is spoken of in verse twenty-six. I have declared unto them Your name, and will declare it. Our Beloved Lord has most fitly declared to us this name of righteous Father, for He, Himself, knows it as none other can know it! And He here confesses this intimate knowledge, saying, but I have known You. No man knows the Father save the Son and the Son knows the rectitude of the Fathers government and the love of the Fathers heart beyond all others. Is He not Himself, very God of very God? And does He not perceive this wondrous union of the two ranges of attributes in the Person of the Father with a clearness of vision which no one else possesses? Fit is it, therefore, that He should declare to us what He has seen and known of the Father.

He declared the righteous Father in His life, for in His life He incarnated Truth and Grace. Jesus Christ on earth was without sin in thought, in word and in deed. Point me to a sin He ever committed, inculcated, or excused. Righteousness was about Him as the atmosphere which He breathed. Well did the Psalmist say of Him, You love righteousness and hate wickedness. And yet what love there was in Him and pity for the wandering sheep! He mingled with sinners and yet was separate from sinners. He touched their diseases and healed them and yet was not defiled by their impurities. He took their infirmities upon Himself and yet in Him, personally, there was no trace of sin. Our Lord was so righteous that you perceived at once that He was not of this worldand yet He was so lovingly human that He was altogether a Man among men.

He was not at all separated from them in the way in which John the Baptist was, who came neither eating nor drinking. Nor was He divided from His fellows, as many a man of genius has been, by eccentric modes of thought. He was mans Brother and his Physician, his Friend and his Savior! When you want to know the Fathers righteousness and love, read the history of Jesus Christno, know the Lord Jesus, Himself and you know the Father! His death, however, most gloriously illustrated this beyond everything else. Behold, He dies that the righteous Father may be seen! He has taken upon Himself mans sin and He is brought to the place where man must answer for his sin. He is silent before His accusers. He is condemned and numbered with the transgressors.

Now He must die the sinners death. Look, He is nailed to the Cross and now God, Himself, forsakes Him, for He has laid the guilt of man upon Him and, therefore, cannot be present to make His spirit glad. The deserted Savior cries, My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? and well He might, when His own Father in righteousness turned His face from Him! Beloved, when Jesus Christ died there was a greater display of the righteousness and the fatherhood of God than could have been possible by any other means! Then the mystery was made plain and the depth opened up to its very bottom! O Lord our God, what an abyss of adorable goodness have You thus laid bare before us!

*How our hearts tremble at Your love immense! In love immense, inviolably just!   
You, rather than Your justice should be stained, Did stain the Cross with blood of your own Son.*

And now, today, it is the business of our Lord to continue to reveal the righteous fatherhood of God and He does so by the work of His Holy Spirit. Do you not remember when He revealed it to you? When you were bowed down with grief on account of sin? When you longed to be reconciled to God but could not see how, then the Spirit of God came to you and pointed you to the full Atonement made, to the utmost ransom paid and you clapped your hands for very joy as you perceived that God could be your Father and receive you as His child and yet His righteousness need not suffer the slightest decrease! That Spirit of God working on the behalf of Christ is still declaring this among the nations! As the years roll on He is opening the eyes of the blind and bringing His own chosen, one by one, to behold the Glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ! And then they can say, O righteous Father, I know You and rejoice in You.

To each one of us who are saved, Jesus is declaring this righteous Father more and more. I hope I know more of this than I did 20 years ago. Brothers and Sisters, dont you, too? I trust that every day we see a little more of the righteous fatherhood of God and shall continue to do so, world without end! We shall, as we grow in Grace, look further and further into the wondrous mystery of the justice which was satisfied and the love which furnished the satisfaction! Beloved, it shall be a part of our Lords joy, even in eternity, to still declare to us the name of God, the righteous Father. Will it not be our joy to sit at His feet and learn of Him? Is He not a blessed Teacher? Has He not been very patient with us? Blessed be His name for all His care and patience towards us. He has taught us much and means to teach us more. Let us bend a listening ear and bow a willing heart while, from day to day, He shall continue to declare unto us the righteous Father.

Now, if at any time I should seem to preach the doctrine of the Substitution of Christ too often and if you should say, He is harping upon the old string, I shall not hesitate to quote my Masters words and say, I have declared unto them Your name, and will declare it. This Truth of God is one that needs continual declaration! It should be sounded often in the Christians ears to keep alive His sense of obligation to the Wisdom which devised and the Love which carried out the plan of our salvation to the glory of the righteous Father.

II. But now, secondly, this heavenly knowledge is not given to us for its own sake alone. Even the high and blessed Revelation of the righteous Father is not made to us that we may know it and end in knowing. Our Lord says, I have declared unto them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You have loved Me may be in them, and I in them. The objective of the knowledge bestowed upon us is the infusion of a LOVE UNRIVALLED IN VALUE and extraordinary to the last degree! Let us speak upon it. First, notice that this discovery of love which is spoken of in the 26th verse is an inward discovery of itThat the love with which You have loved Me may be in them. It was always on them, for the Father has always loved His peoplebut here it is spoken of as, in them.

What does that mean? I think it means that they may know it, be persuaded of it, believe it and enjoy itthat they, through knowing the righteous name, may come to perceive the love of God towards them. Do you not see the connection? Jesus Christ our Lord dies for us that God may be righteous and yet may save us! Is it not clear as a pikestaff to you that God loves His people with a very wonderful love when He gives His own Son to die and satisfy justice on their behalf? Nothing can prove that love so clearly. Nothing can bring it home so forcibly as the sacrificial death of the Only Begotten. Therefore does Christ declare the blessed name of the righteous Father, in order that it may come home to you with an unconquerable power that the Father loves you and loves you beyond conception, seeing that not even His dear Son was so loved as to be spared, but

He must die that you might live and that the justice of God might be satisfied on your account!

There is no way of knowing the love of God like knowing the righteous Father and the Atonement which that Character necessitated. Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us. You may say, I see His love in every flower that blooms and every breeze that blows. It is true, but it is the same love, after all, which He has towards a horse or a cowfor do not flowers bloom and breezes blow for them? We see the love of God, say some, in giving us meat to eat and raiment to put on. So do I, but this, also, is the same love which He bears to ravens and to lilies, for does He not feed the one and clothe the other? I need something more by way of love than this. I see Gods love, says one, in

Christs coming to teach us and make us better. No doubt you do, and so do I, but I do not feel it one half so forcibly as when I gaze upon Calvary and see the innocent Victim bleeding for my crimes. Herein is love!

When the Divine Father gives up His best Beloved for guilty man, we may well say, Behold how He loved him! Come and see this spectacle of love! It is none other than the Lord of Heaven who must die to vindicate the jealous purity of the Divine government! Is He Gods only begotten Son and must He bear mans guilt? Miracle of miracles! Must the spotless Son bear human guilt? He must! He did! Tell it and let Heaven be astonished, still, though it has heard the wonder nearly 2,000 years! Upon Him who never sinned the Lord has laid our iniquities! Bearing that guilt, must He suffer? He must. If God loves His people, His Son must suffer in their placemust suffer shame, must suffer desertion, must suffer death. What? Must He die? Incarnate Deity be put to death? A felons death? Can this be? It has been! It is finished! Such was the love of God that He spared not His only begotten Son, but freely delivered Him up for us all. Be astonished, O heavens, forever and ever, that love could accomplish such a feat as this!

Now, then, Christ has come on purpose to declare the name of God that the love of God may be perceived by us, its power felt, its Glory recognized, its greatness wondered at, its infinitude delighted in. But now notice, and here is the very heart of our subject, that this love was of a most extraordinary kind. That the love with which You have loved Me may be in them. What is the love with which God loved His Son? Come, you philosophers and divines! Come, you who have learned to blend imagination with cool judgmentcome and think this overthe love with which the Father loved His Son! Believer, He loves you as He loves His best Beloved! He is His only begotten SonSon in a very mysterious mannerfor we cannot understand that Divine filiation in which the Father is eternal and the Son also eternal.

He loves you as He loves such a Son. There is more than sonship, there is natural unity of Essence, for the Father and Son are one God! And how the one God loves, how the Father loves, the Son, I know not, except that I know there can be no limit to such love. It must be altogether boundless and unspeakable! Now, if you fully know the righteous fatherhood of God, as Christ would have you know it, you will learn that God loved you as He loved His Son. Do you not see that it is so? If He had not loved you as He loved the Son, He would have spared His Son! Is not that clear? If He had not loved you as He loved His Son, He would have said to His Son, Son, You shall never leave Heaven for that polluted planet. You shall never descend to poverty and suffering. You shall never have Your hands and feet pierced. You shall never be despised and spit upon and put to a cruel death.

But because He loved us as He loved His Son, He gave His Son! Does not that fact warm your hearts? Does it not burn like coals of juniper within your bosoms? Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable Gift! No, that is not all. We learn from the verse which precedes our text that the Father loved our Lord eternallyFor You loved Me before the foundation of the world. Perceive, then, that God has also loved you, dear child of His, from before the foundation of the world! Before you had a being, His prescient eye foresaw your existence and you were the object of His love! How or why, I cannot tell you, but He loved you and He still loves you as He loves His Son! May the power of that love be felt in Your heart, now! It was a love of complacency and delight!

Remember those words of the Lord which He spoke concerning His Son in the day of His Baptism and at two other occasions when the heavens openedThis is My Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Always draw a distinction between the love of benevolence, with which God loves all His creatures, and the love of complacency which is reserved for His own. He calls His Church His Hephzibah, My delight is in her. He says not so of the world! God never said concerning any wicked man, This is my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, for He is not pleased with him, but angry with him every day! But concerning all those who know the righteous Father it is the prayer of Christ that the love with which the Father loves Him may be in themand by that He means that they may feel that the Lord has, in them, a fathers content.

Do try, if you can, to realize this high privilege. It is true, O Believer, that God, the infinite Father, takes pleasure in you! It is true, but it is very surprising! Often have I turned over that Word in the Song where the Bridegroom says to the bride, You are all fair, My love. There is no spot on you. How can this be? Why, we are all spots! Yet does the Eternal Father view us in Christ! And in Him He takes delight in us as a father does in his children. My delights were with the sons of men. He shall rest in His love, He shall rejoice over you with singing. When you know God as righteous, and yet, Father, then shall you see that, inasmuch as the righteous way of salvation has put away all sin by laying it upon Christ, there is no reason why the Lord should be angry with us! And inasmuch as the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us, there is a legal reason why He should be satisfied with His people. And inasmuch as we have become one with Christ, there is good cause why He should take a delight in us, even for His Sons sake!

God the Father loves His Son infinitely! How could He do less? Without beginning has He loved Him and without an end will He love Him and, also, without change, without limit and without degree! In the same way does He love His people, whose hope is fixed in Him as the righteous Father. This love, wherever it reigns in the heart, creates a return love to God. You cannot really know all this and enjoy it without feeling, My God, I love You in return. And that high and noble passion works to the cleansing of the soul and the purging out of sinand so it becomes a sanctifying influence by which a Christian is made to be holiness unto the Lord.

To closethis love within the soul comes through an Indweller. Observe the last words of the text, That the love with which You have loved Me may be in them, and I in them. What does this mean? I cannot tell you all it means. Let us skim the surface just for a minute. It means this. The Holy Spirit is the representative of Christ now upon earth and if ever the love of God the Father is to be known by any one of us, the Lord Jesus,

by the Spirit, must be in us. Without the Spirit of God actually resident in us we cannot know the righteous Father! We are as blind and dead men until He quickens and illuminates usall the letter-teaching in the world will benefit us nothingwe must be born again!

My dear Hearers, there may be some of you to whom all my talk, this morning, must seem very strange. You cannot see anything in it. Let the fact cause you to suspect that you must be in the dark. When even the love of God to His people becomes a dry theme to you, it looks suspicious! Surely you have no part nor lot in it, or else you would relish a discourse upon it! The reason why you do not comprehend it is because you have not the Spirit of Christand if you have not the Spirit of Christ, you are none of His. May this convince you of your condition and may you be led to seek Christ and find everlasting life.

But when the text says that Christ is in His people, it means, besides the indwelling of the Spirit, that Christ is in us! He is in us by faith, for we have taken Christ Jesus as the great atoning Sacrifice to be our sole and only confidence. Therefore He is in us, trusted and loved, fed upon and believed in. If He is so, then it is quite clear that we know the righteous Father! And when we know the righteous Father, then it follows that we must have some discoveries of His great love to us. Are you trusting Christ? Is Jesus, in you, the hope of Glory? Do you trust in Him, alone? If so, go and drink to the fullest, the sweetness of the text and let no man say you cannot! Christ is in you, moreover, by a real and vital union with you. You are in Him as a branch is in the vine and He is in you as the sap is in the branch.

You are in Him as a member is in the body and He is in you as the life is in all the members. We know that Jesus quickens us and because He lives, we live, also. From now on we are one with Christ! It must be so, because if God did not see us in Christ, He could not regard us with complacency or, in other words, love us as He loves His Son! If He did not, in looking upon a man, see the love and the Nature of His Only Begotten in Him, how could He love him? He views us as part and parcel of His own dear Son and so His delight is in us!

Beloved, the Lord sees, in addition to all this, something of a likeness to Christ in us, worked by His Spirit, for if Jesus is, indeed, in us, we shall grow to be like He and shall manifest somewhat of His spirit and Nature. The more we have of likeness to Jesus, the more will it be evident that the love of God is in us and is working in us, to will and to do of His own good pleasure. May God grant that what I have spoken so feebly may, nevertheless, be sweetly enjoyed by you, for I am persuaded that in the text there lies many a banquet for saints that hunger and thirst after righteousnessand a depth of mystical teaching which it shall be well for you to search into with all your powers. God bless you, my Beloved, for Christs sake. Amen.

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LOVE AND IA MYSTERY   
NO. 1667

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

**I have declared unto them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You have loved Me may be in them, and I in them. John 17:26.**

FOR several Sabbath mornings my mind has been directed into subjects which I might fitly call the deep things of God. I think I have never felt my own incompetence more fully than in trying to handle such subjects. It is a soil into which one may dig and dig as deep as you will and still never exhaust the golden nuggets which lie within it! I am, however, comforted by this fact, that these subjects are so fruitful that even we who can only scratch the surface of them shall yet get a harvest from them. I read, once, of the plains of India, that they were so fertile that you had only to tickle them with a hoe and they laughed with plentyand surely such a text as this may be described as equally fruitfuleven under our feeble husbandry.

Pearls lie on the surface here as well as in the depth. We have only to search its surface and stir the soil a little, and we shall be astonished at the plenitude of spiritual wealth which lies before us. Oh, that the Spirit of God may help us to enjoy the blessed Truths which are here set forth! Here is the priceless treasure, but it lies hidden till He reveals it to us. You see, this text is taken out of our Lords last prayer with His disciples. He did as good as say, I am about to leave you, I am about to die for you and for awhile you will not see Me. But now, before we separate, let us pray. It is one of those impulses that you have felt yourselves. When you have been about to part from those you love, to leave them, perhaps, in danger and difficulty, you have felt you could do no less than say, Let us draw near unto God. Your heart found no way of expressing itself at all so fitting, so congenial, so satisfactory as to draw near unto the great Father and spread your case before Him.

Now, a prayer from such a One as Jesus, our Lord and Mastera prayer in such a company, with the 11 whom He had chosen and who had been with Him from the beginning. A prayer under such circumstances, I say, when He was just on the brink of the brook of Kedron and was about to cross that gloomy stream and go up to Calvary and there lay down His lifesuch a prayer as this, so living, earnest, loving and Divinedeserves the most studious meditations of all Believers! I invite you to bring your best thoughts and skill for the navigation of this sea. It is not a creek or bay, but the main ocean itself!

We cannot hope to fathom its depths. This is true of any sentence of this matchless prayer, but for me, the work of exposition becomes unusually heavy because my text is the close and climax of this marvelous supplicationit is the central mystery of all! In the lowest depth there is still a lower depthand this verse is one of those deeps which still exceed the rest! Oh, how much we need the Spirit of God! Pray for His bedewing! Pray that His balmy influences may descend upon us richly! You will observe that the last word of our Lords prayer is concerning love. This is the last petition which He offers, That the love with which You have loved Me may be in them, and I in them. He reaches no greater height than this, namely, that His people be filled with the Fathers love!

How could He rise higher? For this is to be filled with all the fullness of God, since God is Love and he that loves Him dwells in God and God in him. What importance ought you and I to attach to the Grace of love! How highly we should esteem that which Jesus makes the crown jewel of all. If we have faith, let us not be satisfied unless our faith works by love and purifies the soul. Let us not be content, indeed, until the love of Christ is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us. Well did the poet say

*Only love to us be given,*

*Lord, we ask no other Heaven,*  
For, indeed, there is no other Heaven below and scarcely is there any other Heaven above than to reach to the fullness of perfect love, for this is where the prayer of the Son of David ends, in praying, that the love with which You have loved Me may be in them. What a subject! The highest that even our Lord Jesus reached in His noblest prayer! Again, with groans, my heart cries, Holy Spirit, help!

I shall, this morning, try to speak first, upon the food of love, or what love lives upon. Secondly, upon the love, itselfwhat kind of love it is. And then, thirdly, upon the companion of love. That the love with which You have loved Me may be in them, and I in them.

I. First, THE FOOD OF LOVE to Godwhat is it? It is knowledge. I have made known unto them Your name, and will make it known. We cannot love a God whom we do not know! A measure of knowledge is necessary to affection. However lovely God may be, a man blind of soul cannot perceive Him and, therefore, is not touched by His loveliness. Only when the eyes are opened to behold the loveliness of God will the heart go out towards God who is so desirable an object for the affections. Brothers and Sisters, we must know in order to believe! We must know in order to hope and we must especially know in order to love. Hence the great desirableness that you should know the Lord and His great love which passes knowledge.

You cannot reciprocate love which you have never known, even as a man cannot derive strength from food which he has not eaten. Till first of all the love of God has come into your heart and you have been made a partaker of it, you cannot rejoice in it or return it. Therefore our Lord took care to feed His disciples hearts upon the Fathers name. He labored to make the Father known to them. This is one of His great efforts with them and He is grieved when He sees their ignorance and has to say to one of them, Have I been so long time with you and yet have you not known Me, Philip? He that has seen Me has seen the Father; and why do you say, then, Show us the Father? Study much, then, the Word of Godbe diligent in turning the pages of Scripture and in hearing Gods true ministers, that the flame of love within your hearts may be revived by the fuel of holy knowledge which you place upon it.

Pile on the logs of sandal wood and let the perfumed fires burn before the Lord! Heap on the handfuls of frankincense and sweet odors of sacred knowledge, that on the altar of your heart there may always be burning the sacred flame of love to God in Christ Jesus! The knowledge, here spoken of, is a knowledge which Jesus gave them. I have known You and these have known that You have sent Me. And I have declared unto them Your name, and will declare it. O Beloved, it is not knowledge that you and I pick up as a matter of book-learning that will ever bring out our love to the Father! It is only knowledge given us by Christ through His Spirit! It is not knowledge communicated by the preacher, alone, which will bless you, for however much he may be taught of God, himself, he cannot preach to the heart unless the blessed Spirit of God comes and takes of the things that are spoken and reveals them and makes them manifest to each individual heart so that, in consequence, it knows the Lord.

Jesus said, O righteous Father, the world has not known You, and you and I would have been in the same condition, strangers to God, without God and without hope in the world, if the Spirit of God had not taken of Divine things and applied them to our souls so that we are made to know them! Every living word of knowledge is the work of the living God! If you only know what you have found out for yourself, or picked up by your own industry apart from Jesus, you know nothing arightit must be by the direct and distinct teaching of God the Holy Spirit that you must learn to profit! Only Jesus Christ can reveal the Father. He Himself said, No man comes unto the Father but by Me. He that knows not Christ knows not the Father! But when Jesus Christ reveals Him, ah, then we do know Him after a special, personal, peculiar, inward knowledge!

This knowledge brings with it a life and a love with which the soul is not puffed up, but built up. By such knowledge we grow up into Him in all things who is our Head, being taught of the Son of God. This knowledge, dear Friends, comes to us gradually. The text indicates this. I have declared unto them Your name, and will declare it. As if, though they knew the Father, there was far more to know and the Lord Jesus was resolved to teach them more. Are you growing in knowledge, my Brothers and Sisters? My labor is lost if you are not growing in Grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I hope you know much more of God than you did 20 years ago when you first came to Him. That little knowledge which you received by Grace when you found life in a look at the Crucified One has saved youbut in these later years you have added to your faith, knowledge, and to your knowledge, experience.

You have gone on to know more deeply what you knew before and to know the details of what you seemed to know in the grass and the lump at first. You have come to look into things as well as upon thingsa look at Christ savesbut oh, it is the look into Christ that wins the hearts love and holds it fast and binds us to Him as with fetters of gold! We ought, every day, to be adding something to this inestimably precious store, that as we are known of God so we may know God and become, thereby, transformed from Glory unto Glory through His Spirit! Are you not thankful for this blessed word of the Lord JesusI will declare it? I will make it known?

He did so at His Resurrection, when He taught His people things they knew not before. But He did so much more after He had ascended up on high when the Spirit of God was given. He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatever I have said unto you. And now, today, in the hearts of His people, He is daily teaching us something that we do not know! All our experience tends that way. When the Spirit of God blesses an affliction to us, it is one of the Saviors illuminated books out of which we learn something more of the Fathers name and, consequently, come to love Him better, for that is the thing Christ aims at. He would so make known the Father that the love with which the Father has loved Him may be in usand that He, Himself, may be in us! This knowledge distinguishes us from the world. It is the mark by which the elect are made manifest. In the sixth verse of this chapter our Lord says, I have manifested Your name unto the men which You gave Me out of the world: Yours they were, and You gave them to Me; and they have kept Your Word. The world does not know the Father and cannot know Him, for it abides in the darkness and death of sin. Judge yourselves, therefore, by this sure test, and let the love which grows out of gracious knowledge be a token for good unto you.

Now let me try to show you what the Savior meant when He said, I have declared unto them Your name, and will declare. This knowledge which breeds love is knowledge of the name of God. What does He mean by, Your name? Now, I do not think I would preach an unprofitable sermon if I were to stay with the context and say that the name here meant is especially the name used in the 25th verseO righteous Father, the world has not known You. This is the name which we most need to knowRighteous Father. Observe the singular combination here. Righteous and yet a Father. Righteousto us poor sinners, a word of terror when we first hear it. Fatheroh, how sweet! That is a word of good cheer even to us prodigalsbut we are afraid to lay hold upon it, for our sins arise and conscience protests that God must be righteous and punish sin.

Our joy begins when we see the two unitedRighteous Fathera Father full of love and nothing but love to His people, and yet righteous as a Judge, as righteous as if He were not a Father. Dealing out His righteousness with stern severity as the Judge of all the earth must do, and yet a Father at the same time! I acknowledge that I never did love God at all, nor could I embrace Him in my affections till I understood how He could be just and yet the Justifier of him that believes in Jesus. How, in a word, He could be the, Righteous Father. That satisfied my conscience and my heart at the same time, for my conscience said, It is well, God has not put away sin without a Sacrifice, and has not winked at sin nor waived His justice in order to indulge His mercy.

But He remains just as He ever wasthe same thrice-holy God who will by no means spare the guilty. He has laid the punishment of our sins upon Christ. He has made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. And all this He has done that He might act to us as a Father and save His own children from the result of their transgressions! He has given His only-begotten Son to die in our stead that many sons might be brought to Glory through Him. It is at the Cross we understand this riddle. Here we see the righteous Father. But the world will not learn it and a large part of the professing church, which is nothing better than the world, wrongfully named with Christs name, will not learn it!

They do anything they can to get away from Atonementlove without righteousness is their idol! Substitution is a word that is hard for the world to spellthey cannot abide it. That Christ should suffer in the place of the guilty and bear that we might never bear the Fathers righteous wraththis they cannot agree with! Many pretend to keep the Atonement and yet they tear the heart out of it. They profess to believe in the Gospel, but it is a gospel without the blood of the Atonementand a bloodless gospel is a lifeless gospela dead gospel and a damning gospel! Let those take heed who cannot see God as a righteous Father, for they are numbered among the world who know Him not! These have known You, says our Lord. These who have been taught by Christ and only these, come to find as much joy in the word, righteous, as in the word, Father. And blending the two together they feel an intense love to the Righteous Father and their hearts rejoice in a holy Gospel, a message of mercy consistent with justice, a Covenant salvation ordered in all things and sure because it does no violence to Law and does not bind the hands of Justice.

Beloved, if this revelation of the atoning blood does not make your heart love Jesus and love the Father, it is because you are not in Him! But if you know this secret as to how righteousness and peace have kissed each other, you know the name that wins the affection of Believers to God. My own heart is glad and rejoices every hour because I find rest in Substitution, safety in the vindication of the Law, and bliss in the Glory of the Divine Character

*Lo! In the Grace that rescued man His brightest form of Glory shines! Here, on the Cross, tis fairest drawn In precious blond and crimson lines. Here I behold His inmost heart,   
Where Grace and vengeance strangely join, Piercing His Son with sharpest smart, To make the purchased pleasure mine.*

*Oh, the sweet wonders of that Cross,   
Where God the Savior loved and died!   
Her noblest life my spirit draws   
From His dear wounds and bleeding side.*

Still, I would take the word, name, in a wider sense. I have declared unto them Your name, which signifies Your Character. The word, name, is used as a sort of summary of all the attributes of God. All these attributes are well adapted to win the love of all regenerate spirits. Just think for a minute. God is holy. To a holy mind there is nothing in the world, there is nothing in Heaven more beautiful than holiness! We read of the beauties of holiness, for to a soul that is purified, holiness is superlatively lovely. Now, beauty wins love and, consequently, when Jesus Christ makes known His holy Father and shows us, in His life and in His death, the holiness of the Ever-Blessed, then our heart is won to the Father. Oh, you say, but holiness does not always win love. No, not the love of the defiled hearts that cannot appreciate it. But those who are pure in heart and can see God, no sooner behold His holiness than they are enamored of it and their souls at once delight in Him!

Moreover, we learn from our Lord Jesus that God is good. There is none good but one: that is God. How inexpressibly good He is! There is no goodness but what comes from God! His name, God, is but short for good, and all the good things that we receive in this life and for the life to come are but enlargements of His blessed name. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above and comes down from the Father of lights. Blessings enjoyed by us are streams that flow from the fountainhead of Gods infinite goodness to the sons of men. A man cannot help loving God when once he knows Him to be good, for all men love that which they apprehend to be good to them. A man says, Gold is good; rest is good; fame is good and, therefore, he seeks after these things. And when he comes to know that God is good, oh, then his spirit follows hard after Him. He cannot help but love that which he is persuaded is in the highest sense, good!

The soul that knows the name of the Lord rejoices at the very mention of Him. To sinners like ourselves, perhaps the next word may have more sweetness. God is mercifulHe is always ready to forgive. Note how the Prophet says, Who is a God like unto You, passing by transgression? He does not say, Who is a man like unto You? for none among our race can, for a moment, be compared with Him. But even if the gods of the heathen were gods, none of them could be likened unto the Lord for mercy! Now, when a man knows that he has offended and yet the person offended readily and freely forgives, why, it wins his love! If he is a right-hearted man, he cries, I cannot, again, offend one who so generously casts all my offenses behind his back.

The mercy of God is such a love-winning attribute that, as I told you the other Sunday, 26 times in a single Psalm the ancient Church sang, His mercy endures forever. Free Grace and pardoning love sensibly known in the soul will win your hearts unto God forever, so that you shall be His willing servants as long as you have any being. But there is still a higher word. God is Love and there is a something about love which always wins love. When Love puts on her own golden armor and bares her sword, bright with her own unselfishness, she goes on conquering and to conquer! Let a man once apprehend that God is Love; that this is Gods very essence, and he must at once love God. I do not mean merely apprehend, that God is Love in the cold intellectbut when his heart begins to glow and burn with that Divine Revelationthen straightway the spirit is joined unto the Lord and rests with delight in the great Father of spirits. Love knits and binds. Oh to feel more of its uniting power!

Thus have I shown you the manna which love feeds upon, the nectar which it drinks. Everything in God is lovely and there is no trait in His Character that is other than lovely. All the loveliness that can be conceived are heaped up in God without the slightest admixture of adulteration. He is Love altogether, wholly and emphatically. Oh, surely our Lord and Master was wise when He fed His peoples love upon such meat as this!

II. Brothers and Sisters, we have as yet only been standing at the furnace mouthlet us now enter into the devouring flame while we speak, in the second place, upon THE LOVE ITSELF. Observe, first, what this love is not. I have declared unto them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You have loved Me may be in them. Notice that the prayer is not that the Fathers love may be set upon them, or moved towards them. God does not love us because we know Him, for He loved us before we knew Him, even as Paul speaks of, His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses and sins.

Jesus has not come to set His Fathers love upon the chosen. Oh, no! He did not even die with that objective, for the Fathers love was upon the chosen from before the foundation of the world. The Father Himself loves you was always true. Christ did not die to make His Father loving, but because His Father is lovingthe atoning blood is the outflow of the very heart of God toward us! So do not make a mistake about this. Our Lord speaks not of the Divine Love in itself, but in us. This is not the eternal love of God towards us of which we are now reading, but that love in us. We are inwardly to feel the love which proceeds from the Father and so to have it in us. We are to have the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given to us. It is to be recognized by us, felt in us, made the subject of inward joythis it is that our Lord wishes to producethat the love of God may be in us, dwelling in our hearts, a welcome guest, the sovereign of our souls.

And this love is of a very peculiar sort. Let me read the verse again That the love with which You have loved Me may be in them. It is Gods own love in us! The love of the Father towards Jesus springs up like a crystal fountain and then the sparkling drops fall and overflow, as you have seen the fountains do, and we are the cups into which this overflowing love of God towards Christ Jesus flowsand flows till we, too, are full! The inward love so much desired for us by our Lord is no emotion of nature, no attachment proceeding from the unregenerate will, but it is the Fathers love transplanted into the soil of these poor hearts and becoming our love to Jesus, as we shall have to show in the next point.

But is not this a wonderful thingthat Gods love to Jesus should dwell in our hearts? And yet it is so. The love with which we love Christ, mark you, is Gods love to ChristThat the love with which You have loved Me may be in them. All true love, such as the Father delights in and accepts at our hands, is nothing but His own love which has come streaming down from His own heart into our renewed minds! But what can this mean? I must ask you to observe that it includes within itself four precious things. First, the text means that our Lord Jesus Christ desires us to have a distinct recognition of the Fathers love to Him. He wants the love with which the Father loves Him to be felt in us so that we may say, Yes, I know the Father loved Him, for I, who am such a poor, unworthy and foolish creature, yet love Him and, oh, how His Father must love Him!

I love Him! Yes, by His Grace it were a blessed thing to die for Him, but if I love Him, oh, how must His Father love him who can see all His beauty and can appreciate every distinct piece of loveliness that is in Him! God never loved anything as He loves Christ, except His people, and they have had to be lifted up to that position by the love which the Father has to His Son. For, first and foremost, the Father and the Son are Onethey are One in essence. The Savior has been with the Father from the beginning and His delight has been with Him, even as the Father testified, This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Oh, try to feel, if you can, the love of the Father to His Son, or else you will not love the Father as you should for the amazing Sacrifice which He made in giving Jesus to us!

Think what it cost Him to tear His Well-Beloved from His bosom and send Him down below to be despised and rejected. Think what it cost Him to nail Him up to yonder Cross and then forsake Him and hide His face from Him because He had laid all our sins upon Him! Oh, the love He must have had to us to have made His Best-Beloved to become a curse for us, as it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangs on a tree. I want you to get this right into your souls, dear Friends. Do not hold it as a dry doctrine, but let it touch your heart! Let it flow into your heart like a boiling stream till your whole souls become like Icelandic geysers which boil and bubble up and send their steam aloft into the clouds! Oh, to have the soul filled with the love of the Father towards Him who is altogether lovely!

Now, go a step further and deeper. Our text bears a further reading. Remember that you are to have in your heart a sense of the Fathers love to you and to remember that it is precisely the same love with which He loves His Son. That the love with which You have loved Me may be in them. Oh, wonder of wonders! I feel more inclined to sit down and meditate upon it than to stand up and talk about it! The love with which He loved His Sonsuch is His love to all His chosen ones! Can you believe it, that you should be the object of Gods delight, even as Christ is, because you are in Christ? That you should be the object of the Fathers love as truly as Christ is, because He sees you to be part and parcel of the mystical body of His Well-Beloved Son?

Do not tell me that God the Father does not love you as well as He does Christthe point can be settled by the most grand matter of fact that ever was! When there was a choice between Christ and His peoplewhich should die of the twothe Father freely delivered up His Son that we might live through Him! Oh, what a meeting there must have been of the seas of love that day, when Gods great love to us came rolling in like a glorious springtide and His love to His Son came rolling in at the same time! If they had met and collided, we cannot imagine the result! But when they both took to rolling together in one mighty torrent, what a stream of love was there! The Lord Jesus sank that we might swim! He sank that we might rise and now we are borne onward forever by the mighty sweep of infinite Love into an everlasting blessedness which tongues and lips can never fully set forth! Oh, be ravished with this! Be carried away with it! Be in ecstasy at love so amazing, so Divinethe Father loves you even as He loves His Sonafter the same manner and sort He loves all His redeemed!

But now this goes to a third meaning and that is that we are to give back a reflection of this love and to love Jesus as the Father loves Him. A dear old friend, speaking to me, the other day, in a rapturous tone, said, I love Jesus as the Father loves Him. This is true. Not equally, but like. Is not this a blessed thought? I said, O Friend, that is a strong thing to say! Ah, said he, but not stronger than Jesus would have it when He prays that the love with which You have loved Me may be in them, and I in them. His people love Christ as the Father loves Himin the same way, though from lack of capacity they cannot reach to the same immeasurable force of love. Oh, to throw back on Christ His Fathers love! The Father is the Sun and we are the moon, but the moonlight is the same light as the Sunlight! We can see a difference because reflection robs the light of much of its heat and its brilliance, but it is the same light! The moon has not a ray of light but what came from the sun and we have not a live coal of love to Christ but what came from the Father!

We are as the moon, shining by reflected light, but Jesus loves the moonlight of our love and rejoices in it. Let us give Him all of itlet us always try to be as the full moon and let us not dwindle down to a mere ring of love, or a crescent of affectionlet us render no half moon love! Let us not be half dark and cold, but let us shine on Christ with all the light we can possibly reflect of His Fathers love, saying in our very soul

*My Jesus, I love You,   
I know You are mine,   
For You all the follies   
Of sin I resign.*

And then, fourthly, this love of the Father in us is to go beaming forth from us to all around. When we get the love with which the Father loves the Son into our hearts, then it is to go out towards all the chosen seed. He that loves Him that begat, loves, also, them that are begotten of Him. Yes, and your love is to go forth to all the sons of men, seeking their good for Gods Glory, that they may be brought in to know the same Savior in whom we rejoice. Oh, if the love of the Father to Christ once enters into a mans soul, it will change him! It will sway him with the noblest passion! It will make him a zealot for Christ! It will cast out his selfishness! It will change him into the image of Christ and fit him to dwell in Heaven where love is perfected.

So I conclude this second head by saying that this indwelling of the Fathers love in us has the most blessed results. It has an expulsive result. As soon as ever it gets into the heart it says to all love of sin, Get you away; there remains no room for you here. When the Light of God enters in, the darkness receives immediate notice of ejectmentthe night is gone as soon as the dawn appears! It has, also, a repulsive power by which it repels the assaults of sin. As though a man did snatch the sun out of the heavens and made a round shield with itand hold it in the very face of the Prince of Darkness and blind him with the light, so does the love of God the Father repel the enemy! It girds the soul with the armor of light. It repels the devil, the love of the world, the love of sin and all outward temptations.

And then what an impulsive power it has. Get the love of Christ into you and it is as when an engine receives fire and steam and so obtains the force which drives it. Then you have strengthening! Then you have motive power! Then are you urged on to this and that heroic deed which, apart from this sublime love, you would never have thought of! For Christ you can live, for Christ you can suffer, for Christ you can die when once the Fathers love to Him has taken full possession of your spirit! And, oh, how elevating it is! How it lifts a man up above self and sin! How it makes him seek the things that are above! How purifying it is and how happy it makes the subject of its influence! If you are unhappy, you need more of the love of God!

Oh, you say, I need a larger income. Nonsense! A man is not made happy by money. You will do very well in poverty if you have enough of the love of God. Oh, but if your soul is filled with the love of God, your spirit will be ready to dance at the very sound of His name! You murmur and repine at Providence because the fire of your love is burning low. Come, get the ashes together! Pray the Spirit of God to blow upon thembeg Him to bring fresh fuel of holy knowledge till your soul becomes like Nebuchadnezzars furnace, heated seven times hotter! This is the kind of love we should have towards Christ. No blessing can excel it. Oh, Savior, let Your prayer be fulfilled in me and in all Your dear people this morning! And may the love with which the Father has loved You be in us.

III. Thirdly, here is THE COMPANION OF LOVE. I in them. Look at the text a minute and just catch those two words. Here is, love, and, Ilove and Christ come together! Oh, blessed guests! Love and I, says Christ. As if He felt He never had a companion that suited Him better. Love and IJesus is always at home where Love is reigning. When Love lives in His peoples hearts, Jesus lives there, too. Does Jesus, then, live in the hearts of His people? Yeswherever there is the love of the Father shed abroad in them, Jesus must be there. We have His word for it and we are sure that Jesus knows where He is.

We are sure that He is where Love is for, first, where there is love there is life, and where there is life there is Christ, for He, Himself, says, I am the Life. There is no true life in the Believers soul that is divided from Christ! We are sure of thatso that where there is love there is lifeand where there is life there is Christ. Again, where there is the love of God in the heart there is the Holy Spirit. But wherever the Holy Spirit is, there is Christ, for the Holy Spirit is Christs Representative and it is in that sense that He tells us, Lo, I am with you always, namely, because the Spirit is come to be always with us. So where there is love, there is the Spirit of God and where there is the Spirit of God there is Christ. So it is always, Love and I.

Furthermore, where there is love there is faith, for faith works by love and there never was true love to Christ apart from faith. But where there is faith there is always Christ, for if there is faith in Him, He has been received into the soul. Jesus is always near to that faith which has Himself for its foundation and resting place. Where there is love there is faith. Where there is faith there is Christ and so it is, love and I. Yes, but where there is the Fathers love toward Christ in the heart, God Himself is there! I am sure of that, for God is Love. So if there is love within us, there must be God, and where God is, there Christ is, for He says. I and my Father are One. So you see, for these reasons and for many others besides, where there is love there must be Jesus Christ. I in them.

Yes, if I were commanded to preach for seven years from these three words, I would never exhaust the text! I am quite certain. I might exhaust you and exhaust myself by laboring to tell out the sacred secret, but I should never exhaust the text! I in them. It is the most blessed word I know of! You, Beloved, need not go abroad to find the Lord Jesus Christ. Where does He live? He lives within you! I in them. As soon as ever you pray, you are sure He hears you because He is within you! He is not knocking at your doorHe has entered into you and there He dwellsand He will go no more out forever. What a blessed sense of power this gives to us. I in them. Then it is no more, I, in weakness, but, since Jesus dwells in me, I can do all things through Christ that strengthens me. I in them. It is the Glory of the Believer that Christ dwells in him. Unto you that believe He is precious. Hence we gather the security of the Believer. Brothers and Sisters, if Christ is in me, and I am overcome, Christ is conquered, too, for He is in me! I in them.

I cannot comprehend the doctrine of Believers falling from Grace! If Christ has once entered into them, will He not abide with them? Paul says, I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, To that persuasion I set my hand and seal! Well, then, if Christ is in us, whatever happens to us will happen to Him! We shall be losers if we do not get to Heavenbut so will He, for He is in usand so is a partaker of our condition. If it is an indissoluble unionand so He declares it is I in them, then His destiny and ours are linked together! And if He wins the victory, we conquer in Him! If He sits at the right hand of God, we shall sit at the might hand of God with Him, for He is in us!

I know not what more to say, not because I have nothing more, but because I do not know which to bring forward out of a thousand precious things! But I leave the subject with you. Go home and live in the power of this blessed text. Go home and be as happy as you can be to liveand if you get a little happier, that will not hurt you, for then you will be in Heaven. Keep up unbroken joy in the Lord! It is not, I in them for Sundays and gone on Mondays! It is not, I in them when they sit in the Tabernacle, and out of them when they reach home. No! I in them and that forever and forever! Go and rejoice!

Show this blind world that you have a happiness which as much outshines theirs as the sun outshines the sparks which fly from the chimney and expire! Go forth with joy and be led forth with peace! Let the mountains and the hills break forth before you into singing

*All that remains for me   
Is but to love and sing,   
And wait until the angels come,   
To bear me to the King.*

Oh, but I have my troubles. I know you have your troubles, but they are not worthy to be compared with the Glory that shall be revealed in you, nor even with your present glory! I feel as if I could not think about troubles, nor sins, nor anything else when I once behold the love of God to me! When 1 feel my love to Christ, which is but Gods love to Christ, burning within my soul, then I glory in tribulation, for the power of God shall, through these afflictions, be made manifest in me! I in them. God bless you with the knowledge of this mystery, for Jesus sake. Amen.

Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #2767 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

JESUS IN GETHSEMANE   
NO. 2767

A SERMON   
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, FEBRUARY 23, 1902.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, MARCH 6, 1881.

**When Jesus had spoken these words, He went forth with His disciples over the Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered. And Judas, who betrayed Him, also knew the place; for Jesus often met there with His disciples. John 18:1, 2.**

I REMEMBER to have read somewhere, though I cannot just now recall the authority, that Bethanyto which place one would have thought the Savior would have gone to spend the night, at the house of Mary and her sister, Martha, was over the brow of the Mount of Olives and was out of the bounds of the city of Jerusalem. Now, at the Passover, it was incumbent that all who kept the feast should spend the whole night within the boundary of the city and our Divine Lord and Master, scrupulous to observe every point of the old Law of God, did not go over the hill, but stayed within the area which was technically considered to be part and parcel of Jerusalemso that His going to Gethsemane was, in part, a fulfillment of the Ceremonial Law and, for that reason, He went no further and sought no other shelter.

Our Lord also knew that on that particular night He would be betrayed into the hands of His enemies and, therefore, He would need to be prepared, by a special season of devotion, for the terrible ordeal He was about to endure. That Passover night was a night to be remembered on this account and He would, therefore, keep it peculiarly sacred. But it was to be made still more memorable as the time of the commencement of His passion sufferings, so He determined to spend the whole night in prayer to His Father. In this act He reminds us of Jacob by the Brook Jabbokwhen he had to face trouble in the morning, he spent the night in wrestling prayerand this Greater Jacob spent His night, not by Jabbok, but by the black, foul Brook Kidron, and there wrestled with mightier Power. Even. than the Patriarch put forth in his notable night struggle with the Angel of the Covenant. I want you to try, in thought, to go as far as Gethsemane. And I think you ought to be encouraged to go there because our text says, Jesus often met there with His disciples. I. And, first, so far as we can in thought, LET US VIEW THE PLACE. I have never seen the Garden of Gethsemane. Many travelers tell us

that they have done so and they have described what they saw there. My impression is that not one of them ever saw the real spot and that not a trace of it remains. There are certain old olive trees, within an enclosure, which are commonly thought to have been growing at the time of the Saviorbut that seems scarcely possible, for Josephus tells us that the whole of the trees round about Jerusalem were cut downmany of them to be made into crosses for the crucifixion of the Jews. Others of them to assist in building the bulwarks with which the Roman emperor surrounded the doomed city. There does not seem to have been scarcely anything left that would be a true relic of the old city and I cannot imagine that the olive trees would be spared. From what I have heard from Brothers and Sisters who have gone to the reputed Garden of Gethsemane, I conclude that it is not very helpful to ones devotions to go there at all. One who thought to spend a part of his Sabbath there, and who hoped to enjoy much fellowship with Christ in the place, said that he was made very bitterly to learn the meaning of our Saviors words to the woman at the well of Sychar, The hour comes when you shall neither, in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father...The hour comes, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeks such to worship Him.

I do not want to find out exactly where Gethsemane was. It is enough for me to know that it was at the side of Mount Olivet and that it was a very retired spot. My conception of it is the result of having, for many winters, resided in a little town in the South of France where olive trees grow to perfection and where, on the side of the hills, I have often sat down in olive groves and I have said to myself, Gethsemane was a place just like this. I am sure it was so, because one olive garden on the side of a hill must necessarily be very much like another. The hills are lined out in terrace above terrace, each one seldom above eight, 10, or 12 feet wide. Then you rise, say, five, six, seven, or eight feet and there is another terrace and so on right up the hilland on these terraces the olive trees grow.

One of the charms of an olive garden of that kind is that as soon as you get into it, you may sit down under the lee of the bank at the back of the terraceperhaps in an angle where you are sheltered from the windand you will be completely hidden from all observers. I have had persons sitting within a few yards of me, of whose presence I had no idea. One Sabbath, when we had been spending a little time in prayer together, I saw what appeared to be an Englishmans tall hat moving away, at a little distance, just above one of the terraces. By-and-by, I recognized the head that was under the hat as that of a Christian Brother whom I knewand I found that he had been walking up and down there, studying his sermon for the afternoon. He had not noticed us, except that he had heard some sounds that seemed to him like prayer and praise. Many of you might be in an olive garden, but, unless you made some sign of recognition to your friends, they would scarcely know that anybody else was there! And under the thick, yet light foliage, with the glints of sunlight shining through, or at night under the kind of ashy, gray color, with the moonlight glimmering through with its silvery beams, I cannot imagine a more delightful place of retreata place where one would feel surer of being quite alone, even though somebody might be near youa place where you might feel free to express your thoughts and your prayers because, at any rate, to your own consciousness, you would seem to be entirely alone.

I cannot help thinking that our Savior also loved to get among the olive trees because of the very congenial form of the olive. It twists and winds and turns about as though it were in an agony. It has to draw up oil out of the flinty rock and it seems to do so with labor and travail. The very shape of many olive trees seems to suggest that thought. So, an olive garden is a place of painful pleasure and of fruitful toil, where the oil is rich and fat, but where much effort has to be expended in the extraction of it out of the hard soil on which the olive stands. I believe that others have felt about this matter as I have felt, namely, that there is no tree which seems more suggestive of a fellow-feeling with the sufferer than an oliveno shade that is more sweetly pensive, more suitable to the season of sorrowand the hour of devout meditation. I marvel not, therefore, that Jesus sought the Garden of Gethsemane that He might be quite alonethat He might pour out His soul before God and yet might have some companions within call without being disturbed by their immediate presence.

One reason for His going to that particular garden was because He had gone there so often that He loved to be in the old familiar place. Do you not feel something of that in your own special place of prayer? I do not like reading out of other peoples Bibles as well as out of my own. I do not know how it is, but I like my own study Bible best of all, and if I must have a smaller one, I prefer one that has the words on the same page as in my Bible so that I may easily find them. And I do not know whether you feel the same, but I can usually pray best in one place. There are certain spots where I delight to be when I draw near to God there is some association connected with them of former interviews with my Heavenly Father that makes the old armchair to be the very best place at which one can kneel. So, I think the Savior loved Gethsemane because He had oftentimes resorted there with His disciples and, therefore, He makes that the sacred spot where His last agony of prayer shall be poured out before His Father.

II. That, however, is only the introduction to the main matter of our meditations. So, now, LET US VIEW THE SAVIOR IN GETHSEMANE, THAT WE MAY IMITATE HIM.

And, first, our blessed Lord is to be imitated by us in that He frequently sought and enjoyed retirement. His was a very busy life. He had much more to do than you and I have, yet He found abundant time for private prayer. He was much holier than any of us are, yet He realized His need of private prayer and meditation. He was much wiser than we shall ever be, yet He felt the necessity for retiring into solitude for communion with His Father. He had much power over Himself, He could control and compose Himself far more readily than we can, yet, amid the distractions of the world, He felt that He must frequently get away alone. It would be well for us if we were more often alone. We are so busyso taken up with this or that committee meeting, working-class, Sunday school, preaching, talking, visiting, gossipingall sorts of things, good, bad, or indifferentthat we have no leisure for the due cultivation of our spiritual life! We rush from pillar to post without proper time for rest, but, Brothers and Sisters, if we want to be strong, if we mean to be like Jesus, our Lord and Savior, we must have our Gethsemane, our place for secret retirement where we can get alone with our God. I think it was Luther who said, I have a hard days work before me todayit will take me many hours and there will be a stern struggle, so I must have at least three hours prayer, that I may gain the necessary strength for my task. Ah, we do not act in that wise fashion nowadayswe feel as if we cannot spare the time for private prayer, but, had we more communion with Godwe would have more influence with men.

But our blessed Master is especially to be imitated in that He sought retirement when He was about to enter upon the great struggle of His life. Just then, when Judas was about to give the traitors kisswhen scribes and Pharisees were about to hound Him to the Crossit was then that He felt that He must get away to Gethsemane and be alone in prayer with His Father! What did you do, my dear Brother, when you apprehended trial? Why, you sought out a sympathizing friend! I shall not blame you for desiring the consolations of true friendship, but I shall not commend you if you put them into the place of communion with God. Are you, even now, dreading some approaching calamity? What are you doing to meet it? I will not suggest that you should neglect certain precautions, but I would admonish you that the first and best precaution is to get away to your God in prayer! As the feeble conies find their shelter in the solid rock, and as the doves fly away to their home in the dovecot, so should Christians, when they expect trouble, fly straight away to their God upon the wings of fear and faith! Your great strength does not lie in your hair, otherwise you might feel as proud as Samson was in the days of his victories! Your great strength lies in your God! Therefore, get away to Him with all speed and ask Him from help in this, your hour of need!

Some of you pray when you are, as it were, at Calvary, but not at Gethsemane. I mean you pray when the trouble comes upon you, but not when it is on the road. Yet your Master here teaches you that to conquer at your Calvary, you must commence by wrestling at your Gethsemane. When as yet it is but the shadow of your coming trial that spreads its black wings over you, cry to God for help! When you are not emptying the bitter cupwhen you are only sipping the first drops of the wormwood and the gall, begin, even then, to pray, Not as I will, but as You will, O my Father! You will thus be the better able to drink of the cup to its very dregs when God shall place it in your hands.

We may also imitate our Lordas far as it would be in our line, in His taking His disciples with Him. At any rate, if we do not imitate Him in this respect, we may certainly admire Him, for He took the disciples with Him, I think, for two purposes. First, for their good. Remember, Brothers and Sisters, that the next morning was to be a day of trial for them as well as for Himself. He was to be taken to trial and condemnation, but they were to be severely tried, in their fidelity to Him, by seeing their Lord and Master put to a shameful death. So He took them with Him that they also might praythat they might learn how to pray by hearing His wondrous prayersthat they might watch and pray, lest they should enter into temptation. Now, sometimes in your special hour of trouble, I believe that it will be for the good of others for you to communicate to them the story of your distress and ask them to join you in prayer concerning it. I have often done this, so I can urge you to do the same. I found it a great blessing, on one dark day of my life, to ask my sons, though they were but lads, to come into my room and pray with their father in his time of trouble. I know that it was good for them, and their prayers were helpful to me, but I acted as I did in part that they might realize their share in domestic responsibilitiesthat they might come to know their fathers Godand might learn to trust Him in their time of trouble.

But our Savior also took His disciples with Him to Gethsemane that they might assist to comfort Him and, in this respect, He is to be imitated by us because of His wonderful humility. If those disciples had all done their best, what would it have been worth? But what they really did was most discouraging to Christ, instead of being at all helpful to Him. They went to sleep when they should have watched with their Lord and they did not assist Him with their prayers as they might have done. It is noteworthy that He did not ask them to pray with HimHe bade them watch and pray, lest they should enter into temptation. But He said to them, What? Could you not watch with Me one hour? He did not say, What? Could you not pray with me one hour? He knew that they could not do that. What mortal man could pray at such a time as that, when great drops of bloody sweat punctuated every paragraph of His petition? No, they could not pray with Him, but they might have watched with Him yet that they did not.

Sometimes, dear Friends, when a very great trial comes upon you, it will be well for you to ask some Brothers and Sisters, who cannot do much, but who can do something to come and watch with you and pray with you. If it does not do any good to you, it will be good for thembut it will do good to you, also, I feel sure. OftenI have to confess itI have got two Brothers to kneel with me in prayer when I have been depressed through this late illness of mine. And their honest, earnest, hearty prayers in my study have often lifted me right up into joy and peace! I believe it has also done them good. I know it has done me good and I feel sure that you might often be a blessing to others if you did not mind confessing to them when you are depressed and sad at heart. Say, Come into my room and watch with me one hour. And you may add to that request this other one, Come and pray with me, for some of them can pray as well as you can, and even better. So imitate the Savior in endeavoring not only to pray yourself, but to call to your assistance the praying legion of Gods elect ones when a great trial is impending.

Still, our Lords example may mainly be followed in another direction, namely, when we do pray in the presence of a great trouble, it is well to pray with much importunity. Our Savior prayed in Gethsemane three times, using the same words. He prayed with such intensity of desire that His heart seemed to burn with anguish. The canals overflowed their banks and the red streams came bursting down in bloody drops that fell upon the earth in that rightly-named olive-press. Ah, that is the way to prayif not actually unto a bloody sweat, as we may not have to do, or be able to do, yet with such intensity of hearty earnestness as we can and as we oughtwhen God the Holy Spirit is working mightily in us! We cannot expect to be helped in our time of trouble unless it is intense prayer that we send up to Heaven.

But imitate Christ also in the matter of your prayer. I feel sure that He only softly whispered the request, O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me. You also may present that petition, but mind that you say it very softly. Yet I feel certain that it was with all His might that our Savior said, Nevertheless not as I will, but as You will. In the presence or in the prospect of a great trouble, make this your prayer to God, Your will be done. Brace up your soul to this pointhaving asked the Lord to screen you, if it should seem good in His sight, resign yourself absolutely into His hands and say, Nevertheless, O my Father, not as I will, but as You will!

It is prevailing prayer when one gets as far as that! A man is prepared to die when he knows how to present that petition! That is the best preparation for any cross that may come upon your shoulders. You can die a martyrs death and clap your hands even in the midst of the fire if you can, with all your soul, really pray as Jesus prayed, Not as I will, but as You will. This is the objective which I set before you, my Brothers and Sisters in Christthat if you are expecting sicknessif you are fearing lossif you are anticipating bereavementif you are dreading deathlet this be your great ultimatum, go to God now, in the time of your distress and, by mighty prevailing prayer, with such prayerful sympathy as others can give you, breathe out this one petition, Your will be done, O my Father! Your will be done! Help me to do it! Help me to bear it! Help me to go through with it all to Your honor and Glory. Let me be baptized with Your Baptism, and drink of Your cup, even to the dregs.

Sometimes, dear Friends, you may wish, in your hearts, that the Lord would make great use of you and yet, perhaps, He may not do so. Well, a man who holds his tongue when Christ tells him to do so, is glorifying Christ more than if he opened his mouth and broke the Masters commandment. There are some of the Lords people who, by a quiet, holy, consistent manifestation of what the Lord has done for them, glorify Him more than they would do if they went from place to place telling out His Gospel in a way which would make the Gospel itself disgusting to those who heard it. That is quite possible, for some people do it. If my Lord puts me in the front rank, blessed be His name for it, and I must fight for Him there as best I can. But if He says to me, Lie in bed! Be bed-ridden for seven years, and never get up!I have nothing to do but to glorify Him in that way. He is the best soldier who does exactly what his captain bids him.

III. Now, in the third place, and only briefly, LET US VIEW THE DISCIPLES IN GETHSEMANE, BY WAY OF INSTRUCTION TO OURSELVES.   
Probably, the disciples had often been with their Master to GethsemaneI suppose, sometimes by day, and oftentimes by night, in secret conclave they had been instructed in the olive garden. It had been their Academy! There they had been with the Master in prayerno doubt, each one praying and learning how to pray better from His Divine example. Dear Brothers and Sisters, I recommend you oftentimes to get to the place where you can best commune with your God.   
But, now, the disciples came to Gethsemane because a great trouble was impending. They were brought there that they might watch and pray. So, get to the place of prayer, at this time of trouble, and at all other times of trial that shall come upon you throughout your whole life. Whenever you hear the knell ringing out all earthly joy, let it ring you into the garden of prayer! Whenever there is the shadow of a coming trouble looming before you, let there also be the substance of more intense communion with God! These disciples were, however, at this time, called to enter into fellowship with their Master in the thicker, deeper darkness that was coming over Himfar denser than any that was coming over them. And you are called, dear Brothers and Sisters, each in your own measure, to be baptized unto Jesus in the cloud and in the sea, that you may have fellowship with Him in His sufferings. Be not ashamed to go even to Gethsemane with Christ, entering into a knowledge of what He suffered by being made, according to your capacity, to suffer in the same manner. All His true followers have to go there. Some have only to stand at the outside gate and keep watch, but His highlyfavored ones have to go into the denser gloom and to be nearer to their Lord in His greatest agonies. If we are His true disciples, we must have fellowship with Him in His sufferings.   
Our difficulty is that the flesh shrinks from this trial, and that, like the disciples, we sleep when we ought to watch. When the time of trial comes, if we get depressed in spirit about it, we are apt not to pray with that fervor and vigor which greater hopefulness would have begotten. And when we come to feel something of what the Savior endured, we are apt to be overwhelmed by it rather than stimulated by it and so, when He comes to us, He finds us, like the disciples, sleeping for sorrow. The Master gently said, The spirit, indeed, is willing, but the flesh is weak. But I do not suppose that one of the disciples made any excuse for himself. I feel, if I may judge them from myself, that I would always have said, I never can forgive myself for going to sleep that night! How could I fall asleep when He said, Watch with Me? And when He came again, with His face red with bloody sweat, and with that disappointed look upon His Countenance, said, What? Could you not watch with Me one hour? how could I go to sleep a second time? And then, how could I go to sleep a third time? Oh, I think that Simon Peter must always have remembered that his Savior said to him, Simon, could you not watch with Me one hour? That question must have stuck by him all his lifeand James and John must have felt the same.  
Brothers and Sisters, are any of you sleeping under similar circumstanceswhile Christs Church is sufferingwhile Christs cause is sufferingwhile Christs people are sufferingwhile a trial is coming upon you to help you into fellowship with Him? Are you, instead of being aroused to a higher and more intense devotion, sinking into deeper sleep? If so, Christ may, in His great love, excuse you, but I beg you not to begin making excuses for yourself! No, awake, Brothers and Sisters and watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation.   
That slumber of theirs must have been greatly rebuked by their Saviors kindness to them. As I understand the narrative, our Lord came to His disciples three times and, on the third occasion, He found them still heavy with sleep, so He sat down beside them and said to them, Sleep on now, and take your rest. There He sat, patiently waiting for the traitors arrivalnot expecting any help or sympathy from His disciples, but just watching over them as they would not watch with Him, praying for them as they would not pray for themselvesand letting them take another nap while He made Himself ready to meet Judas and the rabble throng that would so soon surround Him. Our Master, in His great tenderness, sometimes indulges us with such sleeps as these, yet we may have to regret them and to wish that we had had sufficient strength of mind and earnestness of heart to stay awake and watch with Him in His season of sorrow. It appears to me that of all the 11 good disciples, there was not one who stayed awake. There was one vile traitor and he was wide-awake. He never went to sleephe was awake enough to sell his Master and to act as guide to those who came to capture Him.   
I think also that at least partly in consequence of that slumber of the disciples, within a short time, they all forsook Him and fled. They seem, for the time, to have slept away their attachment to their Lord and waking, as from a disturbed dream, they scarcely knew what they did, and helter-skelter, away they fled! The sheep were all scattered and the Shepherd was left alone, thus fulfilling the ancient prophecy, Smite the Shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered. And that other word, I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me. Wake up, Brothers and Sisters, otherwise you, too, may forsake your Masterand in the hour when you ought most to prove your fidelity, it may be that your slumbering state of heart will lead on to backsliding and to forsaking of your Lord. God grant that it may not!   
IV. Now I close with a word of warning which I have almost anticipated. LET US, IN THOUGHT, GO TO GETHSEMANE TO TAKE WARNING FROM JUDAS. Let me read to you the latter part of the textJudas who betrayed Him, also knew the place: for Jesus ofttimes met there with His disciples.   
Judas who betrayed Him, also knew the place. Yes, he had probably, many times, been there all night with Christ. He had sat with the other disciples in a circle round their Lord on one of those olive-clad terraces and he had listened to His wondrous words in the soft moonlight. He had often heard His Master pray there. Judas who betrayed Him, had heard Him pray in Gethsemane. He knew the tones of His voice, the pathos of His pleading, the intense agony of that great heart of love when it was poured out in prayer! He had, no doubt, joined with the other disciples when they said, Lord, teach us to pray.   
Judas who betrayed Him, also knew the place. He could have pointed out to us the very spot where the Savior most loved to bethat angle in the terrace, that little corner out of the way, where the Master was known to find a seat when He sat down and taught the chosen band around Him. Yes, Judas knew the place, and it was because he knew the place that he was able to betray Christ, for, if he had not known where Jesus was, he could not have taken the guard there.   
It does seem, to me, very dreadful that familiarity with Christ should have qualified this man to become a traitor. And it is still true that, sometimes, familiarity with religion may qualify men to become apostates. Oh, if there is a Judas here, I would speak very solemnly to you! You know the place. You know all about church government and church order, and you can go and tell pretty tales about the mistakes made by some of Gods servants who would not err if they could help it. Yes, you know the church members. You know where there are flaws of character and infirmity of spirit. You know how to go and spread the story of them among worldlings and you can make such mischief as you could not make if you had not known the place! Yes, and you know the Doctrines of Grace, at least with a measure of head-knowledge, and you know how to twist them so as to make them seem ridiculous, even those eternal Truths of God which ravish the hearts of angels and of the redeemed from among men! Because you know them so well, you know how to parody them and to caricature themand to make the Grace of God, itself, seem to be a farce!

Yes, you know the place. You have been to the Lords Table and you have heard the saints speak of their raptures and their ecstasiesand you pretended that you were sharing them. So you know how to go back to the world and to represent true godliness as being all cant and hypocrisyand you make rare fun out of those most solemn secrets of which a man would scarcely speak to his fellow because they are the private transactions between his soul and his God!  
I can hardly realize how terrible will be the doom of those who, after making a profession of religion, have prostituted their knowledge of the inner working of the Church of God and made it the material for novels in which Christs Gospel is held up to scorn! Yet there have been such men who have not been content to be like birds that have fouled their own nests, for they have also gone forth and also tried to foul the nest of every believing heart that they could reach. What a dreadful thing it will be if any one of us, here, should know the place and, therefore, should betray the Savior! Do you know the place of private prayer, or do you think you do? Do you know the place where men go when the shadow of a coming trial is looming before them? Do you think you know something about fellowship with Christ in His sufferings? But, what if the greed of gold should override in you, as it did in Judas, such natural attachment as you feel towards Christ and better things? And what if even Gethsemane should, like a pit, open wide its mouth to swallow you up? It is terrible to contemplate, yet it may be true, for, Judas who betrayed Him, also knew the place.   
I cannot bear to think that anyone of you should be familiar with the ins and outs of this Tabernacle and yet should betray Christthat you should be one of those who gather around this Communion Table, that you should be familiar with all the loving and tender expressions which we are known to use here, and yet, after all, should forsake our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ! Pass the disciples question around and each one ask it, Lord, is it I? Is it I?   
*When any turn from Zions way,   
(Alas, what numbers do)!   
I think I hear my Savior say,   
Will you forsake Me too?   
Ah Lord! With such a heart as mine,   
Unless You hold me fast, I feel I must, I shall decline, And prove like them at last.*   
Therefore, hold me up, O Lord, and I shall be safe; keep me even to the end, for Your dear Sons sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 15:1-8.**

On the way from the supper table to the Garden of Gethsemane, or while still lingering in the upper room, our Lord spoke this wondrous parable.

Verse 1. I am the true Vine. All other vines are but shadows of Christ. They represent Christ, but He is Himself the substance, the essence, the one great reality. He is the Truth of all things that exist. I am the true Vine. Does anybody ask which is the true Church? All who are vitally joined to Christ are in the true Church, for He says, I am the true Vine.

1. And My Father is the Vinedresser. He cares for the Church with infinite wisdom and love. No one else can care for that true Vine as the Fatherthe Vinedresserdoes.

2. Every branch in Me that bears not fruit He takes away. If there are any who are only nominally in Christ and who, therefore, bear no fruit, their doom is certain, for, in order to final perseverance and eternal safety, there must be fruit-bearing.

2. And every branch that bears fruit, He purges it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Pruning, then, is for fruit-bearers. If the branch were dead, what would be the good of pruning it? Say not, dear Friends that your afflictions must be caused by your sinsno, rather they may come in consequence of your virtues! Because you do bear fruit, it is worthwhile for the Vinedresser to use His knife upon you, that you may bring forth more fruit!

3, 4. Now you are clean through the word, which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. Give good heed to that sweet word, Beloved Brothers and Sisters, Abide in Me. Do not seem to get into Christ and then depart from Him. Pray for constancy to all your other Graces.

4, 5. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can you, except you abide in Me. I am the Vine, you are the branches. He that abides in Me, and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit, for without Me you can do nothing. You know how the branch is in the vine, it is a component part of the vine. But do not forget that the vine is also in the branchthat the sap, which is the very life of the vine, flows into every living branch. So we are in Christ, and Christ is in us, and He says to us, as the marginal reading has it, Severed from Me, you can do nothing. What? Not even a little, Lord? Can we not do something good, something acceptable apart from You? No, Without Me, you can do nothing.

6. If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. That is all that can be done with fruitless vine-branches. You cannot make anything of them. Other trees yield timber and are useful for various purposes, but with the vine, it is as the Prophet Ezekiel says, Son of man, What is the vine tree more than any tree, or than a branch which is among the trees of the forest? Shall wood be taken from them to do any work? Or will men take a pin of it to hang any vessel on it? Behold, it is cast into the fire for fuel; the fire devours both the ends of it, and the midst of it is burned. Is it meet for any work? It is useless if it is fruitless and so is it with usif we do not bear fruit unto God, we are of no service to Him whatever.

7. If you abide in Me and My words abide in you, you shall ask what you will, and it shall be done for you. Here is the secret of prevailing prayer! It is not every man who chooses to pray who shall have whatever he asks of God! But the successful pleader is the man who abides in Christ and in whom Christs words abide. God will not hear our words if we disregard His words! We cannot expect our prayers to be prevalent if we are severed from our Lord.

8. Herein is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall you be My disciples. Much fruit should be produced by the disciples of the much-doing Christ. The true Vine was full of fruit and it scarcely can be believed that we are branches of that Vine if we exhibit only a little fruit. It is much fruit that proves our union to this Vine.

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CHRISTS CARE OF HIS DISCIPLES   
NO. 2616

A SERMON   
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, APRIL 2, 1899.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT NEW PARK STREET CHAPEL, SOUTHWARK, ON A LORDS-DAY EVENING, EARLY IN THE YEAR 1857.

**If, therefore, you seek Me, let these go their way. John 18:8.**

WE need but hint at the circumstances under which these words were uttered. Our Savior was in the Garden of Gethsemane with His disciples when a multitude came with the officers commissioned by the High Priest to seize Him. He went boldly towards them and asked, Whom do you seek? They answered, Jesus of Nazareth. At His words, I am He, they drew back and fell to the ground, and then Jesus said to them, I have told you that I am He. If, therefore, you seek Me, let these go their way.

Now, in a very simple manner, I shall try, first of all, to draw a few lessons from this occurrence and then, secondly, to bring out a great Truth of God which I think is foreshadowed in this utterance of our Redeemer.

I. First, let us CONSIDER THE LESSONS OF THE OCCURRENCE ITSELF. Our Savior said to these people, If, therefore, you seek Me, let these go their way.

In this incident, our Master proved His own willingness to die. This word of His was a mandate so powerful that none of the disciples were seized, much less put to death. There was Peter, who had drawn his sword and cut off the ear of the High Priests servant. We should naturally have expected that he would have been arrested, or smitten to the earth, but so powerful was the command of Christ that not a finger was laid upon His hasty-tempered disciple. Peter and John later went into the judgment hallinto the very teeth of our Lords enemiesbut, with the exception of a few jeers, they were allowed to go their way. John did even more than that, for he went within the range of the spears of the Roman soldiers and stood at the foot of Christs Cross and weptyet not a finger was laid on him, nor on any of Christs disciplesnot for lack of will, for, you remember, they seized a young man who left his garment in their hands, and fled nakedevidently supposing him to have been a disciple of Christ. This shows, then, the power of Christs mandate that, in that hour of darkness, not so much as one of His disciples was maltreated, but all were allowed to go their way. If Christ, then, by His simple word, delivered His disciples, how much more could He have delivered Himself? And in His not doing so, you cannot fail to see how willing He was to die. One word threw them to the ground. Another word would have hurled them into the arms of death! But our Savior would not speak the word which might have saved Himself, for He came to save others, not Himself.

There is something very courageous in the Saviors saying, If you seek Me. You know that when Adam sinned, God had to seek the culprit, but, in this case, when Christ stood as the Surety for His people, instead of being sought, He seemed to seek His executioners! If you seek Me, He saidand He put in an, if, as though it were not so much their seeking Him as His seeking themfor He had come into their very midst to die. Our blessed Lord was well acquainted with the circumstances of His own death. He sat at the table, at the institution of the Lords Supper on that memorable eveningwhy could He not wait and be seized there? But no, dauntless, the Lion of the tribe of Judah steps out and boldly faces His enemy! He does not wait to be attacked, but goes forth to meet death, to give Himself up for us. Scarcely any martyr has done such a deed as this! God has helped them to die when they have been delivered into the hands of their enemies, but our Savior goes to His enemies and says, Here I am. If you seek Me, I have come to give Myself up. I will put you to no trouble in searching for Me. There is no necessity to hunt through the length and breadth of Jerusalem to find Me. Here I am. If you seek Me, I am ready to die. Take Me, I have no opposition to make. If you seek Me, all I have to say is, Let these go their way. As for Myself, I am willing enough to die!

Learn, then, Christian, the readiness of your Master to suffer for you. He was no unwilling Savior. You have, sometimes, borrowed money from a friend and when you have taken it from him, it was a grief to you to accept it, for he looked upon you as a beggar, or even as a robber who had demanded spoil of him. But when you take Christs favors, there is this sweet consideration with them, that they are all given willingly! The blood that you drink and the flesh that you eat, spiritually, is no dole of a strained benevolence, but the voluntary, munificent gift from the heart of Jesus to you and to your brethren. Rejoice, then, in the willingness of Christ to suffer for you!

In the second place, upon the very face of our text we read the care of Christ towards His people. If, therefore, you seek Me, let these go their way. Oh, the agony of the Saviors heart at that moment! A friend in trouble is frequently forgetfulexpect not a man in great grief to remember youthe heart is then so full of its own bitterness it has no time to think of others. I would pardon any man for not noticing me in the street if he were ill. I would easily forgive anyone for forgetting anything when loaded with pain and sorrow and surely, Beloved, we might have thought it not hard of Jesus if He had forgotten His disciples in His hour of grief! But mark how kind His heart isIf you seek MeI say nothing about how you should treat Mebut let thesethese disciples were the only ones He cared about. He cared not for Himselflet these go their way.

Like the mother in the snowstorm who takes off her own clothes to wrap around her cold shivering babywhat does she care though the cold blast should find out her inmost soul, and though her body is frozen like ice, if her baby but lives? Her first thought, after she is restored to consciousness, when she has been well-nigh benumbed to death, but chafed to life by kindness, is concerning that baby! It was even so with Jesus. Let these go their way.

*When Justice, by our sins provoked,   
Drew forth its dreadful sword,   
He gave His soul up to the stroke   
Without a murmuring word.   
This was compassion like a God,   
That when the Savior knew   
The price of pardon was His blood,   
His pity neer withdrew.   
Now though He reigns exalted high,   
His love is still as great.   
Well He remembers Calvary,   
Nor lets His saints forget.*

They are all remembered, all borne upon His heart and still cared for. Therefore you are cared for, you lamb of the flock! You are cared for, poor Ready-to-Halt! You are remembered, Miss Despondency! You are regarded with the eyes of love, timid Mr. Fearing! Though you stumble at every stone, yet your Saviors love fails not! He remembers you, for He cared for His disciples in His hour of greatest sorrow.

In the next place, learn from this incident our Saviors wisdom. When He said, Let these go their way, there was wisdom in it. How? Because they were not prepared to suffer and it would have been unwise to have allowed them to suffer, then, even if they had been preparedfor if they had suffered, then, it would have been thought that at least they shared the honor of our redemptiontherefore Christ would have none but thieves upon the mount of doom, lest any should suppose that He had a helper! He tread the winepress alone and of the people there were none with Him. Besides, these disciples were but infants in Divine Gracethey had not received the plenitude of the Spirit. They were not fit to suffer. Therefore Christ said, If you seek Me, let these go their way. These raw recruits must not yet bear the brunt of the battle. Let them tarry until, by a greater experience and by greater Grace, they shall be made brave to die and shall, each of them in his turn, wear the crown of martyrdom. But not now. Christ spared His people at that moment since it would have been unwise to have allowed them to die then.

Learn also, Christians, from your Masters example, the duty of putting yourselves in the way of suffering when you can save your Brothers and Sisters. Oh, there is something glorious in the spirit Christ manifested in placing Himself first. If you seek Me, let these go their way. That is the spirit all Christians ought to havethe spirit of heroic self-sacrifice for the disciples sake. The mere professor says, Let me go my way, seek another to be put to death. But if we were what we should be, we would, each one, say, If you seek me, let these go their way. How many of us would be ready to escape martyrdom and allow our Brethren to be burned! That would not be the spirit of our Master. How frequently you are ready to allow ridicule and shame to fall upon the Church if you can but be spared! How very frequently you will allow a Brother to perform a duty, at much inconvenience, which you could do without any trouble to yourself! Now, if you were like your Master, you would say, Let these go their way. If there is sufficient ground for it, let me suffer. If there is a painful duty, let me do it. Let others escape, let them go freelo, I will be, myself, a willing substitute for them in this matter. Oh, we need, everywhere, more of this spirit to be able to say to the poor saint, Poverty is seeking you. I will, in some degree, bear the inconvenience that you may be spared. You are sick. I will watch you. You are in need. I will clothe you. You are hungry. I will feed you. I will stand in your place as far as I am able, that you may go your way.

These seem to me to be the lessons to be learned from our Saviors words, If, therefore, you seek Me, let these go their way.   
II. Now I come to notice, secondly, THE GREAT DOCTRINE WHICH THIS INCIDENT SEEMS TO FORESHADOW.   
Will you please observe the next verse to the text? That the saying might be fulfilled, which He spoke, Of them which You gave Me have I lost none. If I had quoted this passage in such a connection, you would have told me it was a misquotation. You would have said, Why, my dear Sir, that has nothing to do with the disciples going their way or not! Ah, but you would be quite in error if you talked like that! Gods Spirit knows how to quote, if we do not. Very often we refer our hearers to a text which we think is exactly adapted and pertinent to the point before us when it has really nothing to do with the matter. And, often, the Holy Spirit quotes a text which we think unsuitable, but, on closer examination, we find that the very gist of it bears directly upon the subject. This was the beginning of Christs deliverances which He would, through eternity, vouchsafe to all His children. Inasmuch as He then said, Let these go their way, it was the foreshadowing, the picturing of the greet deed of Substitution whereby Christ would be able to say, If, therefore, you seek Me, let these go their way. This point will appear dearly if we look at how Christ treats His people in Providence and at the bar of Justice.   
It has always seemed to me as if Christ had borne the brunt of Providence for His people so that now all things work together for their good! When Christ came into the world, He did, in spirit, say something like this, You wild beasts of the field, you are against My peoplecome, now, be against Me and, then, let these go their way. This was according to the ancient prophecyI will make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field and with the fowls of Heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground. Christ seemed to say, Stones, you are enemies to My flocktake Me for their Substitute and be at enmity against Me. And then it shall be written, The stones of the field shall be in league with them. Christ, as it were, said to Providence, Your black and bitter face shall look on Me. Your quiver, full of fiery darts, shall be emptied, and they shall all find their target here in My bosom. Your dread aspect shall be seen by Me, but, Let these go their way.   
Providence has indicted its evils on Christ and has now only good for Gods people! What? Only good, Sir? you say, why, I am poor, I am sick! Yes, but it is only good, for that is good which works good. All things work together for good to them that love God. Christ even says to kings, Touch not My anointed and do My prophets no harm. Let these go their way. The kings of the earth have been seeking Christs Church, to destroy and to devour it, so Christ lets them find Him and put Him to death! And before He dies, He turns round to the kings, and says, Touch not My anointed and do My prophets no harm. He speaks to trouble, to trial, to grief, to accident and to peril as He says, You have sought Me, now let My people go their way. We would never have known the sweetness of the Psalm   
*He that has made his refuge God,   
Shall find a most secure abode*   
if Christ had not died! The only way that you and I can have a refuge is by Christ bearing the brunt of our trouble. How does a shield save me? It saves me by bearing the blows, itself. The shield does, as it were, say to the swords of the enemy, If you seek me, let this warrior go his way. So Christ, our Shield and Gods Anointed, bears the brunt of Providence, the evil and the woe, thereof, and He now says to the mysterious dispensations of God concerning all the children of the Lord, Let these go their way. Never, never work ill to them, but let them have only good.   
The other thought is, Christ has said this of His people even to Justice. Before the Throne of God, fiery Justice once drew his sword and went out after sinners, to find many and to cast them into the Pit. His sword thirsted for the blood of all that had sinned. But there stood a chosen multitude, reserved by love and chosen by Grace, and Justice said, They are sinners. I will have them, I will sheathe this sword in their hearts, for they are sinners and they must perish. Then Christ came forward and asked him, Whom do you seek? Sinners, answered Justice. Then Jesus said, They are not sinners. They were sinners, once, but they are now righteous, clothed in My righteousness. If you seek the sinner, here am I. What? said Justice, are You the sinner? No, not the sinner, but I am the sinners Substitute. All the sinners guilt was imputed to Me. All his unrighteousness is Mine and all My righteousness is his. I, the Savior, am the sinners Substitute. Take Me. And Justice accepted the substitution, took the Savior, crucified Him, nailed Him to that Cross whose agonies we commemorate at the Communion Table. In that hour Jesus cried, If you seek Me, let these go their way. Who are they that are to go their way? Why, the very men whose former way was one of iniquity and whose end would have been destruction if the curse had not been made to fall upon the head of Jesus!

Let these go their way. Oh, that a wonderful sentence! I never knew its sweetness till I found the Lord, but I did know something of its power. Do you ask, How was that? Why, long before you know the Lord, you have some of the power of the blood of Christ resting upon you. How so? do you ask? Why, do you not know it to be a fact that **Determined to save, He watched oer our path, When Satans blind slaves, we sported with death**? And so, some of the benefits of Christs death were ours before we knew Him and before we loved Him! The reason why I was not damned before I knew the Savior was that He had said, Let him go his way. I have died for him. You would have been in Hell these 20 years, Saint, for you were then unregenerate. But Christ said, Let him go his way. If you seek Me, he shall go his way, sinner though he is. And now, when gloomy fears arise, and dark thoughts roll over our mind, let this be our comfort! We are still sinnersguilty and vilebut the same voice says, Let these go their way. It is the let of commandand who can hinder when God lets in this sense? Let these go their way. You are going up Bunyans Hill Difficulty and there are lions at the top. Christians remember this message, Let these go their way. You will, perhaps, get into Giant Despairs dungeon. Here is a key that will fit the lockLet these go their way. You will be tumbling about in the Slough of Despondhere is a stone to put your foot on to help you to get outLet these go their way. Why? Because they pray? No. Because they serve God? Nothe mandate was given before they did either the one or the other. Let these go their way because Christ died in their place!   
The day is coming, and shall soon be here, when you and I shall stretch our wings and fly away to the land that is very far off. I think I might picture in my imagination the soul when it has left the body. The Believer speeds his way up to his native city, Jerusalem, the mother of us all. But at the gate one stands and he says, Have you a right to admission here? It is written, He that walks righteously, and speaks uprightly; he that despises the gain of oppressions, that shakes his hands from holding of bribes, that stops his ears from hearing of blood, and shuts his eyes from seeing evil; he shall dwell on high. Are you such an one? Ah, says the soul, I hope by Grace I have been made so; but I cannot claim to have always been so, for I the chief of sinners am. Then how came you here? This gate gives no admission to those who are sinners. While the angel is thus parleying, I hear a Voice crying, Let these go their way and, forthwith, the gates of Heaven are opened and every soul for whom Christ died enters into Paradise!   
Come, Saint, close up this simple meditation by looking yonder. See Christ, with Justice, Vengeance, Wrath, all seeking Him. Lo, they have found Him! They have slain Him! He is buried! He has risen again! Oh, see them seeking Him and, as you sit down at His Table, think, When they sought Him, they let me go my way. And what a sweet way it is! I am allowed to come to His Table of Communion. Why? Because they sought Him. I am invited to hold fellowship with Jesus. Why? Because they sought Him. I am permitted to have a good hope through Divine Grace and, more than that, I know that when this earthly house of my tabernacle is dissolved, I have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.   
Why am I to go that way? Why? Because they sought Him and found Him! Otherwise, where had I been now? My place might have been on the alehouse bench, or, perhaps, in the seat of the scorner. And what would have been my prospect? Why, that, at the last, I would be in Hell among the fiends and the lost spirits of the Pit! But now I tread the paths of righteousness and the ways of Grace. Oh, let me remember why I do so it is because they sought You, O precious Lord of mine! They sought You, my dear Redeemer and my God! They sought Your heart and broke it! They sought Your head and crowned it with thorns! They sought Your hands and nailed them to the tree! They sought Your feet and pierced them! They sought Your body, they slew and buried it! And now, though the roaring lion may seek me ever so much, he cannot devour me! Never can I be torn in pieces, never can I be destroyed, for I carry with me this sweet passport of the King of Heaven, Let these go their way.   
O child of God, take this with you for your safe conduct everywhere! When men travel abroad, they carry with them a permit to go to this town and the other. Take this little sentence, Brother or Sister in Jesus, and when Unbelief stops you, draw it out, and say, He has said, Let these go their way. And when Satan stops you, hold out to him this Divine Mandate, Let these go their way. And when Death shall stop you, take out this sweet permit from your Master, Let these go their way. And when the Throne of Judgment shall be set and you stand before it, plead this sentence, plead it even before Your Maker, My Master said, Let these go their way.   
Oh, cheering words! I could weep them all out, but I will say no more. I hope many of you will enjoy the sweetness of them while we gather around the Lords Table, in obedience to His gracious command, This do in remembrance of Me.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 17; 18:1-9.**

John 17:1. These words spoke Jesus, and lifted up His eyes to Heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify Your Son, that Your Son may also glorify You. Jesus is going forth to die and He knows it, yet He prays to His Father, Glorify Your Son. There was no way of His coming to that Glory except by passing through tears, blood, agony and death. He only asks that He may be glorified in what He is about to do and sufferand He is ready for it allFather, the hour is come; glorify Your Son, that Your Son may also glorify You.

2. As You have given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. In that saying of our Lords we have an explanation of what He did by His redemption. There was a universal aspect of itYou have given Him power over all flesh. There was a special design in itThat He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. Sometimes, two views of the same thing may appear to contradict each other, but when we are taught of God, we soon discover that they do not really do so, and that a grand Truth may be contained in the two descriptions of it. Christ had, by virtue of His death, power over all flesh, but it was for a distinct purposethat He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him.

3. And this is eternal life, that they might know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent. By this, then, dear Friends, we can know whether we have eternal life or not. Do we know the Father? Do we know Jesus Christ as the Messiah, the Sent One? Are we resting in that blessed knowledge? If so, He has given us eternal life.

4, 5. I have glorified You on the earth: I have finished the work which You gave Me to do, And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself with the Glory which I had with You before the world was. In deep humility, Jesus had laid that Glory aside for a while. He had tabernacled in human fleshand when He spoke these words, the time was approaching when

*All His world and warfare done,*   
He would go back to His pristine Glory with something more added to it.

6. I have manifested Your name unto the men which You gave Me out of the world. They had not, all of them, clearly seen that manifestation. Jesus had to ask the question, Have I been so long with you, and yet have you not known Me, Philip? Still, that was not the fault of the manifestation. Christ had manifested the namethat is, the Characterof God unto those who had been given to Him out of the world.

6. Yours they were and You gave them to Me; and they have kept Your Word. We might have expected that the verse would end, and I have kept them. But their keeping Gods Word is the evidence that Christ has kept them! Whenever a soul loves the Word of God, delights in the teaching of Christ, glories in those things which the world calls dogmasas if they were so much dogs meatwhen you and I can feed upon these things when every utterance of Christ is dear and precious to usthat is good evidence of our being called out of the world and separated unto Christ! It is one of the marks of Divine Grace which Jesus works in those whom the Father has given Him. Yours they were and You gave them to Me; and they have kept Your Word.

7. Now they have known that all things whatever You have given Me are of You. The Father gives Christ the Truth which Christ gives to us. The Father gives Christ the souls which Jesus keeps until the day of His power. There is mutual communion between God the Father and His blessed Sonlet us never say a word that might look as if we did not understand the Oneness, the everlasting and Infinite Onenesswhich there is between the sacred Persons of the Divine Unity.

8. For I have given unto them the Words which You gave Me. You know how men talk against verbal Inspiration. Yet Christ says, I have given unto them the Words which You gave Me. Many are trifling with the teaching of Gods Word as if it were of no importance at all. Not so Christ! I have given unto them the Words which You gave Me.

8. And they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from You, and they have believed that You did send Me. Firmly do we believe this and in our heart of hearts we accept every part of the teaching of Christ, no matter what it is. I hear people say, sometimes, Oh, but that is not essential! There is a great deal of mischief hatched out of that egg! O Friends, it is essential that Christs disciples should treasure whatever He has said! Never trifle with that part of the Word of God which seems to be less essential to salvation than another portion, for if it is not essential to salvation, it may be essential to your comfort, or your holiness, or your strength, or your usefulness. And if it be essential to Gods Glory, let us never trample it in the mire, or in any way dishonor it. Who am I that I should say, This which God has spoken is important, but that other is not? It does not do for us to presume to judge the Word of Godwe should rather let the Word of God judge us.

9. I pray for them.Blessed Words! Christ prays for His own people. I pray for them. I pray not for the world, but for them which You have given Me. In that last hour, just before His Passion, His thoughts were separating the precious from the vile and His prayer ascended for His own people. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which You have given Me.

9, 10. For they are Yours. And all Mine are Yours and Yours are Mine; and I am glorified in them. It is a wonderful thing that Christ should be glorified in His people! Can it be that He shall be glorified in me? Dear child of God, you sometimes sit in the corner and think to yourself, How insignificant I am! The Church on earth would not miss me if I were taken away. And the choirs of Heaven cannot need me. Oh, but your Lord is glorified in You! If you are one of His chosen and redeemed people, in your very weakness and need He finds opportunity to glorify His strength and His fullness! He knows the truth about this matter and He says, I am glorified in them.

11. And now I am no more in the world. He was going away. He has now gone.   
11. But these are in the world. We know we are, do we not, Brothers and Sisters? We have a thousand things, some of them very painful and humiliating, to remind us that we are still in the world.   
11. And I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your own name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one, as We are. Oh, what blessed keeping is thatto be kept in spiritual oneness! I do not expect to see the people of God in visible oneness, but as there was a secret, invisible Union, most real and most true, between the Father and the Son, so there is, at this time, a secret union in the hearts of all Believers, most deep, most real, most true! I may never have seen that good friend before, but as soon as we begin to talk of Jesus and His love, if we are the living children of the living God, the bond of unity is felt at once by both of us! One is your Master, even Christ; and all you are brethren.

12. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name: those that You gave Me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the Scripture might be fulfilled. What a blessed Shepherd is this who never lost a sheep! Judas crept in among the flock, but he was never truly one of the flock. He was never a son of God. He was the son of perdition all along. Christ has kept all His sheep and all His lambs and He will do the same, dear Friends, even to the end.

13. And now come I to You and these things I speak in the world, that they might have My joy fulfilled in themselves. What an unselfish Savior! His heart is ready to break with His impending sufferings and yet He prays for us, that we may be filled with His joy! I suppose that it is true that the Man of Sorrows was the happiest man who ever lived. For the joy that was set before Him, He endured the Cross, despising the shame. And, notwithstanding His boundless and bottomless grief, there was within Him such communion with God, love to men and the certainty of His ultimate triumph that kept Him still joyous above the seas of tribulation! He prays that that same joy may be fulfilled in us. May God graciously grant it to all of us who believe in Jesus!

14, 15. I have given them Your Word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the Evil One. There is a reason for Gods elect being allowed to remain in the world. They are never left like wheat in the field, to perish through the damp and cold, or to be devoured by the birds of the air. Oh, no! We are left for Gods Glory, that men may see what the Grace of God can do in poor frail bodies. We are left for the service of Christs Church, that we may be here for a while to carry on the cause of God, to be the means of comforting the little ones and to seek the conversion of sinners. We are to be like salt to prevent putrefaction. We are Gods preventive men, to prevent as much of the evil as we canand we are to fight with the evil that cannot be prevented and to seek to overthrow it in Christs name.

16. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Many, nowadays, say that we ought to blend the Church with the congregation and that it is a great pity to have any division between them. A great many good people are outside the Churchtherefore try to make the Church as much like the world as you can! That is a silly trick of the devil which the wise servants of God will answer by saying, To whom we give place for subjection? No, not for an hour! There must always be a broad line of demarcation between the Church of Christ and the world it will be an evil day when that line is abolished. The sons of God took to themselves wives of the daughters of men, but that kind of union brought mischief with it, and it will always do so.

17. Sanctify them through Your Truth: Your Word is Truth. We cannot afford to give up Gods Inspired Word because it is a means of our sanctification. If this is taken away, it is not such-and-such a dogma, as they call it, put into the background, but it is the Truth of God that would sanctify us which is discarded, it is Gods own Word that is flung to the dogs! And that must never be.

18, 19. As You have sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they, also, might be sanctified through the Truth. I set Myself apart unto holiness, that they, also, might be set apart unto holy uses through the Truth.

20. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them, also, which shall believe on Me through their word. Our Lord knew that the little circle around Him would grow into a multitude that no man can number, out of all nations, kindreds, people and tonguesso He prayed for all whom His Father had given Him.

21, 22. That they all may be one as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that You have sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them; that they may be one, even as We are One. The Church will never know her true Glory till she knows her perfect onenessthe One Church will be the glorious Church!

23. I in them, and You in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me. That is a grand expressionYou have loved them, as You have loved Me. What? With the same love? It is even soa love without beginning, a love without change, a love without bounds, a love without end! You have loved them as You have loved Me.

24-26. Father, I will that they, also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My Glory, which You have given me: for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world has not known You: but I have known You, and these have known that You have sent Me. And I have declared unto them Your name, and will declare it: that the love in which You have loved Me may be in them, and I in them. This blessed prayer was heard by the Father. All of it must be fulfilledand untold blessings do and shall come to us through this intercession of our Lord. Blessed be His holy name!

John 18:1. When Jesus had spoken these words, He went forth with His disciples over the brook Kidron, where was a garden, into which He entered, and His disciples. Our Lord could not cross that brook Kidron without being reminded of the time when David went that way in the hour of his sorrow, though He knew that He had to face a far greater trial than that of David. The very brook would remind Him of His approaching Sacrifice, for through it flowed the blood and refuse from the Temple.

2. And Judas, also, which betrayed Him, knew the place: for Jesus often resorted there with His disciples. The place of our Lords frequent retirement for private prayer was well known to Judas, who had often gone there with his Lord and his fellow disciples.

3. Judas, then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, went there with lanterns and torches and weapons. How completely the traitor must have been in the power of Satanand how hardened and callous he must have grown, that he could lead, there, the men who were going to arrest the Savior! Truly it was by wicked hands that Christ was taken, crucified and slain! Yet, unconsciously, these evil men were carrying out the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. How strangely were they equipped for their deed of darkness! With lanterns and torches and weapons. They were coming to the Light of the world bearing lanterns and torches! And armed with weapons that they might use against the Lamb of God. If He had wished to deliver Himself, all their weapons would have been in vain and their lanterns and torches would not have revealed Him, even with the help of the full moon, which was probably shining at the time.

4, 5. Jesus, therefore, knowing all things that should come upon Him, went forth and said unto them, Whom do you seek? They answered Him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus said unto them, I am He. And Judas also, which betrayed Him, stood with them. Notice, dear Friends, that the word, He is in italics, showing that it is not in the original. Our Lord here twice used the name of Jehovah, I AMas He did on certain other memorable occasions. It was most fitting that, as He was going out to die, He should declare that it was no mere man who was about to suffer on the Cross, but that, while He was truly Man, He was also very God of very God.

6. As soon, then, as He had said unto them, I am He, they drew back and fell to the ground. The simple utterance of His name drove them from Him and drove them to the earth! What would have happened if He had put forth His almighty power?

7-9. Then He asked them again, Whom do you seek? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered, I have told You that I am He. If, therefore, You seek Me, let these go their way: that the saying might be fulfilled, which He spoke, Of them which You gave Me, I have lost none.

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #2368 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE LIVING CARE OF THE DYING CHRIST   
NO. 2368

**A SERMON INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS DAY, JULY 8, 1894. DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, APRIL 15, 1888.

**Jesus answered, I have told you that I am He: if, therefore, you seek Me, let these go their way: that the saying might be fulfilled which He spoke, Of those which You gave Me have I lost none. John 18:8, 9.**

THE two remarkable miracles which our Lord worked in the Garden of Gethsemane ought not to be lightly passed over. The first was the falling to the ground of the soldiers and the servants of the priests. Jesus did but speak to them and there was such power and majesty about His Presence and His voice that, they went backward, and fell to the ground. They were quite unable to seize Him. Here was a display, in some measure, of Christs Divine Power. These men would have fallen into the grave and into Hell, itself, if Jesus had put forth the full force of His strength! He only spoke a word and down they fellthey had no power whatever against Him. Beloved, take comfort from this miracle! When the enemies and foes of Christ come against Him, He can easily overthrow them. Many times have there been crises in the Churchs history when it seemed as if the Truth of God would be destroyed. Then has come the opportunity for Divine interposition. A word from Christ has vanquished His enemies! They that were waiting, like lions, ready to leap upon their prey, have been disappointed. Jesus has but spoken and they have fallen backward to the ground. Therefore, take heart and be not dismayed even in the darkest hour. Let Christ only utter a word and the victory is certain to be with Him!

The other miracle was this, that seeing the company that came together to take Him, He should be able, at pleasure, to screen His disciples so that not one of them was injured. The ear of the High Priests servant was cut offit was the opposite party that received the woundbut no ear of Peter or finger of John was struck. The Apostles escaped altogether unharmed. The were not able to protect themselves, being a very small number compared with the posse that had come forth from the High Priest, yet their Master preserved them! From this we learn that the Lord Jesus Christ is able to take care of His own. When they seem to be like so many lambs in the midst of wolves, He can keep them so that no wolf can devour them. He has done it and He will continue to do so! Fear not, little flock, for it is your Fathers good pleasure to give you the Kingdom. He will preserve you by His own miraculous power and you need not be dismayed at any force that is arrayed against you.

Think, then, of those two miracles. You may need to remember them there may come a time when it shall be a great joy for you to think of Christ, all ruddy from the bloody sweat, yet driving back His adversaries with only a word, and rescuing the little handful of His disciples from anything like harm.

But in my text I notice something which seems to me very remarkableIf, therefore, said Jesus, you seek Me, let these go their way: that the saying might be fulfilled. After such an expression, you naturally expect some Old Testament textsomething said by David in the Psalms or by one of the Prophetsbut it is not so! It is, that the saying might be fulfilled, which He spoke, Of them which You gave Me have I lost none. It is but an hour or two since Jesus uttered this sentence, but it is already among the Inspired Scriptures and it begins to take effect and to be fulfilled at once! It is not the age of Gods Word, but the Truth of it that constitutes its power! What Christ had said that very night in prayer was as true and as much the Word of the King as that which God had spoken by His Spirit through holy men ages before!

Beloved, learn this lessonthe Word of Christ is to be depended upon! You may hang your whole destiny upon it! What Christ has said is full of the Truth of God. He is, Yes and Amen, and so are all His Wordsthey stand fast forever and ever, like His own eternal Godhead. Therefore, since this Word of Christ, which had only just been spoken, must be fulfilled, believe that every Word of His will be carried out to the utmost! Heaven and earth shall pass away, but not one Word which was spoken by our Savior shall ever failit shall not fail even the least of us in our worst hour of peril! I read this Truth of God in the text with very great delight. We might have expected to find an Old Testament Scripture quoted here, but the New Testament Scripture is put upon the same level as the Old and, coming from the lips of Christ, we are pleased to see it so soon fulfilled.

The soldiers and officers from the chief priests had come forth that night especially to arrest Christ. Peter, James, John, Bartholomew, Thomas and the rest of the Apostles are all there, but Judas has come to betray, not the servants, but their Master. And they who are with the traitor have come to take not the disciples, but their Lord. To me, there is something encouraging about this fact, although it is a dismal one. The fight of the great adversary is not so much against us as against our Master. Satans emissaries are very furious, sometimes, with the faithful defenders of the Truth, but their fury is not so much against them as against the Truth and against the Christ who is the center of that Truth. In olden times, they hated Luther, Calvin and Zwingli, and the rest of the Reformers, but the main point of attack was the Doctrine of Justification by Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

And at this day the great fight is around the Cross. Did Jesus die as His peoples Substitute? That is the question and there are some, I grieve to say it, to whom that text is applicable, He that despised Moses Law died without mercy, under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose you, shall he be thought worthy, who has trodden under foot the Son of God, and has counted the blood of the Covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and has done despite unto the Spirit of Grace? This is the chief aim of the enemys assaultsto get rid of Christ, to get rid of the Atonement, to get rid of His suffering in the place of men! They say they can embrace the rest of the Gospel, but what, rest, is there? What is there left? A bloodless, Christless Gospel is neither fit for the land nor for the dunghillit neither honors God nor converts the sons of men!

This is our consolation, that the attack is, after all, against the Master, Himself. Our Lord Jesus Christ is still the great target for the archers arrows. Though His enemies do not always let His disciples go their way, yet they do seek Himit is against Him that they rave most of all. As it is the quarrel of Gods Covenant, He will fight it out to the end! And so far as your part in the battle is concerned, as it is for His Truth, His eternal power and Godhead and His great Sacrifice, you may safely go through with it, for he who fights for this cause shall surely have God with him.

Now let us come to our text and try to learn some lessons from it. I notice here, first, Christs dying care for His disciples. Then, next, I see that His care extends to their bodies. And, thirdly, I observe that His care offers Himself instead of them. He thrusts Himself upon the edge of the adversaries sword and says, If, therefore, you seek Me, let these go their way.

I. First, then, I call upon you to notice in our text CHRISTS DYING CARE FOR HIS DISCIPLES. Let me correct what I have said and put it, THE LIVING CARE OF THE DYING CHRIST, for you see He is occupied, first of all, with His disciples safety. The soldiers have come to seize Him, but He does not seek to escape. They bind Him, but He does not burst His bonds. They will take Him to prison and to death, but He has not a word to say in His own defense. He utters no curse against His persecutors. His one thought is for His disciples! His ruling passion is strong in deathHis love still masters Him.

This was the more wonderful because He was in the first brunt of the danger. He had been betrayed by Judas and the High Priests servants were gathering about Him to capture Him, yet He was calm and quiet, and His one thought was concerning the 11 who were with Him. Usually, we become quieter when we get used to a troubleit is in the first fluster of it that we are disconcerted and thrown off balance. I suppose it is so with you. I know it is so with me. We learn, after a little while, to look calmly around us. We gird up the loins of our mind and we begin to think as we should thinkbut at first we are like birds driven out to sea by a rough windthat have not learned, yet, to manage their wings in the gale. It was not so with our Savior. In that first moment of attack He still thought of His disciples. Oh, the splendor of that love which could not be disturbed! Many waters could not quench it even at their first breaking out, nor could the floods drown it when they were swollen to their highest! Beloved, Jesus never forgets you who are His own. Never does anything happen in this world or in Heaven that leads Him to forget you. He has engraved your names upon the palms of His handsthey are written upon His heart! So be it, the first brunt of your battle or of His own, He still thinks of you and cares for you.

But it is more remarkable, still, that Jesus thought of His disciples in the faintness of His agony. All crimson from the bloody sweat, He rose from under the olive trees, came forward and stood there in the torchlight before His persecutors. But the light that fell upon His brow revealed no care for anything but the safety of His followers. His whole soul had gone out to them. That crimson sweat meant a heart flowing out at every pore with love for those whom His Father had given Him, and whom He had so long preserved. I doubt not that He was faint with the dreadful agony. He must have been brought to the very lowest point of endurance by it, yet He still thought of His disciples! Beloved, when you and I are sick and faint, other people do not expect us to think of

them. We grow a little selfish when we are weak and illwe want someone to moisten our lips, we expect our friends to watch over us and wipe the sweat from our brow. It was not so with our Master! He came, not to be ministered unto, but to minister! And He does so by saying to the rabble throng, If, therefore, you seek Me, let these go their way.

And mark, dear Friends, that our Lord Jesus was not only in the brunt of danger, and in the faintness of His agony, but He was in full prospect of a cruel death. He knew all that was to be done to Him. When you and I have to suffer, we do not know what is before usit is a happy circumstance that we do not. But Jesus knew that they would buffet Him, that they would blindfold Him, that they would spit in His face, that they would scourge Him. He knew that the crown of thorns would tear His temples. He knew that He would be led forth like a malefactor, bearing the gallows on His shoulder. He knew that they would nail His feet and hands to the cruel Cross. He knew that He would cry, I thirst. He knew that His Father must forsake Him on account of the sin of man that would be laid upon Him. He knew all that! These huge Atlantic billows of grief already cast their spray in His face. His lips were salt with the brine of His coming grief, but He did not think of thatHis one thought was for His Beloved, those whom His Father had given Him. Till He dies, He will keep His eye on His sheep and He will grasp His Shepherds crook with which to drive the foe from them. Oh, the allabsorbing, self-consuming love of Christ! Verily, it was like coals of juniper which have a most vehement flame! Do you know that love, Beloved? If so, let your hearts reciprocate itloving Him in return with all the strength of your life and all the wealth of your being! Even then you can never love Him as He has loved you.

I must add that it was all the more remarkable that Jesus should continue to think of His disciples at such a time when He knew what they were. They had been asleep, even while He was in the bloody sweat! Even the three whom He had chosen as His bodyguard and stationed within a stones throw of His terrible agony, had slept! Jesus also knew that the 11 would all forsake Him and flee, and that one of them would even deny Him. Yet He thought of them. O Lord, how can You think of such sinful creatures as we are? I feel glad that these Apostles were not perfect. We must not rejoice in anything that is evil, but still, it is some comfort to me that though they were such poor creatures as they were, Jesus cared for them, for now I can believe that He loves me!

Though I sleep when I ought to wake and watch with Him, yet He loves me. Although, under the brunt of a strong temptation, I may fleeHe still loves me! Yes, and even if I should deny Him, yet I can understand that, as He loved Peter, He may still love me. O faulty saints, you who love Him and yet often fail Him! You who trust Him and yet are oftentimes dismayed! Gather strength, I pray you, from this wonderful love of Jesus! Is not the love of Christ a mass of miracles, all wonders packed together? It is not a subject for surprise that He should love, but that He should love such worms as we arethat He should love us when we were dead in trespasses and sins, that He should love us into life, should love us despite our faults, should love us to perfectionand should love us till He brings us to share His Glory! Rejoice, then, in this wondrous care of Christthe dying Christ with a living care for His disciples!

II. But now, secondly, HIS CARE EXTENDS TO THEIR BODIES. I will not be long upon this point, but I want you to note some of the sweetness there is in it. When I was reading to you, just now, you must have noticed that our Lord said, Those that You gave Me, I have kept, and none of them is lost. Surely He meant that He kept them from wandering into sin, did He not? Did He not mean that He kept them unto eternal salvation? Undoubtedly He did, but the greater includes the less. He who keeps a man, keeps the whole man spirit, soul and body. So our Lord Jesus, here, interprets His own prayer, which dealt with the souls of His people. He mainly interprets it as to their bodies, for He bade those who came to seize Him to let His disciples go, saying, If, therefore, you seek Me, let these go their way.   
You say to me, That is a small interpretation of a great utterance. I know it is and that is the comfort of it, that if there are small meanings to the promises, you may quote them and pray for them, as well as believe in and pray for the greater and immeasurable meaning of the promises! I like to believe that He who loves me as an immortal spirit, loves me as a mortal man. He who loves me as I shall be before His Throne in Glory, loved me as I was when I hung upon my mothers breastand loves me as I now amwith many a weakness and infirmity clinging to me! He who takes care of the soul, takes care of the body, too.   
Notice that this care of our Lord was effectual. Is it not amazing that none of those soldiers and servants of the High Priest touched one of the eleven? Is it not remarkable that Malchus, having lost his right ear, did not feel it his duty to thrust at Peter? But the Savior interposes and just touches the wounded ear, and it is healed! And Peter is allowed to go. That act of Peter was enough to bring on a battle royal all round and we know that the whole eleven had only two swords between them. They could have made only a very feeble stand against a band of armed men, yet not one of them was injured. How well does Jesus protect His own!   
What is more remarkable, the Apostles were not harmed at the time of Christs death. It would not at all have surprised me if the mob that cried, Crucify Him, crucify Him, had also said, Here are some of His disciples, let us also put them to death! Let us increase the agonies of the dying Nazarene by the slaughter of His disciples before His eyes. Yet not a dog moved his tongue against them! And when it was reported that Christ had risen from the dead, why did not His enemies pounce upon Mary Magdalene and the rest of the women? Forty days was Jesus on the earth and I do not find that in all that time there was any hindrance to the coming or going anywhere of any of His disciples! After the Holy Spirit had been poured out, there came a time of persecution, but until then it was not in the Saviors mind that the Jews should touch one of His disciplesand they could not. The devil cannot go any farther than his chain permitsand the worst enemies of Christ can do no more than Christ allows. What an effectual care was this of the Master which held the broad shield of His Divine protection not only over the eleven, but also over all the rest of the faithful! He was at His lowest when they took Him, bound Him and led Him away, but even then, with His Sovereign Word, He protected His people from all harmas to their bodies as well as their souls.   
Notice, also, that it was necessary that they should have special protection. Jesus meant them all to remain alive to see Him after His death, that they might be witnesses of His Resurrection. They were a little handful of seed corn and He would not have one grain wasted, because it was by that precious wheat that His Church was to be fed and the world was to be sown with spiritual life!   
Besides, they were not ready, yet, to bear persecution. Afterwards they bore it manfully, joyfullybut just now they were poor feeble children until the Spirit of God was poured out. Brothers and Sisters, the Lord Jesus Christ can shelter us from sickness and from every kind of bodily affliction until we are fit to bear it. And He can also preserve us from death till our work is done. It is a good saying, though it is not a Scriptural one, We are immortal till our work is done. If God has given you anything to do, get to the doing of it! The time is short, but dream not that you shall be cut off too soon! You have a work for your time and you shall have time for your work. Believe it and you may go between the jaws of behemoth without a fear, while God has work for you to accomplish for Him! Therefore, be not afraid, for Jesus says, Let these go their way.   
Once more, the care which the Lord took of His people was much better than their own care. See, Peter is going to take care of his Master, but he makes a poor mess of it. But when his Master took care of him, that was a very different affair. Peter is going to fight for his Brothersout comes the swordoff goes the ear of Malchus! And Peter probably regretted that he had not cut off his head. But what good did Peter do? He only increased the danger they were in and made the men feel the more furious against them. But Christs Word was amplehere was sufficient defense for all the Apostles, Let these go their way, and go their way they did! Brothers and Sisters, we would do a deal better in many things if we did not do anything at all! There is many a man who is drowning and makes his drowning sure by his struggling. I am told that if he could but lie still on his back, he would float! And I believe that in many a trouble we make the trouble 10 times worse by our kicking and plunging.   
O rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him. Especially do so if it is a matter of scandal. If anybody speaks evil of you, do not answer him. I have had a great deal of experience of this kindperhaps as much as anybodyand I have always found that if I get a spot of mud anywhere on my coat, and I proceeded to brush it off, it is much worse than before. Leave it alone till it is drythen it will come off easily. Perhaps even then you had better leave somebody else to do your clothes-brushing and your boot-cleaningyou cannot do it nearly so well, yourself, as somebody else can do it for you. I say again, we should do better, often, if we did nothing. These 11 Apostles did best when Peter had put up that ugly old sword of his and left off fighting and, at His Masters Word, went away safe and sound from the armed men who had arrested His Lord.

Beloved, you are all right if you are in Jesus Christs handsright for your body, right for your estate, right for your character, right for little things as well as for greatif you just leave all in those dear hands that never fail, because they act for the dear heart that never ceases to beat with infinite affection towards all those whom the Father has given to Him.   
III. I have continued longer than I intended, so I am coming, now, to the third and last point, which is thisCHRISTS CARE LED HIM TO OFFER HIMSELF INSTEAD OF HIS PEOPLE.   
Jesus said, If, therefore, you seek Me, let these go their way. This was as much as to say, You cannot hurt both Myself and My people. This is a great Truth of God, though I put it very simply to you. When the judgments of God are abroad, it is not possible that they should fall on both Christ and His people. Was Jesus Christ the Substitute for His people? Grant that, then, if the punishment of sin fell on Christ, it cannot fall on those for whom Christ died! It is not according to natural justice, much less Divine Justice, that the Substitute should suffer first, and then the person for whom He stood as Substitute should also suffer. That cannot be! Why have a Substitute at all unless that Substitute, by His suffering, clears those for whom He was substituted?   
I will give you a very simple illustration. You will find it in the Book of Deuteronomy. There is the old Divine ordinance that when a man found a birds nest and there were young birds in the nest, if he took the young, he must let the mother bird go free, he must not take boththat was contrary to the Divine Law. So, Christ may die, or His people may die but not both of them. Justice will not have it that they shall both suffer. And the Lord Jesus Christ gives a tongue to that great Law when He says, If you seek Me, here I am, but let these go their way, for you cannot take us both. That were contrary to the sacred Law and to the Divine equity which lies at the bottom of everything that is true. Did Christ, my Ransom, die for me? Then I shall not die. Did He pay my debt? Then it is paid and I shall not be called upon to pay it   
*If You have my discharge procured,   
And freely in my place endured   
The whole of wrath Divine.   
Payment God cannot twice demand   
First at my bleeding Suretys hand,   
And then, again, at mine.*   
Did Jesus suffer in my place outside the city gate? Then, turn you, my Soul, unto your rest, since He died for you! Justice could not claim both the Surety and those for whom He stood as Substitute! And, Beloved, it was the Master who died. They did seek Him, they did take Him, they did crucify HimHe did bear it all as His peoples Substitute. The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. Do not be deceived about this matter, but grip it as a fact most sure that the Lord Jesus Christ did bear His peoples sins in His own body on the tree. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. Brothers and Sisters, I am not making this up and telling you words of my own. These are the precious Truths of Holy Writ, Divinely Inspired. Oh, that all would believe them!   
Christ has suffered in the place of His people. What then? As I have said to you, before, both cannot suffer, therefore, as Jesus suffered, you who are His people are clear. Perhaps you will go down to the grave. Unless the Lord should speedily come, we shall die, but, since Jesus died, death cannot hold us! The resurrection trumpet will ring out its silver note and this will be the message to the dull cold ear of death, Since I died, let these go their way, and every sepulcher shall open wide, the caverns of death shall no longer enclose the bodies of the saints, but from beds of dust and silent clay the whole of Christs redeemed shall rise! Because He lives, they shall also live! Death sought Him and, therefore, death must let these who belong to Him go their way!   
And as for Justice, there comes the dread tremendous day, the day for which all other days were madethe Day of Judgment and of condemnation of ungodly men! Shall I stand shivering before that eternal Judgement Seat? No, not so! Shall I feel the earth quake beneath me and see Heaven splitting above me, and the stars falling like withered leaves in autumn? Doubtless it will be so. Will the avenging angel come with his dread sword of fire and sweep us poor sinful ones away? He will, unless we are in Christ! But if we are among the blood-redeemed ones, he must stay his fiery vengeance, for there shall come a voice from the risen and reigning Savior, You have smitten Me, therefore let these go their way. And because He died for us, we shall go our way! Which way? Up yonder shining staircase made of light! Up where the angels come and go, we shall make our way, like children who run upstairs at home, up into the world of the Light of God and to the home of Glory where our Saviors face is the sun and His Presence makes Heaven! Yes, and this shall be our permit for ascending thereJesus has loved us and has died to redeem us from our sins.   
With this I close, dear Hearers. When I come into this pulpit and especially during the last two or three Sunday nights when I have felt my head swim at the sight of you, I seem like one standing on a high cliff, half afraid to remain thereand I think to myself, Shall I long preach to these people? Well, well, whether I do or do not, I would press home this question upon your consciences as I shall meet you in that Great Day have you a share in Jesus Christs love and care? Did He bear your sins in His own body on the tree? Do you believe in Him? That is, do you trust Him? Have you put your soul into His hands that He may save it? If so, you are justified by Him, you are saved in Him!   
Say, dear Friend, nextdo you obey Him? Is He your Master and Lord? Is His will the supreme law of your life? Or do you wish it to be so and pray to make it so? Then again you may go your way, for Christ has stood in your place. Do you suffer with Him? Are you willing to suffer for Him? There are some who will go with Christ if He will put on His silver slippers, His purple mantle and His jeweled crown. How good they are! How bravely will they say, I am a Christian, when everybody will throw primroses in their path! Yes, but when people sneer and call you an old Puritan, a Methodist, a Presbyterian, or some other pretty nameand when those who preach to you are much abused and evil things are said of themcan you take the side of a despised Christ? Can you stand at His Cross? Can you acknowledge Him when the blood is dripping from His wounds, when everybody thrusts out their tongue at Him and have ill words for the Crucified One? Can you say, I still love Him?   
Remember the good Scotch woman, when Claverhouse had murdered her godly husband. Ah, he said, what do you think of your bonny husband, now? She answered, I always thought my man was very beautiful, but I never saw him look as lovely as he does now, that he has died for his Master. Can you say the same of Christ? He was always precious to me. I love Him in every shape and form, but when I see Him put on His crimson robe and bleed at every pore for me. When the rubies are in His hands and on His feet, and I see Him still despised and rejected of men, I love Him more than ever! And I love His Cross and take it up. I love His shame and His reproach, and count it greater riches than the treasures in Egypt. If it is so with you. If you are with Him in His shame, I will guarantee that you shall be with Him in His Glory!   
I count it to be a mean position to be only with a reigning Christ on earth and to go with Him only in fair weather. Oh, but this is the pledge and proof of loveif you are with Him when the snowflakes blow into your face and the storm comes hurtling against youand you can follow bravely where He leads the way! God make you such followers of the Crucified! May your feet know what it is to be pricked with thorns, or your head will never know what it is to feel the weight of the Glory diadem! May you be willing to be despised and rejected, for if not, you have thrown away your crown! God bless you, dear Friends, and blessed be His name for helping me, again, to speak to you tonight! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **John 17:1-12; 18:1-14.**

1. These words spoke Jesus, and lifted up His eyes to Heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come. This is, in a very special sense, our Lords prayer. What a word that is from the lips of Jesus, Father! This was the night of His deepest sorrow and His heaviest woe, but He begins His prayer with this tender expression, Father, the hour is come. The hour of darkness, the hour of His passion and death had now arrived.

1. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son, also, may glorify You. Did Jesus look upon His suffering as His Glory? He does not merely pray, Sustain Your Son, but, Glorify Your Son. In truth, our Lords lowest stoop was His highest Glory! He was never more resplendent than when He hung upon the Crossthat was His true spiritual throne, so He prayed, Glorify Your SonEnable Him to bear the agony and to pass through it to Glory. That Your Son, also, may glorify You. The death of Christ was a great glorifying of God. We see His love and His justice rendered more glorious in the death of Christ than they would have been by any other method!

2. As You have given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. In this verse you get the doctrines of General and Particular Redemption blended. By His death, Christ obtained power over all flesh. His death had some relation to every man, but the special objective of it was the salvation of the elect. The purpose of the shower is to water one particular field, but the rain falls everywhere, so plenteous is the bounty of God. The objective of Christs Atonement is to purchase eternal life for those who were given to Him by His Father, but He has also obtained power over all flesh.

3. And this is life eternal, that they might know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent. To know God is eternal life. If you know God, if you know Jesus Christ whom He has sent, you are spiritually quickened. That knowledge has brought to you, no, it is, in itself, the new lifeThis is life eternalnot life for a few years but life eternal. Mark the final perseverance of the saints, how they shall hold on and hold out forever.

4. I have glorified You on the earth: I have finished the work which You gave Me to do. Jesus regards His work as already done, although He had yet to die, to pay the ransom price for His people. Yet, by a leap of holy faith, He says, I have finished the work which You gave Me to do.

5. And now, O Father, glorify You, Me, with Your own Self with the Glory which I had with You before the world was. Jesus had laid aside  
His Glory for our sakes. Now He asks that His work, being regarded as done, His Glory may be given back to Him.

6. I have manifested Your name unto the men which You gave Me out of the world: Yours they were, and You gave them Me: and they have kept Your Word. Gods people belong to Him. He gives them to His SonChrist gives them His Word and they keep it. They have kept Your Word. Do we keep Gods Word? Do we hold to it? Do we make it the guide of our whole life? Do we seek to obey it? This is the token of Gods chosen people.

7-12. Now they have known that all things whatever You have given Me are of You. For I have given unto them the Words which You gave Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from You, and they have believed that You did send Me. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which You have given Me; for they are Yours. And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You, Holy Father. Keep through Your own name those whom You have given Me, that they way be one, as We are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name: those that You gave Me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the Scripture might be fulfilled. Christ always has kept His people! He still keeps His people and He will keep His people forever! The sheep shall be delivered into the hands of the Father in full numberthere shall not be one of them missing in that day when they shall pass under the rod of the Great Shepherd. We cannot read all this prayer of our Lord, tonight. We must now go, in the language of the next chapter, with the Master into the garden of His grief.

John 18:1 . When Jesus had spoken these words, He went forth with His disciples over the brook Kidron. A dark, foul brook through which flowed the blood and refuse from the Temple. King David crossed that brook one night in bitter sorrowand now the Savior crossed it when it was near to midnightHe went forth with His disciples over the brook Kidron.

1-2. Where was a garden, into the which He entered, and His disciples. And Judas, also, which betrayed Him, knew the place: for Jesus ofttimes resorted there with His disciples. Our Lord went there to pray and Judas knew that this was His custom. Are we such men of prayer that others know where we pray? Have you some familiar place where you go to meet your Lord? I am afraid that many know where we trade and many know where we preach but, perhaps, few know where we pray. God grant that we may be often at the Mercy Seat! We would be better men and women if we were more frequently at the Throne of Grace.

3. Judas, then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, came there with lanterns and torches and weapons. Lanterns to give light to the Sun! Torches to discern the Light of the World! Weapons with which to fight with the Lamb of God, the unarmed Sufferer! Strange treatment, this, for Him who came to save and bless!

4, 5. Jesus, therefore, knowing all things that should came upon Him, went forth and said unto them, Whom do you seek? They answered Him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus said to them, I am He. Or, I Am. It is remarkable that Jesus should, in His betrayal, twice use this expression, thus uttering the very name of Jehovah!

5. And Judas, also, which betrayed Him, stood with them. What a hardened wretch he must have been, to be able to stand with them! One would have thought that, having betrayed his Master, he would have hidden himself away for shame, but no, Judas, also, which betrayed Him, stood with them. His heart must have been steeled.

6. As soon, then, as He had said unto them, I am He, they went backward and fell to the ground. Christs Almighty Power cast them down at once! He needed not to lift His hand or even His fingerHe only said, I am and, they went backward and fell to the ground.

7. Then asked He them, again, Whom do you seek? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. Do they return to the fray? Having once felt Christs Divine Power, do they summon courage enough to attack Him again? Yes, for there is no limit to the malice and impudence of the human heart!

8-10. Jesus answered, I have told you that I am He: if, therefore, you seek Me, let these go their way: that the saying might be fulfilled, which He spoke, Of them which You gave Me have I lost none. Then Simon PeterAlways ready to boil over. Always full of zeal and rash impetuosity, Peter

10. Having a sword, drew it and struck the High Priests servant and cut off his right ear. The servants name was Malchus. Peter struck at his headhe was not content with trying to woundhe meant to kill Malchus. But he, cut off his right ear.

11-14. Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up your sword into the sheath: the cup which My Father has given Me, shall I not drink it? Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus and bound Him, and led Him away to Annas first; for he was father-in-law to Caiaphas, which was the High Priest that same year. Now Caiaphas was he which gave counsel to the Jews that it was expedient that one man should die for the people. Saying a great deal more than he thought he was saying, for he uttered a great Gospel Truth when he said, It was expedient that one man should die for the people.

HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK382, 401, 293. Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #722 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE CAPTIVE SAVIOR FREEING HIS PEOPLE

NO. 722

**DELIVERED ON SUNDAY MORNING, NOVEMBER 25, 1866, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Jesus answered, I have told you that I am He. If therefore you seek Me, let these go their way, that the saying might be fulfilled, which He spoke, Of them whom You gave Me have I lost none. John 18:8, 9.**

THE whole story of our Lords passion is exceedingly rich in meaning. One is tempted to linger over every separate sentence of the narratives given by the Evangelists. It is possible to preach several series of sermons upon the whole story, and there is not a single incident, though it may seem to be but accidental, which might not furnish a wealth of holy thought to the careful student.

In looking through this chapter one was greatly tempted to speak awhile upon the Masters selecting the place of His prayer as the place of His agony and betrayalthe holy prudence and forethought by which He had, as it were, cast up His entrenchments and made His defenses upon the very spot where He knew He should meet the shock of the evenings first onslaught. This is a lesson to us, Christians, not to venture out into the days battle without girding on our armor, nor make a voyage upon the sea of life without having seen to it that the vessel is well supplied against every possible danger which may be encountered upon the stormtossed sea. Jesus prays before He fights, and so must we if we would overcome.

One is tempted, also, to dwell upon that remarkable expression, Judas, also, which betrayed Him, knew the place, to show the futility of knowledge apart from sincerity. Oh, the injuriousness of knowledge, if it is not attended with corresponding Grace! Had the traitor not known he could not have betrayed, and had he not been an intimate friend, he could not have been so base a wretch! Strange, but strangely true is it, that the ability to become the child of perdition by betraying his Master was found in the fact of his having been the near acquaintance of the Savior. He could never have been so sevenfold an inheritor of Hell if he had not been so largely a receiver of the privilege of companionship with Christ.

Direful truth, that to be educated to take the highest degree in Hell it is almost necessary to enter hypocritically into the school of Christ. Terrible reflection, which should well check any of us who make high professions without a corresponding weight of sincerity. But as time does not allow us, like the bee, to gather honey from every flower, we shall dwell upon the text. In this passage there is much instruction and we shall endeavor to draw it forth. And then we shall take the liberty to spiritualize it, to set the words in another sense in order that we may still be promoting our great object of setting forth our Lord Jesus Christ.

I. When we observe the words of the text, we notice upon the very surface a sure proof of THE WILLINGNESS OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST TO GIVE HIMSELF TO SUFFER FOR OUR SINS. The voluntary character of Christs suffering makes it beam with a matchless splendor of love! He needed not to have died. If it had been His good pleasure He might have tarried gloriously among the songs of angels. He came not to earth to win a crown because He had none, for all honor and glory are His by right.

It was not to earn a dominion, or because He was not Lord of principalities and powers, that He descended from the skies: Who, though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor, that we, through His poverty, might be made rich. It was a disinterested mission upon which the Redeemer came to the abodes of sinful men. He had nothing to gainrather He had everything to loseand yet let me say to correct myself, by that losing He

did gain, for as our Mediator, He is clothed with a special glory of unrivalled Grace, unequalled by any other manifestation of the Divine perfections.

The proofs that the Master went voluntarily to His death are very abundant. He rose from supper when He knew that Judas had gone out to betray Him, but He did not seek a hiding place in the corners of Jerusalem, or retire to the calm retreat of Bethany. If He had chosen to parry His betrayers thrust that night and to wait until the day, the fickle multitude would have gathered around Him and protected Him from His foes, for they would soon have been won to His side if He would have consented to become their king.

Instead of retreating, even for a moment, Jesus, attended by His disciples, boldly advanced to the spot where Judas had planned to betray Him. He went as calmly as though He had made an appointment to meet a friend there, and would not be late when he arrived. He entered upon His terrible sufferings with His whole heart, with the full concurrence of His whole being having a baptism to be baptized with, and being straitened until it was accomplished. What true courage is in those words, Arise, let us go from this place, when He knew that He was going to the Cross! When the band came to take Him, it appears that they did not know Him. I am He. He said to them twice, Whom are you seeking?

He had to reveal himself, or the lanterns and the torches would not have revealed him. He was not, after all, taken by Judas kissthe kiss was givenbut in the confusion they may have missed the token. Jesus had to ask, Whom are you seeking? And He had to twice announce Himself plainly with the words, I am He. He yielded Himself to His bloodthirsty foes and went willingly with His tormentors! It is very clear that He went willingly, for since a single word made the captors fall to the ground, what could He not have done?

Another word and they would have descended into the tomb! Another, and they would have been hurled into Hell! He put forth just that little finger of His potency in order to let them feel what He could have done if He had chosen to lay bare the arm of His strength and to utter but one word of wrath against them. It is very sure that he went willingly, for how could He have gone at all if not with His own consent? There was no power on earth that could possibly have bound the Lord Jesus, had He been unwilling. He who said, Let these go their way, and by that word secured the safety of all His disciples, it is certain could have said the same of Himself and so have gone His way where He would.

Men might as well speak of loading the sun with chains, or holding the lightning flash in bondage, or like the foolish king of old, fettering the wild uproarious sea as to suppose that they could constrain the Lord of Life and Glory, and lead Him a captive against His will! He was led, and led bound, too, but He could have snapped those bonds as Samson did the Philistines bonds of old. There were other cords that bound Him invisible to carnal sensethe bonds of Covenant engagements, the bonds of His own oath and promise, the bonds of His love to you and to me, my Brothers and Sisters. There were the mighty bonds of His marriage union to our souls which constrained Him, without a word, to yield Himself as a lamb to the slaughter.

The willingness of Jesus! Let us see it clearly, and let us reverently adore Him for it. Blessed Master! You go of Yourself to die for us! No compulsion but that of Your own heart! Nothing brought You to the tomb but Your almighty love to us! I do not intend to dwell upon this thought, but having brought it before you, the practical use of it is just thisLet us take care that our service of Christ shall ever be most manifestly a cheerful and a willing one. Let us never come, for instance, up to the place of worship unwillingly, merely because of custom, or because it is the right thing to dowhich we would gladly avoid doing if we dare. Let us never contribute of our substance to the Masters cause with a grudging hand, as though a tax collector were wringing from us what we could not afford.

Let us never enter upon Christian exercises as a slave would enter upon his labor, hearing the crack of the whip behind him. But let love put wings to our feet and inspire our souls with a sacred alacrity, that as the seraphs fly upon the high behests of Heaven, we may run upon our Saviors commands with as much swiftness as mortals can command. Let our duty be our delight! Let the service of Christ be a kingdom to us! Let us count it to be our highest gain to suffer loss for Him, and our greatest ease to be fully immersed in abundant labors for His sake. His willing sacrifice ought to ensure our willing sacrifice. The Savior bleeds freely like the camphor tree that needs no pressurelet us as freely, from our very hearts, pour forth our love and all the kindred graces and deeds of virtue.

II. Turning from this thought, I beg you, secondly, to notice OUR LORDS CARE FOR HIS PEOPLE IN THE HOURS OF HIS GREATEST DISTURBANCE OF MIND. If you seek Me, let these go their way. That word was intended, in the first place, to be a preservation for His immediate attendants. It is singular that the Jews did not surround that little handful of disciples, put them in prison, and then execute them in due season. If they had done so, where would have been the Christian church?

If they, the first nucleus of Christianity had been destroyed, as it seems likely they could have been, where would have been the Church of after ages? But those words, Let these go their way, very efficiently protected all the weak and trembling fugitives. Why did not the soldiers capture John? He seems to have gone in and out of the palace without even a single word of challenge. Why did they not seize Peter? They were searching for witnesses, why did they not examine Peter under torture, as was the Roman custom, in order to have extorted from him some railing accusation against his Lord whom he so readily denied?

Where were the others? Timid, trembling folk, they had fled like harts and roes when they first heard the baying of the dogs of persecutionwhy were they not hunted up? The Jews did not lack for will, for afterwards they were gratified when James was killed with the sword, and pleased when Peter was laid in prisonwhy were they allowed to go unharmed? Was it not because the Master had need of them? The Holy Spirit had not yet been poured out upon them, and they were not yet fit to be martyrs. They were like green wood that would not burn! They were as yet unbroken to the sacred yoke of suffering. They had not been endowed with that irresistible spiritual strength which made them able to bear tribulation with rejoicing, and therefore that good Shepherd, who tempers the wind to shorn lambs, tempered the wind to these young beginners.

Those words, If you therefore seek Me, let these go their way, were like coats of mail to them, or those fabled, invisible garments which concealed their wearers from their enemies. Under the more than bronze shield of their Lords words, the disciples walked securely in the midst of the boisterous mob! We find John and others of the disciples even standing at the foot of the Cross while those who gnashed their teeth at Christ and laughed at Him, and revealed their savage malice in a thousand ways, did not touch so much as a hair of their heads, or, as far as we know, utter one jest against them. The words of Jesus proved to be right royal wordsthey were Divine wordsand men were constrained to obey them.

The Lord had said, Touch not Mine Anointed, and do My Prophets no harm, and therefore, for the time, His disciples were safe. It strikes me that the expression was not only a guard for the disciples for the time, but, as no Scripture is of private interpretation, I believe that such a royal passport has been given to all Christs people in the way of Providence. Fear not, you servant of Christ, you are immortal till your work is done! When you are fit to suffer, and if needs be, even to die, Christ will not screen you from so high an honor, but permit you to drink of His cup, and to be baptized with His baptism! But until your hour is come you may go and return secure from death. Though cruel men may desire your ill, and devise mischief against you, you are safe enough until the Lord shall be pleased to let loose the lionand even then you shall suffer no permanent injury.

It is wonderful, in the lives of some of Gods ministers, how strikingly they have been preserved from imminent peril. We cannot read the life of Calvin without being surprised that he should have been permitted to die peaceably in his bed, an honored man, surrounded by the town councilors and the great ones of the very city from which he had been once expelled! It seems astounding that a poor weak man whose body was emaciated with diseases of all kinds, who had no arms to wield against the furious hosts of Rome, should yet live in usefulness and then die in circumstances of peace and comfort.

It is no less remarkable that the brave hero of the Cross, Martin Luther, should seem as if he had carried a safe conduct pass, which permitted him to go anywhere and everywhere. He stood up in the Diet of Worms expecting to die, but he came out unscathed! He passed, as it were, between the very jaws of death and yet remained unharmed. Though, as I have said before, Christ has suffered many of His people to die for Him, and they have rejoiced to do so, yet, when He has willed to preserve any of His servants who were needed for a special work, as Calvin and Luther undoubtedly were, He had a way of taking care of them, and saying, Let these go their way.

Take, for instance, another illustration, the life of our remarkable reformer, John Wickliffe. Many times his life was not worth a weeks wages, and yet the old enemy of the Saints were robbed of their prey and could never touch a bone of him until years after he had been buried. When he was brought up for trial before the bishop at St. Pauls, it was a very singular circumstance that John of Gaunt should stand at his side, fully armed, proudly covering the godly man with the prestige of his rank and the arm of his power!

When Wickliffe was faint with standing, and begged to be allowed to sit, the bishop tells him that heretics shall have no seats, but John of Gaunt with rough, uncourtly words swears that he shall sit when he wills! And when the time comes the good man goes forth through the midst of the rabble protected by his friend! I know not that John of Gaunt knew the Truth of God, but yet God touched the mans heart to protect His servant in the hour of peril. Vultures, when God has willed it, have protected doves, and eagles have covered with their wings defenseless children whom God would save. When the Lord wills it, if all Hell should shoot such a shower of arrows as should put out the sun, and if all those arrows were aimed at one poor heart, yet not a single shaft would find its mark, but all would be turned aside by an invisible but irresistible power from the man whom Jehovah ordained to save!

We understand, then, that Jesus has issued a royal passport for all His servants which enables them to live on in the midst of deaths innumerable. Mystically understood, the words have a far deeper meaning. The true seizure of Christ was not by Romans or by the envious Jews, but by our sins. And the true deliverance which Jesus gave to His disciples was not so much from Roman weapons as from the penalty of our sins. How anxiously do I desire that those here this morning, whose sins have been tormenting them, would hear the voice of Jesus, If therefore you seek Me, let these go their way. The Law of God comes out to seek us who have violated it. It has many and just demands against us, but Jesus, who stood in our place, puts Himself before the Law, and He says, Do you seek Me? Here I am. But when you take Me prisoner let these, for whom I stood, go their way.

So then, Beloved, when the Law met with the Lord Jesus and made Him its servant, and constrained Him to bear its penalty, all those for whom Christ stood were, by His being bound, absolutely and forever set free! Christs suffering the penalty of the Law was the means of removing His people forever from under the legal yoke. Now let me try to apply that Truth to your case. A poor soul under distress of mind has gone to the priest, and the priest says, If you would be pardoned do penance. While the poor soul is flogging his back and laying on the stripes most earnestly I think I hear the Savior saying to the whole tribe of priests, Let these poor souls go their way. My shoulders have borne all they ought to have borne. My heart has suffered all the griefs that they were condemned to know. The chastisement of their peace was upon Me, and by My stripes they are healed. Let these go!

Put away your whip! Cease from your bodily tortures, they are of no service! The Law has taken the Redeemer, it does not want you. You need not suffer, Christ has suffered and all your sufferings will now be useless and in vain! Christ has paid the debt, no need for you to attempt it again. Another poor trembler has been sitting under a legal ministry, and he has been told that if he would be saved he must keep the Commandments. He has, therefore, endeavored to forego this sin and the other, and as far as possible to be perfect in holiness. But he has made no headway. His soul is as much in bondage as ever, unsaved with all his exertions, destitute, still, of true peace notwithstanding all his good works.

This morning my Master cries to the preacher who talks after this fashion, Let these poor bondaged ones go their way. Do not preach to them salvation by their own doing! Do not tell them that they are to earn admittance to Heaven. I have worked out and finished their redemption! Their salvation is complete in ME! There is nothing for sinners to do to win forgiveness. All they have to do is to receive what I have done for them! All the righteousness they need to recommend them before God is My righteousnesswhich requires not that theirs be added to itfor why should their rags be joined to my cloth of gold? All the merit a sinner can plead is the merit of My passion. Why should they seek after merit through their repentance and their good works? Why should such stagnant water be poured into the midst of the wine of My merit?

Away with your fancied good works! Away with your boasts, your religions doings, your weeping, and your prayersfor if they are used as a ground of confidence instead of the work of Jesus Christ, they are things of nothingmere rottenness and dung to be cast upon the dunghill! Since Jesus was accepted and punished by the Law, sinners believing in Him are free from the Laws exactions and may go their way!

Perhaps there are some here in whose hearts the Law of God is making terrible confusion. You feel that you have broken the Law and that you cannot keep it. And now the Law is flogging you! It has tied you up as they tie up soldiers in the army to the stocks and it has been laying on the great cat-o-ten-tails to your backthe Ten Commandments of the Law till you are smarting, smarting all over! Your whole conscience is troubled. Now the Lord Jesus Christ says to the Law, Put up, put up that whip! Do not smite the sinner any more! Did you not smite Me, why should you vex him?

Sinner, the only way in which you can escape from the Laws whip is thishasten to Jesus Christ. You must flee to Christ! You must trust in Jesus, and if you shall trust in Jesus He will cast His robe over you! He will lift up the broad shield of His merit and protect you from the shafts of the foe, so that you can say to the Law, I am not under the curse of the Law now, for I have fulfilled it in the Person of my Surety, and I have suffered its penalty in the Person of my Savior

*The terrors of Law and of God   
With me can have nothing to do!   
My Saviors obedience and blood   
Hide all my transgressions from view.*

Jesus Christ, then, as He stands before the Law and is bound by the Law, and flogged by the Law, and crucified by the Law, and buried by the Law, says to you who trust in Him, Go your way. The Law cannot touch you, for it has struck Me instead of you. I was your Substitute, and you may go free. Why you all know that this is simple justice! If another person shall have paid your debts, you are not afraid of being immersed again in those debts, are you? And if you are drafted for the army and a substitute has taken your place, you are not afraid of being drawn a second time, are you? So the Lord Jesus Christ is the Substitute for all His people, and if He was a substitute for you, the Law has no further penal claims upon you! Christ has obeyed it. Christ has suffered its penalty. You may rejoice in the Law as being, now, to you, a gracious rule of lifebut it is not to you a yoke of bondageyou are not under it as a slave! You are free from its dominion! You are not under the Law! You are under Grace!

What a blessing is this! Further, these words seem to me to bear such a meaning as thisthat as we are delivered from legal exaction so are we also delivered from all penal infliction. I wish that some children of God were clearer on this point. When you suffer tribulation, affliction and adversity, do not think that God is punishing you for your sins, for no child of God can be punished penally for sin. Let me not be misunderstood. A man is brought before God, first of all, as a criminal before a judge. You and I have stood there. Through Christs blood and righteousness we have been absolved and acquitted as before God the Judge, and it is not possible for the Law to lay so much as the weight of a feather upon us since we have been perfectly acquitted. In all the pains and sufferings which a Christian may endure, there is not so much as a single ounce of penal infliction. God cannot punish a man whom He has pardoned!

And that criminal, being pardoned, is then adopted into the family and becomes a child. Now, if he shall, as a child, offend against his fathers rule, he will be chastened for it. Everyone can see the distinction between the chastening of a father and the punishment of a judge. If your child were to steal, you would not think of punishing that child in the light in which the judge would do it, who would commit him to imprisonment for having broken the law. No, you chasten your child yourself, not so much to avenge the law as for the childs good, that he may not do this evil thing again.

So our heavenly Father chastens His people with the rod of the Covenant, but He never punishes them with the sword of vengeance. There is a difference between chastening and punishing. Punishing is from a judgeChrist has suffered all such punishmentso that no penal infliction can fall upon a soul that believes in Him. But we may have chastisement which comes to us as the result of a fathers love, but not as the result of a judges anger. We have felt such chastisement, and have reason to bless God for it. Our Lord Jesus says with regard to all legal penalty, If you seek Me, I have borne it: let these go free.

Once more, this text will have its grandest fulfillment at the last. When the destroying angel shall come forth with his sword of fire to smite the sinner. When the gulf of Hell shall open and vomit forth its floods of flame. When the dread trumpet shall sound and shall make all ears to hear the voice of an avenging God, Christ shall stand forth in the front of all the blood-bought souls that came to trust under the shadow of the wings of His mercy, and He will say to Justice, You have sought Me once, and you have found all you can ask of Me. Then let these go their way. And up the glorious steeps of the celestial hills the happy throng shall stream, singing as they pass through the gates of pearl and tread the pavement of transparent gold, Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His blood, unto Him be glory forever and ever!

Then shall the great freeing of the slaves take place because Christ was bound! Then shall the deliverance of the captive come, because Christ slept in the prison house of the tomb. If you seek Me, let these go their way. I would to God that some here would perceive that the way of deliverance is for the Lord Jesus to be bound in their stead. Trust in Jesus, and it shall be so.

III. Thirdly, but very briefly, notice why our Lord exhibited this great care for His people. PONDER OVER HIS SAYING concerning them, That the saying might be fulfilled which He spoke, Of them which you gave Me I have lost none. Here is much of matter for thought at your leisure. Do you know that that text was a prayer? Now here it is made into a promise. What? Then is everything that Christ asks for guaranteed to His people, so that His prayer is Gods promise? It is so!

Notice next, that verbally understood, this expression, which is quoted from the seventeenth of John, could only relate to the souls of Gods people. But here it is taken as though it related to their bodies. From which I gather that we are never wrong in understanding promises in the largest possible sense. It is, I believe, a rule of law that if a man should get a privilege from the king, that privilege is to be understood in the widest sense, whereas a punishment, or penalty, is always to be understood in the narrowest sense.

In the olden times, when princes and kings used to grant monopolies, if a king had granted a monopoly upon all kinds of foreign fruits, if the words had so run, you may rest assured that the person obtaining that monopoly would have put everything down as foreign fruit that could possibly bear the nameand he would have been justified by the law for doing so. Now, when the great King gives a promise, you may encompass everything within its range which can possibly come under the promise! And we may be sure that the Lord will not run back from His word! Gods words are never to be taken with a rebate, or discount, but with such blessed interest as your faith is able to put to them! The grant of eternal life includes such providential protections and provisions as shall be necessary on the road to Heaven. The house is secured for the sake of the tenant, and the body because of the soul.

There is also one more remark I cannot help making, namely, that this text is not in the form of a promise at all. Of them which you gave Me have I lost none. It relates to the pastbut here it is used as a reason why none should be lost of the present. From which I gather that as Jesus has done in the past so will He act in the future, and that all He ever was to His people He will be to them forever more. We may look upon every past act of Divine Grace as being a token and guarantee of future Grace, and we may gather from all our experience of the Lords goodness in the days that are gone, that He will do yet again unto us as He has done, and still more abundantly until we see His face in Heaven!

The gracious words before us read as follows: Of all them which You have given Me I have lost none. Then some are given. There is an elect nation. Oh that we may be found in that happy number! Then Jesus keeps those who are given! They cannot keep themselves, but He can keep them and will. He so well preserves them that not so much as one is lost. I have sometimes thought I might imagine such a scene as this at the gates of Heaven when the great Shepherd comes to give His charge. Here I am, He says, and the children which You have given Me. But are they everyone brought safely here? Yes, says the great Shepherd, of all whom You have given Me I have lost none.

But where is Peter? Did he not deny You to Your face in the hall? Did he not three times say, I know Him not! Yes, but I made him go out and weep bitterly, and then I washed him in My precious blood, and here he is, and Peter sings as sweetly as any! Then, perhaps, the question may be asked, And where is such a one, the least of all the saints? Brother, you feel yourself to be the weakest, the meanest, the most useless, but an enquiry will be made for you, and the answer will be, He is here! Of all whom You have given Me I have lost none.

Oh, happy sheep in the care of such a Shepherd! Oh happy, happy hearts that can rely upon such a Keeper! Dear Hearer, is Jesus yours? Are you depending upon Him? Say, have you cast yourself upon Him? Then do not fear concerning your last days! It must be well at the last, if it is well now. If you are now in Christ, He never did cast away any and He never will. Oh if you have but come to Him and are now depending on Him

*His honor is engaged to save   
The meanest of His sheep!   
All that His heavenly Father gave   
His hands securely keep.*   
He suffered for you and therefore you shall go your way, and the Covenant shall be fulfilled. Of those whom You have given Me I have lost none. I have thus used the text as briefly as I could. I shall want your patience a few minutes while I apply this text in a sort of SPIRITUAL SENSE. The first remark in this department of the subject ismany seek Jesus but do not know who He is. So that Christ says to them, Whom do you seek? Some here this morning are seeking rest, but they do not know that Jesus is the rest. You feel an aching void in your hearts. You are not happy. The theater does not give you the pleasure it once did. Somehow life has grown insipid to you. There is a still small voice within your soul like the voice of wailinglike Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted.   
You are seeking you know not what. You have begun to read your Bible. You are eager to attend upon the preaching of the Gospel but you do not know what it is you want. Ah well, it is a good thing to be a seeker. Though you cannot tell what it is you need, if you do but desire and lift up your voice to God sincerely and earnestly, He will be found of you. We now note the fact that those who seek Christ will find Him, but they find Him only because He reveals Himself to them. These men sought Christ to kill Him, yet He came and said, I am He.   
There was a woman, if you remember, at the well of Sychar, who sought Him for a very different purpose. She said, I know that Messiah comes, which is called Christ. When He is come He will tell us all things. And Jesus said, I that speak unto you am He. Whoever seeks Jesus, Jesus will show Himself to them! They came with lanterns and with torches, but they did not find Christ with lanterns and with torches. And you, too, may come, dear Friend, with a great many of your own inventionsa great many fancies and imaginingsbut you will not find Him. How could you expect to find the sun with a lantern?   
No. Christ must come and reveal Himself to you, and if you seek Him He will do so. Only continue to seek Him. Let not past disappointments make you leave off seeking. As long as you have breath continue in prayer. I charge you before the living God if you have sought in vain, do not let Satan make you give up! Ask that Christ would lead you in the right way, for if you did but know the right way you need not seek long, for He is here now. Jesus can forgive this morning! Before you leave that seat you shall have a full assurance of your interest in Him if you are led to understand the way of salvation!   
That way is simply to trust Christ! Simply to believe that He can and will save you, and to trust yourself with Him. I will never believe that He will let a sincere soul go hungering and thirsting after Him, and let that soul die without Him! Though He may be pleased for a while to let that spirit wander, even in apparent blackness and darkness, yet He will at the last lift the veil from His blessed face, and ah, the sight of that face will well repay you for all the sighs and cries with which you sought Him! To hear Him say, I have loved you with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn you, will so wake up the music of Heaven within your soul that you will think of the months of weariness and the nights of waiting as all too little, and more than enough repaid! One thing more. When Jesus is found there is always much to be given up. If you seek Me, let these go their way. There are always many things that you will have to let go if you have Christ, and this is very often the testing point. If a man keeps a public house which he opens on Sunday, in which cursing and swearing abounds. If he has encouraged all sorts of vice in order to increase his customers, can he continue in this and yet have Christ? Impossible! Now that man would like to go to Heaven, but if he would, he must let go of his evil occupation. Yonder is a woman who has tasted the pleasures of sin. She would gladly have a Savior, but if she will have a Savior she must let her sins go.   
There is a young man over yonder, proud, vain, giddy. If he would have Christ, he must let all these evils go. Our sins must be abandoned or we cannot receive a Savior. Christ Jesus will pardon sin, but He will never dwell in the same heart with sin. Though you may have been as base as base could be, it can all be forgiven you nowbut if you continue in it there is no mercy for you. He that confesses his sin and forsakes it shall find mercybut not the man who with hypocritical lip bewails it, and then with vicious heart plunges into it again. If you seek Me, let these go. What? Cant you give them up? Silly companions, idle habits, foolish songs, pleasure-seeking, so-calledare these too dear to be renounced? Really, some of the things which give pleasure to men nowadays are so absurd, so empty, so devoid of true wit that I wonder the swine do not revolt against the moldy husks which they are fed with now-a-days! We cannot wonder that swine eat husksit is natural they should and we would not deny them their native food. If I were a swine, I think I should like to have husks that have some sort of substance in them, but the worlds pleasure grows more and more vapid and worthlessthe pleasure of idiots rather than of men.   
Cant you give these poor things up? Are they such dear attractions, such precious things, that you let Heaven go, and Christ go, sooner than let them go? No, I hope it will be a voice of power to you, and that you will say, My Savior let them all go! What are they to me? I shall find ten thousand times more pleasure, and more profit, too, in following Christ than in following the best of them. So I let them go forever, and may they never entice me again. Have you any self-righteousness remaining? Are you in your own conceit better than other people? Do you secretly trust in your works? Now if you want Christ, you must let all that go! Christ will tread the winepress alone, and of the people, there must be none with Him. And if you seek to be saved by Christ it must not be by the works of the Law, but by Grace alone. Would to God that there might be a clean sweep made in some of your hearts, and that you would come to Jesus all empty-handed as you are, and say, Yes, Master, Your precious blood, Your triumphant Resurrection, Your effectual pleathese are our hope and these our joy. We would serve You in life, and bless You in death. Yours we are, Son of God, and all that we have! Take us and keep us, and Yours be the praise. Amen.

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CHRIST BEFORE ANNAS   
NO. 2820

A SERMON   
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS DAY, MARCH 1, 1903.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON THURSDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 26, 1882.

**Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus and bound Him and led Him away to Annas first: for he was father-in-law to Caiaphas, who was the high priest that same year...The high priest then asked Jesus of His disciples and of His doctrine. Jesus answered him, I spoke openly to the world; I taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, where the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing. Why**

**do you ask Me? Ask them who heard Me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said. And when He had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answer You the high priest so? Jesus answered him, lf I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why do you strike Me? John 18:12, 13, 19-23.**

NOTE the words in verse 13and led him away to Annas first. This man, Annas, has not become so infamous as Pontius Pilate because his name did not happen to be mentioned in the Creed, but, in some respects, he was even more guilty than the Roman governor. He was one of those who handed over our Lord to Pilate and he is included in the judgment, he that delivered Me unto you has the greater sin. It must not be forgotten that he was first in trying the Saviorlet him have the full benefit of itThey led him away to Annas first.

Who was this man to whose palace the Lord Jesus was first conducted? He was a man who had been high priest actually for a time and had, for some 50 years, been regarded as high priest by the Jews, while members of his family, one after another, had in turns nominally held the office. The high-priesthood had been degraded from its permanence to become little more than an annual office and hence the Evangelist significantly says of Caiaphas that, he was the high priest that same year. But Annas would seem to have been secretly regarded by the Jews as the real high priest and respect to him in that capacity was the more easily offered because, according to Josephus, five of his sons and his son-inlaw, Caiaphas, had succeeded him in the sacred office. To him, then, it was due that the victim of the priests should be first taken. He shall have this mark of distinctionthey led him away to Annas first. The Sacrifice of God, the Lamb of His Passover, the Scapegoat of the Lords Atonement shall be brought before the priest before He is slain.

The house of Annas was united to that of Caiaphas and it was proposed to detain the prisoner there till the Sanhedrin could be hastily convened for His trial. If He should be brought into the palace of Annas, the old man would be gratified by a sight of Jesus and by conducting a preliminary examination, acting as deputy for his son-in-law. Without leaving his own house, he could thus indulge his malice and have a finger in the business. Priestly hate is always deep and unrelenting. Today none are such enemies of Christs holy Gospel as those who delight in priestcraftand it is not without prophetic meaning that our Lord must be led as a prisoner, first to a priests housethey led him away to Annas first. Not in the soldiers barracks, nor in the governors hall, but in the high priests palace must Jesus meet with His first captivity! There it is that Christ in bonds seems not altogether out of place

*See how the patient Jesus stands,   
Insulted in His lowest case!   
Sinners have bound the Almighty hands, And spit in their Creators face.*

Annas bore a very promising name, for it signifies clement or merciful, yet he was the man to begin the work of ensnaring the Lord Jesus in His speech, if He could be ensnared. He examined Him first in a semi-private manner, that, by cunning questions, he might extract from Him some ground of accusation. Under pretence of mercy, he turned inquisitor and put his Victim to the question. This priest, whose name was clemency, showed the usual tender mercies of the wicked, which are proverbially cruel. When Jesus is to be ill-treated by His servants, there is usually a pretence of pity and compassion. Persecutors are grieved to feel forced to be harshtheir tender spirits are wounded by being compelled to say a word against the Lords people! Gladly would they love them if they would not be so obstinate! With sweet language they inflict bitter woundstheir words are softer than butterbut inwardly they are drawn swords.

If I read aright the character of this man, Annas, he was one of the Saviors bitterest enemies. He was a Sadducee. Is not this the liberal side? Do we not reckon Pharisees to be the straitest sect of the Jews? Why he should have been so bitter against the Savior is pretty clear, since, if Pharisees, in their multiplication of ceremonies and selfrighteousness, hate the Christ, so also do the Sadducees in their unbelief and rejection of the great Truths of Revelation. Here, Ritualism and Rationalism go hand in hand and the free-thinker, with all his profession of liberality, usually displays none of it toward the followers of the Truth of God. The Broad Church is usually narrow enough when the Doctrine of the Cross is under discussion! Whether this Sadducee had an interest in the sales that were effected in the temple and whether, as some suppose, he was greatly irritated and touched in a very tender point, namely, in his pocket, when Jesus overthrew the tables of the money-changers and the seats of them that sold doves, I cannot tell. But, certainly, for some reason or other, Annas was among the first of our Lords persecutors, not only in order of time, but also in point of malice. The wealthy latitudinarian has a fierce enmity to the Gospel of Christ Jesus and will be found second to none in hunting down the adherents of Christ.

Did the military tribune and his cohort stop at the house of Annas because he had been at the bottom of the business and Pilate had ordered them, for the time, to do the will of the high priest and his father-in-law? Was this long-headed old gentleman the counselor of the conspirators? Did the force of character which kept him to the front for half a century, make him a leader at this juncture? Is it possible that they called at the house of Annas to hand over their Victim that Judas might receive the blood money? At all events we hear no more of the traitor as being in the company of those who had seized upon his Lord.

At any rate, the Lord is led to Annas, first, and we feel sure that there was a motive for that act. Annas, in some sense, had a priority in the peerage of enmity to Jesushe was malignant, cruel and unscrupulous enough to be premier in the ministry of persecutors. In all matters, there are first, as well as last, and this man leads the van among the unjust judges of our Lord. He was a favorite of the first and most detestable of the Herods and a friend of Pilate, the governor, and so, a fit ringleader in procuring the judicial murder of the Innocent. All hope of justice was gone when the Holy One and the Just was delivered into those cruel and unrighteous hands! He was as determined as he was cold-bloodedand a lamb might as well look for favor from a wolf as Jesus expect candor from the old deputy high priest. For many a long years he had held his own by flattering Herod, the Roman and the Jewand he set about the work of mastering the Nazarene with cool determination and deep subtlety, hoping to pave the way for the men of the Sanhedrin who were even then being mustered to do the deed of blood on which their hearts were set.

In the house of this man, then, who is very properly called the high priest, having quite as good a right to the title as Caiaphas had, we see these two things. First, we see our Lord under examination. And, secondly, we see our Lord wrongfully struck.

I. First, let us, tenderly, lovingly, adoringly, look at OUR DIVINE MASTER UNDER EXAMINATION.

My first remark is that this examination was informal and extrajudicial. Jesus was not yet accused of anything, so far. No judge had taken his place upon the judgment seat, neither were any witnesses called to give evidence against the Prisoner. It was a sort of private examination, held with the view of extorting something from the Captive which might afterwards be used against Him. You know how strongly and how properly our law forbids anything of the kind and, though it may not have been contrary to Jewish law, it was certainly contrary to the eternal laws of right and wrong! A prisoner should not thus be questioned with the object of entangling him in his speech and making him incriminate himself. If there is no charge formulated against him, let him go his way. If the entries on the charge sheet are not completed, let him be remanded, but let him not be set before one of his most cruel foes to be questioned to his own detriment!

This is what was done in our Saviors case when He was brought before Annas. And I think that I know many who treat Him, at this time, quite as badly. They ask questions about Him and make enquiries concerning Him, but they do not do it honestly and sincerely, or according to the rules of justice. You know how captious unbelievers often are, how they pick up any misquoted text, or half a text torn from its context, and say that they are enquiring about Christ, when they are not doing it either judicially or as they would wish to be questioned were they themselves under examination! I fear that the bulk of those who quibble at the faith of Christ, do it not as honest men, nor as they would wish to have their own characters investigated. The last book which some of them think of reading is the New Testamentand the last thing that they try to understand is Christs true Character. And one of the last things that they will ever listen to is a full and fair statement of what His Gospel really is. Still, to this day, the representatives of Annas are here and there, and almost everywhere, questioning the followers of Christ with the design of finding out something to jeer at, something which may be hawked about as a discrepancy, or held up as obsolete and inconsistent with the spirit of this wonderful century of which I hear so often that I am utterly sick of itand long for the time when the 19

th Century shall go down to its ignoble grave!

Next, this questioning of Christ was one-sided. The high priest then asked Jesus of His disciples and of His doctrine. Why did he not ask Him about Himselfwho and what He wasand enquire especially concerning His miracles and His whole course of life? Why did not Annas enquire, Did You raise the dead? Did You open blind eyes? Did You heal the lepers? Did You go about doing good? Oh, no, there were no questions about any such thingsthey were all passed over as of no importance!

The questions began with the weakest point of all, or that which men have often regarded as the weakesthe asked Jesus of His disciples. Can a leader help the follies and weaknesses of his followers? I suppose Annas put his question thus, Where are Your disciples? Ah, there was Peter down there in the hall, but Christ could not call him up to witness for Him. John was probably somewhere in the background, but the rest had forsaken their Lord and fled. Annas, no doubt asked, Who are these disciples of Yours? Where did You pick them up? I dare say he knew that they were men of Galilee, mostly plain fishermen, and he meant to cast a slur upon Christ on that account. If he had known more about those disciples, he might have put a great many questions which would have reflected but little honor upon the religion of Jesus.

This is just as men do nowthey ask concerning Christs disciples. I do not deny that it is quite fair to enquire what is the influence of Christianity upon the men who believe it, but, oftentimes, that one point is thrust so prominently into the front that the wonders which Christ, Himself, worked, are thrown into the backgroundand the investigation thus becomes one-sided. We are quite willing that Christ, Himself, and His workall that has been, all that is to be, all His designs and purposes should be examined. But, for the most part, men search for that which they think to be the weakest point of assault and they say, Look at Soand-So, one of Christs disciples. And look at So-and-So, one of His ministers! See what divisions there are in the churches, and so forth. Yes, but surely, if Christ is examined at all, He deserves to have a full and fair examinationit should not be upon only one point. Blessed be His name, it matters not upon what point He is examined! He always has His answer ready, and a glorious one it is! If men were really willing to know the Truth of God, they would take an all-round view of Him and look at Him from this point and from thatand then judge Him.

Further, this examination was very disorderly, for the high priest asked Christ of His disciples and of His doctrine. Now, logically, the enquiry should have been, first, concerning His doctrine and then with respect to His disciplesfirst as to His teaching and then as to the people influenced by it. But men like Annas put their questions anywayupside down, the first last and the last firstso that they may secure some accusation against Christ. Now, if any man will sit down quietly and really study the life, Character and teaching of Jesus of Nazareth, we shall be delighted to hear what he has to say about it, but let him study it in due order. Let him not pick out this, and leave out that, and put everything out of gear, so as to make a monster of Him. Let Him be looked at after the same manner as one would look at any other religious teacher, or as we might examine the character of any man brought before a court of law. I ask those, if there are any such now present, who have spoken harshly of our blessed Lord and Master, to do themselves the justice and to do Christ the justice, to adopt another course and to examine Him as they would wish to be examined themselves, if their character and their designs were called in question.

Annas did not so, for his examination of Christ was concerning His disciples and His doctrine. With regard to His disciples, our Master said nothing. He had been saying much about them to His Father and, in His almighty love and wisdom, He could have said much, then and there, concerning His disciples if He had chosen to do so, but He did not and therein He proved His wisdom. All through the Scriptures we find comparatively little said concerning Gods people. The record is mostly of their faults and their failings. The reason for that is that this is not the day of their manifestation. That day comes on apace and, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father. Annas thought that Christs followers were a set of fanaticsignorant, unskilled, worthless peoplethe lower orders. The catacombs tell us, as we read the rude inscriptions there, how few of those godly folk, of whom the world was not worthy, were men of educationthe most of them were evidently plain, humble, common people. Our Lord Jesus Christ has no great reverence for earthly rank or grandeurHe loves the man, but cares little for the garb he wearsand of the poorest saints it is true that He is not ashamed to call them brethren.

It is a mercy for us, who are on Christs side, and who have been despised in consequence, that, in the Resurrection, there will also be a resurrection of reputations as well as of bodies. There will be a bestowal of honor that has been denied here and of credit that has been refused on earth. God has said it, so it must be true, Light is sown for the righteous, and their glad harvest time shall surely come! And then the glory will forever blot out the shame and derision which may have been poured upon the faithful for the sake of Jesus Christ their Lord and Master. As yet, we will not ask Him concerning His disciples, but that is the point that the adversary harps upon. Therefore, O you disciples of Jesus, watch and pray, and seek to be like your Master! Pray to be kept from the evil which is in the world and, as for the rest, if men despise you, count that as part of the bargain upon which you have entereda bargain which shall, in due season, fill you with eternal bliss!

Annas also asked Christ concerning His doctrinewhat it was that He taught those who listened to Him. I will not go into that matter, for I want to speak at some length upon the answer which Christ gave to Annas. He first protested that it was not fair for Him to be thus questioned in private as to what He had said in public. The proper thing was to ask those who had heard Him, for, He said, I spoke openly to the world. I always taught in the synagogue, and in the temple. I chose the most public places for My teaching. I had no hole-and-corner gatherings, no little conventicle in which I urged My followers to sedition. No, I spoke openly. The heavens heard Me. On the side of the hills, I proclaimed My message. By the seashore, I spoke to all who gathered around Me. Multitudes were often present at My servicesthey know what I said, and they could bear witness concerning it if they were asked to do so.

There was great openness about Christ. There was an utter absence of anything like the Jesuitical plan of saying one thing and meaning another, or using expressions that had double meaning in them. It is true that our Lord did not explain to the great mass of the people all that He said to them, for they were so stupid that they would not receive it. But, at the same time, there was nothing that His hearers really needed to know that He concealed from them. He carried His heart where all might read it and even in His common teaching to the multitude, there was, if they had but had eyes to see it, all that He taught to His disciples in the most private place. There was no wish, on His part, to keep back any Truth of God that ought to be made known to those who gathered to hear Him.

I have heard it said that there are certain Truths in Gods Word which it is better for us not to preach. It is admitted that they are true, but it is alleged that they are not edifying. I will not agree to any such plan! This is just going back to old Romes method. Whatever it has seemed good to Gods wisdom to reveal, it is wise for Gods servants to proclaim. Who are we that we are to judge between this Truth of God and that and to say that this we are to preach, and that we are to withhold? This system would make us to be, after all, the judges of what Christs Gospel is to be! It must not be so among us, Belovedthat would be assuming a responsibility which we are quite unable to bear. I believe that it is because the Doctrines of Grace have been too much kept from the pulpit, that the pews are getting so empty. Leave the Doctrines of Grace out of the preaching and you have left the marrow and fatness out of it! What is there to make the people rush to your houses of prayer and crowd them, if there is no preaching of the Election of Graceno declaration of Particular Redemption and Effectual Calling, no proclamation of the blessed Final Perseverance of the Saints? If you leave these glorious Truths out of your preaching, you have put on the table nothing but the horseradish and the parsleythe roast is conspicuous by its absence!

Some people say that these things are to be talked of among the saints, but must not be preached to sinners. Oh, say not so! Every Doctrine of Gods Word is good! Every Truth in the Bible is precious! The omission of any one part of it, willfully, and with design, may so impair the whole of our testimony that, instead of being like Hermon, wet with dew, our ministry will be like the accursed Gilboa, upon which no dew descended. Whatever the Lord has taught you by His Spirit, my Brother, tell to others! According as you have opportunity, reveal to them what God has revealed to you. Remember how Christ Himself charged His disciples, What I tell you in darkness, that speak in light; what you hear in the ear, that preach upon the housetops. And, today, the sublime and majestic Truths of God which cluster around the Sovereignty of God are as much to be proclaimed as the softer, most tender and apparently more winsome words which tell of infinite mercy to the chief of sinners!

All truths are to be preached in due proportionthere is a time for this, and a time for thatand none must be omitted. There is a particular stone which is to be the key of the arch, and another which is to go on this side, another lower down and yet another still lower downand the omitting of any one stone, because it does not happen to be of what we reckon to the orthodox shape for usefulness, may spoil the whole bridge and it may come down with a crash! Oh, that we may so build in our teaching that our building will last throughout eternity! At the end of our ministry, may we be able to say, I have kept back nothing; all that Christ taught me, I have taught to others and so I have made full proof of my ministry. Christ was able to appeal to those who had heard Him and who could tell what His testimony had been. May God give us Grace to imitate Him in this respect!

Our blessed Lord answered Annas by referring him to His public life and teaching. There was no need for any other defense. We cannot imagine anything more convincing. No eloquence of speech or forcibleness of argument could have completely put the wily adversary out of the field. The inquisitor, himself, was so ashamed and, for the moment, so confounded, that a zealous official struck Jesus with his open hand. The innocent, unabashed face of the persecuted Nazarene was thus slapped because His simple defense had silenced His cruel opponent! What a wonderful answer it was! How it commends His whole Character to us and makes Him seem to be even more truly majestic than ever!

I am sure there is not one of us who would dare to say of our lives, at least not so unreservedly, what Jesus could truly say of His. Our Lords life was emphatically lived among men. He was no recluse. From early morning to the last thing at night, He was associated with men and, therefore, all that He did was done before the eyes of men. That fierce light that beats about a throne always beat about Him. He was constantly being watchedevery word that He uttered was remembered. Again and again, His enemies endeavored to catch Him in His speech. He could scarcely be allowed a moments leisure when He might relax, like one at his own fireside. He was always before the Argus-eyes of the ungodly world who would see faults where there were none, and who, if there had been the least speck of blame, would have magnified it and published it to the ends of the earth!

Moreover, our Lord was by no means a silent Man. He spoke and spoke often. Witness the Books that we have by way of record of that quiet life of Hisand the things that He said and did were far more than those that are recorded, for John says, And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written, everyone, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Yet there was never any act or word of Christs in which friend or foe could find a single speck of sin at all. He could even challenge Satan, himself, to find a flaw in His lifeThe prince of this world comes, and has nothing on Me.

His speech, too, was not only very frequent, but it was also very plain. He spoke so simply that even little children could understand Him. I should think there was never one person in His audience who could truthfully say that he could not comprehend what the Preacher meant. And yet, though they could all tell what His meaning was, they could not honestly find fault with that meaning.

Another thing that is worthy of observation is that He spoke frequently under great provocation. Yet He never lost His temper, nor spoke unadvisedly with His lips. You and I know that if we ever lose our temper, we are apt to say all manner of unwise, foolish and wicked wordsbut our blessed Savior never sinned in that way, however great was the provocation to which He was subjected. He was also often misrepresented and our tendency is, when men speak falsely of us, to go beyond the bounds of truth or prudence in replying to them. Our Lord Jesus never did that. The pendulum of the great clock of His wonderful life never swung too far either one way or the other. You have not to correct any one saying of the Savior by what He said at some other timeall His utterances are the absolute Truth of God, whether taken separately, or taken together. Even the false witnesses who were bribed to bring accusations against Him, altogether failed to find anything that could be laid to His charge!

It must not be forgotten, also, that our blessed Master frequently spoke in the midst of turmoil. He did not always have such a quiet, orderly assembly as we have when we gather for public worshipHe had to speak, often, amidst the clamor of the angry mob and the opposition and even the maledictions of those who hated Him. Yet, even under these trying circumstances, He spoke so that He could fearlessly challenge them all to find fault with anything that He had said in their hearing. Our Lord had spoken to all sorts of charactersbad, good and indifferentand there was especially one who betrayed Him, who had heard many of His most secret speeches. Judas had been with Him in His retirement and had listened to His words when only the favored few had been present, yet there was no single sentence or syllable that even he could plead in extenuation of his great crime in betraying his Lord.

II. I have spoken at such length upon this first part of my subject that I have very little time left for the second portion, namely, OUR LORD JESUS WRONGFULLY STRUCKWhen He had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by, struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answer You the high priest so?

His answer was a very simple one and a very proper one in all respects, yet, at the same time, it must have been a very stinging one if Annas was the kind of man that I think he was, for our Savior seemed to say, (you may read it between the lines), I am not plotting in secret against another mans life. I have not talked with another man with the object of entangling him in his speech. I have not been a conspirator, but I have spoken publicly in the synagogues and taught in the temple, in the very center of the place of concoursebut in secret I have said nothing. This must have been a very sharp rebuke to Annas, if any conscience was left in the wretched man! So one of the lackeys that stood around the hierarch struck Christ and said, Answer You the high priest so?

Now, in the first instance, Christ met with the opposition of a so-called enquiry. But here He had the vulgar opposition of persecution. Alas, there are still many who never enquire about Christ at all, but they decide against Him and then they begin to persecute wife, child, friend, neighbor, or whoever it may be that is on Christs side! And, often, they strike him as this officer struck our Lord. This was a most cowardly act, for Christ was bound and helpless. Yet we have the same sort of conduct in our own day. It does seem to me a wretched thing that if some people choose to go through the streets singing hymns, they are pelted with stones and mud while their own hands are bound. They cannot turn round and fight their assailants, for their Christianity has tied their handsand the cruel mobs know it. If these men want to fight, why do they not find some fellows like themselves, walking through the streets, and attack them and then see what will come of it? They are afraid to do that, for, to this day, persecution is always against men whose hands are bound. If our religion taught us to answer sharply and to give cuff for cuff, and kick for kick, it would be all fairbut when we are commanded not to resist evil and our very faithfulness to Christ prevents our replying to the foul language that is used against us, it is brutally cruel that we should be thus persecuted. Read all history through and see whether some have not degraded themselves utterly beneath contempt by burning men who would not have touched a hair of their headsand putting to death poor men and women who could not have done them any injury and who never wished to do so. That is the story of Christ and His followers all the way throughfirst, to be questioned by people who do not want to know the Truth and, next, to be persecuted by people who really have not anything to say against them.

To the man who thus wrongfully struck Him, our Savior said, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why do you strike Me? We also may say to those who wantonly strike Christs followers. Why do you do it? Has Christianity done any harm to manhood in general, or to you in particular? What has been the force that has broken the power of tyrants? At the bottom, in many countries, it has been the Word of God that has made men free. In our own times, what ended the slave trade and set the Negro free? What is it that, today, is the most potent force against the drunkenness of our land? Surely, nothing but the Gospel of Jesus Christ! Have we, as Christians, any aim, in all the world, of which anyone can accuse us? Are we doing mischief to our fellow men? Do we teach drunkenness, or lust, or oppression? Do you hear from us anything about robbing you of your birthright, or injuring you in any way whatever? No, you know that it is not so! Our war is for peace. Every blow that we strike is against blows. If we have to denounce anything, we do most of all denounce denunciationand if we are bitter at all, most of all are we bitter against bitterness, envy, malice and all uncharitableness!

Oh, that we could always give to our persecutors such an answer as our blessed Master gave to the officer who struck Him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why do you strike me? There are times when we dare not say that, but we would rather say, If I have spoken evil, do not remember it, do not bring it to my recollection. If I have spoken evil, try to forget it, or, at least, if you remember it, repeat it not to another, for I am afraid that I may have said much that might stain my profession and grieve my God. I think that if we had our choice as to whether we would be slapped on the face, or have our own words brought up as witnesses against us, we would, each one, say, If I have spoken evil, do not bear witness of the evil, but much rather slap me than bear witness against me.

Yet it is not always so. There are times when, in conscious integrity, or concerning certain words or acts of ours, we can challenge any man to find fault with us. But, taking the whole range of our lives, in public and in private, most of us would be loath to ask for such a test as that. When our adversaries persecute us, we might say to them, Ah, if you really knew all that we have been, you would not so much persecute us for our goodness, but punish us for our badness. When I have been slandered, I have often said to myself, Ah, they have spoken a lie against me, but if they had known me better, they might have said quite as bad a thing as that and yet have only spoken what was true. There is not one man living, who is in his right mind, who would like to have all his thoughts written down, or all his words and acts recorded. We have often wished that half our words could be blotted out with our tearsand then the other half would have to be washed with that precious blood of Jesus before we could, ourselves, endure it.

Now, I think that all this of which I have been speaking to you, ought very much to endear the Master to us and it will do so if we remember and believe that God has made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. Here is a Lamb that is fit for sacrifice. The high priest and all his officers may examine it as much as they pleasethey will find that it is perfect. There is not a blemish in it. There is no redundancy and there is no omission. There is neither speck nor spot of sin in Christwe cannot find any fault in Him. Whether we look at Him within or without, in His youth, or in His childhood, or in His Manhoodin His life or in His deathin His speech or in His silence, in His feelings, or in His thoughts, or in His actsHe is good, and only goodand blessed be His holy name forever and ever! Amen.

HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK289, 274, 268.

[In closing his discourse, Mr. Spurgeon intimated that he had intended also to speak, in that sermon, upon Annas sending Christ bound to Caiaphas, but that he had been obliged, through lack of time, and the importance of that topic, to leave it to be dealt with in another discourse. This will be the one to be published for reading on Lords-Day, March 15th, and will be entitled, Christ in Bonds.Sermon #2822, Volume 49Read/download the entire sermon, free of charge at http://www.spurgeongems.org.]

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A SERMON FOR A WINTERS EVENING   
NO. 3181

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, JANUARY 20, 1910. DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals, for it was cold: and they warmed themselves: and Peter stood with them, and warmed himself.   
John 18:18.**

WE note from this incident that it was a cold night in which our Redeemer agonized in the Garden of Gethsemane. [See Sermon #2767, Volume 48  
JESUS IN GETHSEMANERead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at

http://www.spurgeongems.org.] A cold night and yet He sweat! A cold night and yet there fell from Him, not the sweat of a man who earns the staff of life, but the sweat of One who was earning life, itself. His sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground. No natural heat of the sun, or of a sultry evening caused this! The heat within His soul distilled those sacred drops! His hearts throbs were so mighty that it seemed to empty itself and His life-floods rushed with such awful force that the veins, like overfilled rivers, burst their banks and covered His blessed Person with gory drops! On such a wintry night as this, while you wrap your garments about you, I would ask you to remember the olive garden and the lone Sufferer, all unsheltered, entering into the dread anguish by which He won our souls from death and Hell! The sharp frost may be a useful monitor to us if it makes us think of Him and remember that dark, that doleful night when all the powers of evil met and, even unto blood, He strove with them for our sakes!

Now we will take you away from the Garden to the high priests hall where the incident occurred which is regarded in the textand we will make as good a use as we can of it. I suppose it was a large dark hall in which the soldiers, the priests and the rabble were gathered together. There may have been a few lamps lighting up the far end where Christ was with His judge and His accusers. But the greater part of the hall would have no other light than the glare of the fire which had been kindleda charcoal fire, around which the band of men who had seized Christ and the servants of the high priest gathered to keep themselves warm. We are going to make five observations upon that and upon the fact that Peter was among those who warmed themselves at that fire.

I. The first observation is this. THIS IS A TYPICAL INCIDENT AS TO THE MOST OF MEN.   
Jesus Christ was being tried. Some were very busy about it, being full of malice and burning with rage. But a great many more were indifferentand in the Presence of a rejected and maltreated Savior were carelessly warming their hands. It was not a matter that interested them. They did not care whether He escaped or was condemnedit was very cold and so they warmed their hands. Now, in a land like this, where Jesus Christ is preached, it is a sad circumstance that there are individuals who oppose Him and His Gospel. There is the infidel who denies the Gospel altogether. There is the superstitious man who sets up another way of salvation. And there is the persecutor who rages at Christ and His people. Yet these active enemies are comparatively fewthe great bulk of those who hear the Gospel are not open opponentsbut like Gallio, care for none of these things. They know that there is a Christ and they have some idea of His salvation, but it does not interest them, or awaken any sympathy in their minds. What shall we eat and what shall we drink? these are the great questions of their catechism! But as to who this glorious Sufferer is and why He died, and what are the blessings which He bought with His precious bloodnone of these things move themand they forget, neglect, or despise the great salvation and the Savior, too! They are full of the business of warming their hands! The death of Jesus may be important to other people. It may concern ministers, clergymen and professors, but it is nothing at all to them. They have other matters to attend to and their own comfort is their main concern. Around that charcoal fire the servants of the high priest warmed their hands and so, in their temporal comforts, or in murmuring at the lack of them, the most of men spend their lives. To them it is nothing that Jesus should die! A rise in their wages, a fall in provisions, or a change in the money market is far more important to them!  
If you think of it, this is a very terrible thing. Christ came into the world to save men, yet men do not think it worth their while to turn their gaze upon Him! He takes their nature, but His Incarnation does not interest them. He dies that men may not perishand men care not one whit for His great love! One goes away to his farm and another to his merchandise. One has bought a yoke of oxen and goes to test them. Another has married a wife and, therefore, he cannot come. They are eager for the bread which perishes, but they make light of the meat which endures the everlasting life! They think much of this world, but nothing of the world to come. Jesus is over yonder at His trial and they are warming their hands!   
I pray you think this over a few minutes, any of you who have been indifferent to the great realities of redemption, and see what it is and who it is that you thus treat with discourtesy. It is the Son of God, the Redeemer of men, whom you neglect! Can you imitate those who rattled the dice-box at the foot of the Cross, in utter hardness of heart, though Christs blood was falling upon them as they cast lots for His clothes? Can you trifle in the Presence of a dying Savior? Can you, did I say? Alas, some have done so for thirty, forty, fifty and even 60 years! And unless the almighty Grace of God prevents, they will continue to trifle, stillto sport, play and seek their own welfare in the Presence of the bleeding Son of God, within earshot of His dying groans!   
Look, He dies and they place His body in the sepulcher! But on the third day, according to His promise, He rises again from the dead! That risen Savior is surrounded by the glory of unspeakably precious promises, for He has risen for the justification of His people and as the first fruits of them that sleptthe great pledge that all those who sleep in Him shall rise as He has risen! An august mysterya mystery which brought angels out of Heaven, the one to sit at the head and the other at the feet, where His body had lain! And yet men eat, drink, sleep and wake as if no risen Jesus had been here! In the Presence of the risen Christ many only warm their hands, for it is cold. The animal has mastered the mental. The body, which is the baser part of man, and cleaves to the dust, has subdued the soul, and so the man allows himself to trifle in the Presence of Jesus risen from the dead!   
Nor is this all, for He that rose from the dead ascended after 40 days! A cloud received Him out of the sight of His disciples and He rose into Glory and now He sits at the right hand of the Father, reigning there, head over all principalities and powersKing of kings and Lord of lords! Men do not generally trifle in the presence of a king. If they have petitions to present, they put on an air of reverence. In the Presence of the Royal Intercessor who pleads for us day and night, one would think there would be some interest excited! But no, the multitude warm their hands and think nothing of Him. In His Presence, they forget His redeeming love, neglect His great salvation and remain without God and without Christ. This is terrible! As I see the worldling merely caring for his personal comfort while Christ is in Glory, I marvel, first, at the insolence of the sinner and, secondly, at the Infinite Patience of the Savior!

The Lord Jesus is to come a second time to judge the earth in righteousness. When He shall appear, no man knows, but come He willand everyone of us must stand before Him. If we are alive and remain, we shall join in that great throng. And if we fall asleep before His coming, we shall rise from the dead at the sound of the trumpet which proclaims His Adventand shall all be judged of the Most High. The hour of His appearing is not revealed in order that we may always stand on tiptoe, expecting it to be today, or tomorrow, for He has said, Behold, I come quickly. Oh, how can you still be money-grubbing, pleasure-seeking, enjoying yourselves, living only for this world, living to got a competence, living to be what is called, respectable, and to feed yourselves like the beasts of the field? Have you no thoughts for the Judge and the day of His coming? Shall our immortal spirits spend all their energies on these trifling temporary things in prospect of that great tremendous Day when Christ with clouds shall come? Surely the solemnities of judgment should constrain us to think of something nobler than earth and time!   
There was no harm in their warming their hands, neither is there any harm in our attending to the things of this life. Indeed, they ought to be seen to, and seen to with carebut there is something higher, something nobler and loftier for us to do than to serve ourselves! And as it was horrible that we should be so callous in the presence of the suffering Jews, so is the widespread indifference of sinners a terrible thing! I would to God that the unthinking portion of those who hear the Gospel might be startled out of their groveling care for the things of this life and each one of them be led to ask, What have I to do with this Jesus of Nazareth? Is His blood sprinkled upon me? Has He cleansed me from my sin? May I hope for salvation through Him? Oh, consider these things and give an answer to your consciences! And God do so with you as you shall think of Christ, your Lord.   
II. Secondly, we remark that FOR A DISCIPLE TO MAKE HIS OWN COMFORT THE CHIEF THING IN THE PRESENCE OF HIS SUFFERING MASTER IS MOST INCONSISTENT.   
One does not wonder at the high priests servants making a fire of coals, for it was coldand one is not surprised at their standing to warm their hands, for they knew but little, comparatively, of Christ. They had never tasted of His love, they had never seen His miracles, they had not been asked to watch with Him in the Garden of Gethsemane, they had never heard Him say, Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona, for flesh and blood has not revealed it unto you. The marvel is that Peter should stand there among them warming his hands! Why did he do so? Not because he was indifferent to his Master. Let us do him justiceit is plain that he was in a dreadful state of mind that night. He was so attached to his Master that he followed Him up to the door of the hall and stopped there till John came out and admitted him. He went up to the fire because he thought he must act as others did, so as to escape suspicion. And as they warmed their hands, he did the same, so as to appear as one of them. It so happened, however, that the light of the fire shone upon his face and lit up his countenance, so that one said, You are one of His disciples. Then, to get away from observation, we find Peter passing into another part of the hall, where, I suppose, it was darker. The people were talking and Peter must talk, for it was his weakness to do so, and, moreover, he might have been suspected again had he been silent. Then another remarked, You also are of Galilee, for your speech betrays you. He was discovered, again, and so made for the door, but was known there, also. He was all in a tremble. He did love his Master, weak as his faith was and, therefore, he could not leave Himand yet he was afraid to confess Him. He was worried and troubled, tossed to and fro between a desire to rush forward and do some rash thing for his Lordand a fear for his own life! He went to the fire because nobody would think that a follower of Jesus could warm his hands while his Master was being despitefully entreated.   
You see the gist of my observation, that for a disciple of Christ to make his own ease and comfort the main thing is most palpably inconsistent with the Christian character! Ah, dear Brothers and Sisters, our Lord had not where to lay His head. Though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poorcan it be consistent for the Christian to make the getting of money the main business of life? Is such a disciple like his Master? The Master gives up everythingshall the disciple labor to aggrandize himself?  
Some warm their hands, not at the fire of wealth so much as at the fire of honor. They want approbation, respect, esteemand they will do anything to gain it. Conscience is violated and principle is forgotten to gain the approbation of their fellow men. Whatever happens, they must be respected and admired. Is this as it should be? Are they really disciples of the Nazarene? Is that their Master, despised and rejected, spit upon and jeered? Is He their Lord who made Himself of no reputation? If so, how can they court the smiles of men and sacrifice the Truth of God to popularity? What can be more inconsistent than the disciple warming his hands and the Master enduring the contradiction of sinners against Himself? Dear Brothers and Sisters, every time our cheek crimsons with shame because of the taunts of the wicked and we lower our colors because of the jeers of the godless, we are guilty at heart of the meanness of seeking to fare better than our Lord! Every time we check a testimony because it would involve us in censure, every time we stay from a labor because we covet ease, every time we are impatient at the suffering which the Cross involves, every time we make provision for the flesh, to obey the lusts thereof, every time we seek ease where He toiled, honor where He was put to shame and luxury where He endured an ignominious deathwe are like Peter among the ribald throngwarming our hands at the fire while our Lord is buffeted and shamefully entreated! May the Holy Spirit keep us from this!   
III. We now come to our third observation. IT IS MUCH BETTER TO BE COLD THAN TO WARM OURSELVES WHERE WE ARE EXPOSED TO TEMPTATION.   
Peter, if he had known it, was better off outside the door than in the hall. I suppose he had forgotten the Masters warnings, for if he had thought of them, he would have said to himself, Peter, you had better go home. Did not Jesus, in fact, tell you to go home when He said to those who came to seize Him, If you seek Me, let these go their way? It would seem to have been the path of humble obedience to have gone his way and not to have pressed into the hall. Though no doubt the motives which led both Peter and John into the high priests house were commendable, Peters position among the soldiers and hangers-on around the fire was extremely full of peril and offered no corresponding advantages. Did he not know that evil communications corrupt good manners? Did he not know that the men who had taken his Lord prisoner were not fit associates for him? Should he not have felt that though he might have his hands warmed, he would be likely to get his heart blackened by mixing with such company?   
Brothers and Sisters, I like to warm my hands, but if I cannot warm them without burning them, I would rather keep them cold! Many things are in a measure desirable, but if you cannot obtain them without exposing yourself to the smut of sin, you had better leave them alone. I have known professors far too anxious to mix with what is called, good society. Now, for the most part, good society, as things are, nowadays, is very bad society for a Christian. The best society in the world for me, I know, is to associate with my Brothers and Sisters in Christ. Title, rank and wealth are a poor compensation for the lack of true religion! Yet some professors covet the honors of the ungodly world and they say, It is not so much for ourselveswe are advanced in yearsbut we want to bring the girls out, and our young men, you know, our sons must have some society. Yes, and for the sake of this dangerous luxury our churches are deprived of successors to godly fathers! Instead of seeing the younger members of Christian households drafted into our ranks, we have continually to begin again with new converts from the outer world. Full often professors who God prospers in this world so train their children that they forsake the spiritual worship of God and turn their backs on principles for which their forefathers dared to bleed and die! I charge you, Brothers and Sisters, remember that if you cannot be admitted into society without concealing your principles, you are far better off without society! Has not our Lord called us to go outside the camp? Are we not warned against being conformed to this world? Deny yourselves the warm place around societys charcoal fire, for its sulfurous vapor will do you more harm than the cold!   
Some whom I have known have ventured very far upon very dangerous ground to win the affection of a chosen object. There is no wiser precept in Holy Scripture than that which commands Christians to marry only in the Lord. It never can conduce to take comfort of any Christian man or woman to be unequally yoked together with an unbelieveryou had far better remain in the cold of your bachelor or spinster life than warm your hands at the fire of unhallowed marriage!   
Not a few are tempted by the cleverness of certain literature to defile their minds with skeptical and even blasphemous writings. Such-andsuch a Quarterly or, Fortnightly, is so very clever that you are regarded as a Philistine and an ignoramus if you do not read it! Yet if you do read it, you are never the better, but very much the worse for your painswhy, then, yield to its more than doubtful influence? Do you pray the better for such reading? Have you more faith in God after perusing such works? No, but doubts which would not otherwise have occurred to you are sown in your mind, difficulties which only exist in ungodly brains are conjured upand the time which ought to have been spent in devotion and in growing in Grace, and in bringing others to Jesusyou waste in battling for the very life of your faith which you have needlessly exposed to assault! I do not believe it to be essential to roll in a ditch every day for the sake of proving the efficacy of the clothes brush! Neither is it worthwhile to seek out infidel doubts in order to try our logical powers upon them! Some tell us that we must keep abreast of the times, but if the times run the wrong way, I see no reason why we should run with them! Rather let us leave the times and dwell in the eternities. If I can be cheered and refreshed by good literature, and be the better and wiser for it, I am thankful. But if I must, in warming my hands, defile them with unbelief, I will sooner let them become blue with cold!

Perhaps, dear Friends, our liability to be injured by that which renders us comfortable is one reason why God does not subject some of His best people to the trials of prosperity. Have you not sometimes wished that you were rich? I daresay you have. But perhaps you never will be. You did prosper, once, but it came to an end. Once or twice the prize of wealth seemed within your reachothers seized itand you are still working hard and earning a bare crust. We do not know what you might have been if you had been allowed to succeed. In warming your hands you might have burned them. Many Christians have been impoverished by their wealth and brought to inward wretchedness by outward prosperity. You have flourished best in the soil in which the Lord has kept you anywhere else you might have run to seed. Some years since, when the first larch tree was introduced into England, the person who had brought home the specimen put it into his hothouse to grow. It did not flourish, and no wonder, for it delights in a colder atmosphere! The gardener therefore pulled up the spindly thing by the roots and threw it upon the dunghill! And there, to everybodys surprise, it grew wonderfully! It was created to flourish under trying circumstancesand perhaps you are of the same order. Learn the lesson and be content to be where you are!   
IV. A fourth observation is thisIF A CHRISTIAN ACTS INCONSISTENTLY, HE IS PRETTY SURE TO BE FOUND OUT.  
Here was Peter warming his hands and he thought that nobody would know himbut his face, as we said before, was illuminated by the light of the fire and one said, Surely you are one of His disciples. The fire did not merely warm, but it threw light on him and showed him up. And so, when it comes to pass that a Christian gets into association with the ungodly and figures with them, his sin will find him out. I have noticed, in a very wide sphere of observation, that bad men may do wrong for years and not be discoveredand that hypocrites may contrive to carry on their hypocrisy half a lifetime without being unmasked. But a true man, a real child of God, if he shall only do a tenth as much wrong as others, will be certain to be detected! Peter tried to look uncommonly comfortable and calm while at the fire, but he could not do it. He revealed himself by the twitches of his face and the very look of him! And when he spoke, as we have already said, the tones of his voice betrayed him. A Philistine helmet will not sit well upon an Israelite! He wears it awkwardly and is known, though in disguise. Ah, Christian, you had better keep to your own companyit is of no use for you to try to travel incognito through this world, for it will detect you! Never go where you will be ashamed to be seen, for you will be seen. A city set on a hill cannot be hid! A lighted candle must be seen. A speckled bird will be noticed where no note is taken of others. Worldlings have lynx eyes with which to spy out erring professorsand they are sure to publish your faults for they are sweet morsels to them! Report it! Report it! they say. In vain will you try to pass yourself off as a stranger to Christyour speech will betray you and the finger of scorn will be justly pointed at you for your inconsistency! Therefore, keep to your own company and walk not in the way of the wicked.   
V. The fifth point is thisand you all know it to be trueIT IS A GREAT DEAL EASIER TO WARM YOUR HANDS THAN YOUR HEARTS.   
A few coals in a fire suffice to warm Peters hands, but even the Infinite Love of Jesus did not, just then, warm his heart. O Sirs, what was the scene at the end of the hall? Was not that enough to set all hearts aglow? It was a bush that burned with fire and was not consumed! It was the Son of God struck on the mouth and vilely slanderedand yet bearing it all for love of us! O Sirs, there was a furnace at the other end of the halla furnace of Divine Love! If Peter had but looked at his Masters face, marred with agony, and seen upon it the mark of His terrible nights sweat, surely, had his heart been right, it would have burned within him! One marvels that with such a sight before himif Peter had been Peter if he had only been true to that true heart of his, he would have braved the malice of the throng, placed himself side by side with his Lord and said, Do to me whatever you do to Him. If you smite Him, smite me. Take me and let me suffer with Him. If he might not have done that, one would not have wondered if Peter had sat there and wept till he broke his heart to see his Master treated so! But alas, the sight of his Lord, accused and betrayed, did not warm Peters heart.   
My Brothers and Sisters, we sometimes wish that we had actually seen our Lord, but seeing Christ after the flesh was of small service to Peter. It was when the Holy Spirit used the glance of Jesus as a special means of Grace that Peters heart was thawed and his eyes dropped with tears of repentance! O Lord and Master, though a bodily sight of You would not warm us if You should walk up these aisles and should show Your pierced hands in this pulpit. Yet, if Your blessed Spirit will come upon us tonight, we shall see You by faith and the sight will make our hearts burn within us, though it is winter! Come, sacred Spirit, shed abroad the love of Jesus in our souls and so shall our love be kindled, and burn vehemently! Grant it, therefore, we pray You, for Your loves sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 18:1-27.**

Verse 1. When Jesus had spoken these words, He went out with His disciples over the Brook Kidron, where was a garden, into which He entered, and His disciples. From our Lords example, we should learn, when trouble is near, to meet it with composure. Our Savior did not sit still, but, as the hour approached for His betrayal and death, He went out with His disciples. The passing over the black Brook Kidron, through which flowed the filth of the Temple, was very significant. King David had crossed that brook long before when he had been driven from his home by Absaloms rebellionand now the Greater David went over the Brook Kidron, where was a garden. He especially wanted solitude, just then, for one of the best preparations for suffering is to get alone with God. Learn this lesson, also, from your Lords example and, as He put Gethsemane before Calvary, if you can put an hour of prayerful contemplation before your expected suffering, it will be a great help to you.

2. And Judas, also, who betrayed Him, knew the place: for Jesus ofttimes resorted there with His disciples. That dark and gloomy olive garden was no pleasure garden that night! It had often been a place of retirement and of prayer for the Master. What happy memories His disciples must have had of being with Him there for a season of prayer! It was a very choice privilege for them to be with Him when He preached, but it must have been, if possible, a still greater privilege to be with Him when He prayed. It is not recorded that His disciples ever said to Him, Lord, teach us how to preach, but at least one of them was so struck with His prayers that he said, Lord, teach us to pray. We may well ask Him to do that for us now. Perhaps some of you would like to be taught how you can become greatit is much more important for you to be taught to become prayerful!

3. Then Judas, having received a detachment of men and of officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, came there with lanterns, torches and weapons. It does not matter much about the band of men and officers with lanterns and torches and weapons, but the dreadful part of the narrative is that they were led by one who had been a disciple of Christ, one who had been numbered with the Apostles! Is Christ still betrayed by His professed friends? Yes, it is so, but may you and I never be guilty of that terrible crime! Yet why should we not unless the Grace of God should prevent it? We are of the same flesh and blood as Judasand although we might not be tempted by a sum of money, we may be tempted by a sinful pleasure or by a sinful shame. Lest we should be led astray, let us pray that we may not enter into temptation and especially ask that we may be preserved from betraying our Lord as Judas did.

4. Jesus, therefore, knowing all things that should come upon Him, went forth and said to them, Whom are you seeking? Because of His Divinity, He knew all that would come upon Him, but what a wondrous Manhood His was that although He knew all that would befall Him, He went forth calm and composed, resigned to His Fathers will and said to those who had come to seize Him, Whom are you seeking? I think He is saying to some of us, whom are you seeking? We have not come here to slay Him. We have not come here to fight against Him and lead Him away to crucify Him. Yet I hope that we can truly say that we have come seeking Jesus. If this is really your hearts desire, it shall surely be fulfilled to you!

5. They answered Him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus said unto them, I am He. Or, rather, I Am, pronouncing the words with a Divine dignity which had a startling effect upon them.

5, 6. And Judas, also, who betrayed Him, stood with them. As soon, then, as He had said to them, I am He, they went backward and fell to the ground. It seems as if our Lord intended to let them realize something of His Divine Power and Glory, for the utterance of that august expression, I Am, which is His Fathers name, staggered them and they fell to the ground. Do you not wonder that they did not rise up and go away and leave Him after they had fallen at His feet and asked His forgiveness? They did not act so, for the power of fear, when it is not accompanied by love, is very small. There was enough power in it to make them fall down to the ground, but there was not power enough in it to make them fall at Christs feet confessing their sin!

7, 8. Then He asked them again, Whom are you seeking? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered, I have told you that I am He: if, therefore, you seek Me, let these go their way. [See Sermons #2616, Volume 45

CHRISTS CARE OF HIS DISCIPLES and #2368, Volume 40THE LIVING CARE OF THE DYING CHRISTRead/download both sermons, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] It is very

cheering to us to think of our Lord meeting all the enemies of His people, gathering up all their weapons into His own heart, that His people might go free. You and I, if we had been in such a case, would have been hurried and worriedand our fears would have made us selfishwe would have forgotten our poor friends who were with us! But Jesus thought not of HimselfHe thought of His poor trembling disciples and, therefore, He said, If, therefore, you seek Me, let these go their way.

9. That the saying might be fulfilled which He spoke, Of them which You gave Me have I lost none. He had only said that just a little while before, but this verse shows us that the New Testament is as sure to be fulfilled as the Old Testament. It was a new saying, not then written, yet it had all the life and power of God in it! So it must live and must be fulfilled.

10. Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priests servant, and cut off his right ear. The servants name was Malchus. Here is every prospect of a fight! Simon Peter has begun it and the armed men will be eager to continue it. We always have our Simon Peters aboutmen of emotion, men of impulse, men of impetuosity. They are not a bad sort of Christians and I do not know what we would do without them. Our cold, frozen thinkers would not do much without our warmhearted Peters to help to thaw them! Still, Peter was only one of the 12 Apostles and though they call him the head of the church, he made a very poor head of the church just then! He drew a sword and began to use that carnal weapon by cutting off the right ear of Malchus! It was a great mercy that the Lord was there to heal the ear and to forbid the use of the sword in His defense.

11. Then Jesus said unto Peter, Put your sword into the sheath. Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me? Here is another helpful lesson for any of you who have a trial before you. Do not seek to set the trial asideuse no wrong means to escape from afflictiondrink your ordained cup! Though Peters sword is handy, put it up into its sheath and do not use it. Bear and forbear, on and on and on to the end of the chapter! Drink the cup that your Father gives you. However bitter it is, it is sweetened by the fact that He gives it to you! Shall not a true son of God drink the cup that his Father presents to him? There can be no harm in it and it must work you some real goodso put up your sword and lift the cup to your lipsand drink it to the dregs.

12. Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus and bound Him. When you are bound with sickness, or bound with weakness, or bound in any other way, do not complain. Your Master was bound and I think we ought to be willing to be anything that Christ was. What was good enough for Him is good enough for us. They took Jesus and bound Him.

13, 14. And led Him away to Annas first, for he was father-in-law to Caiaphas, who was the high priest that same year. Now Caiaphas was he who gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people. Christ could not die without the question of expediency turning up. I never knew any great sin in the world, nor any great heresy, nor any great combination of men to maintain it without the question of expediency coming under consideration. Expediency is the great Christ-killer! Many, nowadays, say to us, Do not preach against errorit is not expedient to do so. Do not break away from evil associationsit is not expedient. How many there are of even good men who do certain things, not because they are right, but because they are expedient! But, Believers in Jesus, in the name of your Lord I implore you to hate expediency, since it put Jesus to death! It was a wicked expediency that would murder Christ in order to save a nation! But it did not really do so, after all, for the guilt of slaying Christ brought upon the nation the growing crime of Deicide.

15. And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple: that disciple was known unto the high priest and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest. This other disciple was, no doubt, John, who thus veiled himself as he did on other occasions.

16. But Peter stood at the door outside. It would have been better for him if he had stayed therehe would probably have been more out of the way of temptation than he was inside the palace of the high priest.

16. Then went out that other disciple, who was known to the high priest and spoke unto her whom kept the door, and brought in Peter. John doubtless acted thus out of kindness to Peter, but he was the means of bringing his friend into a place where he was not strong enough to keep his feet. You and I may act like that, perhaps, in perfect innocence and even with commendable kindnessyet we may be unintentionally doing our friends a great wrong! I notice that John seems to have been the first of the Apostles to associate with Peter after that terrible fall of his. And in his record of Peters denial of his Lord, he does not mention his cursing and swearing as Matthew and Mark do. He appears to have felt great tenderness towards Peterperhaps all the more so because he had been the innocent means of getting him into the place of temptation.

17. Then said the damsel who kept the door unto Peter, Are not you, also, one of this Mans disciples? He said, I am not. Ah, Peter! Ah, myself! If anyone is trusting in himself, he may soon utter a lie concerning his Lord as Peter did. Keep us, O God, by Your Grace, or else it will be so with us. It was nothing but a poor maidservant that cowed this brave Peterthe man whose sword was drawn just now in his Masters defense is not able, truthfully, to answer the maids question, Are not you, also, one of this Mans disciples? He said, I am not.

18. And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals, for it was cold: and they warmed themselves. And Peter stood with them and warmed himself. While his Lord and Master was being maltreated and abused over yonder at the end of the hall, Peter was warming himself at the servants fire. Ah, he was getting cold spiritually while warming himself physically! And it sometimes happens that when men are warming their bodies, they are at the same time cooling their hearts. I have known a man warm himself at a very big fire through coming into possession of a large amount of propertybut he has also grown very cold, spiritually, for these coals of fire do not warm the heart.

19-21. The high priest then asked Jesus of His disciples and of His

Doctrine. Jesus answered Him, I spoke openly to the world. I always taught in the synagogue, and in the Temple, where the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing. Why do you ask Me? Ask them which heard Me, what I have said unto you: behold, they know what I said. Our Lords teaching was never deceptive. He did not say one thing and mean another. He could truly appeal to His hearers concerning His teaching. It is a great thing for a preacher to be able to feel that his hearers know what he has said to them. We cannot always say that, for some of them forget and some of them do not understand what we say. Some of them do not give sufficient attention to know what it is that is said, but Christs preaching was so clear and plain that He could truly say, Ask them which heard Me, what I have said to them: behold, they know what I said.

22, 23. And when He had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Do you answer the high priest so? Jesus answered himNot as Paul did, God shall smite you, you whited wall. The Master is superior to the disciple at all points. Jesus said

23. If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why did you strike Me? Let us pray that whenever we are despitefully treated, we may keep our temper and be as composed as our Lord was. And if we must make an answer to our accusers, let it be as discreet and as justifiable as this answer of our Lords.

24, 25. Now Annas had Him sent bound to Caiaphas the high priest. And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. John thus resumes the narrative concerning Peter from the 17th verseSimon Peter stood and warmed himself.

25. They said, therefore, to him. Two or three or more of them speaking at a time said to him   
26-27. Are not you, also, one of His disciples? He denied it and said, I am not. One of the servants of the high priest, being the kinsman whose ear Peter cut off, said, Did not I see you in the garden with Him? Peter then denied it again. Ah, me, they who lie once will be all too apt to lie again! Those who deny Christ once will be apt to go to still greater lengths in their denial of Him. May they be stopped as Peter was!   
27. And immediately the cock crew. May the cock crow for some who have been asleep up till nowand warn them that the night is far spent and that it is time for them to awake out of sleepand wash their eyes with tears and repent of having denied their Lord!

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #2822 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

CHRIST IN BONDS   
NO. 2822

A SERMON   
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, MARCH 15, 1903.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON THURSDAY EVENING, JUNE 28, 1877.

**Now Annas had sent Him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest.**

**(The Revised Version says, Annas therefore sent Him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest).  
John 18:24.**

OUR only subject, on this occasion, is CHRIST IN BONDSthe Son of God as an Ambassador in bonds, a King in chainsthe God-Man sent, boundto take His trial in the court of the high priest, Caiaphas.

It seems to me that this binding of our Lord shows, first, something of fear on the part of His captors. Why did they bind Him? He would not attack them. He had no desire to escape out of their hands, yet, they probably thought that He might break loose from them, or in some way outwit them. Alas, that men should ever have been thus afraid of Him who came alone from Heaven, neither bearing arms nor wearing armorwho came to injure none, nor even to protect Himself against the harm that any might inflict upon Himat first, lying as a Babe in a manger and all His life exhibiting rather the weakness of His Manhood than its strength! Yet His adversaries were often afraid of Him. So it still isthere is a latent, secret conviction in the minds of men that the Christ is greater than He seems to be. Even when they attack Him with their infidel weapons, they never seem to be satisfied with their own arguments, so they are continually seeking fresh ones. To this very day the ungodly are afraid of Christ and, often, their raging against Him resembles the noise made by the boy who, when hurrying through the graveyard, whistles to keep his courage up!

They also bound Christ, no doubt, to increase the shame of His condition. Our Savior said to those who came to arrest Him in the garden, Have you come out as against a thief, with swords, and with staves to take Me? And now they bound Him fast as though He were a thief perhaps tied His hands behind His back with tight cords, to show that they regarded Him a felon and that they were not taking Him into a civil court where some cases of law might be pending, but they already condemned Him by the very act of binding Him! They treated Him as if He were already sentenced and not worthy to stand, a free Man, and plead for Himself before the Judgment Seat. Oh, what a shame that the Lard of Life and Glory should be boundthat He, whom angels delight to worshipthat He who is the very sun of their Heaven should yet be bound as though He were a malefactor, and be sent away to be tried for His life!

We may also look at this matter of the binding of the Savior as an increase of His pain. I suppose none of you have ever been bound as our Lord was at that time. If you had been, you would know the discomfort and pain which must attend such action. John tells us that in Gethsemane, the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound Him. He had scarcely risen from His kneesand the bloody sweat was like fresh ruby dew upon Himyet these men bound Him and led Him away to Annas first. I do not find any indication that His bonds were unloosed by Annas, or that He had even a moments relief or relaxation granted to Him. But, with the cruel ropes still binding Him fast, He was sent across the great hall into the other wing of the palace in which Caiaphas resided.

Annas sent Him bound unto Caiaphas. Then this, surely, must have been done in very wantonness of malice. I have already said that they seemed to have some sort of fear that their Captive would, after all, escape from them. Yet they might, readily enough, have banished that fear from their minds. There was no need to bind HIM! O cruel persecutors, look into His face! If you are resolved to lead Him away to His death, you may lead Him like a sheep goes to the slaughter. He will not even open His mouth to upbraid you! There was no need to put any bands upon One so gentle as He was. Out of very wantonness, I say, they must have done it, that they might express their hatred by every conceivable method, both in the little details and in the great end at which they were aiming all the whilenamely, to put Him to a most painful death. Ah, me, how shamefully was our blessed Master maltreated in this inhospitable world! Men had often been regicides and we need not wonder at that when we think what tyrants they were who were thus slainbut these men were turning to deicideputting to death the Son of God, Himself! And before they did it they heaped upon Him every mark of scorn and dishonor that was possible, that they might cause Him to die with opprobrium as well as with pain.

You who love your Savior will think with tender sympathy of how He was bound by these wicked men. My special objective is to try to find out what are the lessons which we may learn from the bonds of Christ.

I. The first lesson is this. From the binding of our dear Redeemer, I learn a lesson concerning sin. THE BONDS OF CHRIST TEACH US WHAT SIN WOULD DO TO GOD IF IT COULD.

The unregenerate heart, in its enmity against God, would treat Him exactly as the men of 1900 years ago treated the Son of God. What was done to Jesus is just what man would do, if he could, to the Lord God of Heaven and earth, Himself. What? you say, would men bind God? Ah, Sirs, they would do much more than that if they could, but they would certainly do that! They would annihilate God if they could, for, the fool has said in his heart, No Godthat is to say, No God for me! He would kill God if it were possible. There would be no gladder news to many men who are living today than for them to be informed, with absolute certainty, that there was no God at all! All their fears would be at once silenced by such tidings. As for us who love and trust Him, all our joys would be gone and our worst fears would be realized if God were gone. But, as for the ungodly, it would be the best news that was ever rung out from church steeples if they could be assured that God was dead! They would kill Him if they could, but, as they cannot kill Him, they seek to bind Him.

Observe how they try to do this by denying His power. There are many men who say that they believe in God, yet what sort of god is it in whom they believe? It is a god who is fettered by his own laws. Here is the world, they say, but let not anyone suppose that god has anything to do with the world. They seem to have a theory that somehow or other it got wound up, like a great clock, and it has been going on ever since! Their god has not even been to see itindeed, the probability is that he cannot see! Their god does not see and does not know anythinghe is not the living God. They pretend to pay Him the compliment of saying that there may be some great first causethey do not know even that, for certain, because they do not know anything. We live in an age in which the man who professes to be a learned man, calls himself an agnostica Greek word which, in the Latin, signifies, an ignoramus. That is, when you get to be a very clever man, then you become an ignoramus, knowing nothing at all! Such people go crowing, all over the world, that they do not know anything at all! They do not know whether there is any God at all, or if there is a God, they do not know that He has anything to do with the world. They say that it is going on just on its own. Their god may set worlds going if he pleases, but he has nothing do with them afterwards.

Ah, Beloved, the truth is that Gods Laws are simply the ways in which He acts. There is no force in the world apart from God. All the potency of attraction is simply because God lives and pour His energy into the matter that attracts. Every moment it is God who works in all things according to the good pleasure of His own will. Omnipotence is, in fact, the source of all the potency that there is in the universe. God is everywhere and, instead of being banished from the world, and the world going on without Him, if God were not here, this planet, the sun, moon and stars, would retire into their native nothingness as a moments foam subsides into the wave that bears it and is gone forever! God alone IS. All the restcall them what you pleaseare appearances that come out of His ever-existing power. God IS. The other things may be or may not be, but God IS. Well did David write, under the Spirits Inspiration, God has spoken once; twice have I heard this: that power belongs unto God. But that is not the kind of god that the ungodly wantthey want one whose hands they can bind so as to make him powerless!

Especially will they do this with regard to Providence. Look, they say, you Christian people pray and you are foolish enough to believe that because you pray, God hears you and sends you the blessings that you ask for. It is assumed that we are fools, but, I think, it is a mere assumption! Probably these gentlemen who are so generous in disposing of their epithets, may be giving away what really belongs to them! We are fools, so they say. These men of culture, the thinking peopleat least they are the people who call themselves by these high-sounding names and, having done so, to prove that their culture has made perfect gentlemen of themthey call all the rest of us, and especially all Christians, fools! Well, we are not anxious to contend with them as to that matter, and we are quite satisfied to take the position that we do takeand to be called foolsbecause we believe that God does hear and answer our petitions! Even when these people are willing to acknowledge that there is a god in Providence at all, his hands are tied so that he can do nothing! Well, as far as I am concerned, I would as soon believe in a god made out of the mud of the Ganges, or in the fetish of the Hottentot, as bow my knee to a god who could not hear and could not answer me!

Some unbelievers talk of a god whose hands are bound so far as the punishment of sin is concerned. Men will die like dog, so some of these doggish men say. God will not punish sin, say some sinners who imagine that they have prepared a dunghill for themselves to fall upon whenever God shall fling them out of the window as utterly worthless! They imbibe ideas that are contrary to the Truth of God about the Most High in order that they may be able to sin with impunity. But, whatever they may think or say, let us rest assured that there is a God and that He is a God before whom everyone of us must appear to give an account of the deeds done in the body, whether they are good or whether they are evil. We may be quite certain that although, in His long-suffering, He may patiently wait a while before punishing iniquity, yet His hands are not bound and He will lift them before long! And when He raises a hand to strike the man who has broken His laws, He will do it so effectually that the sinner shall know that, truly, there is a God who will not pass by transgression, or wink at sin when it remains unrepented of! Let us, then, be always happy to hear our testimony that God cannot be bound, but let us always expect to see unconverted men, in one way or another, attempting to bind the hands of the Most High as these sinners in Jerusalem bound the Christ of God.

Some people think that God ought to do this and He ought not to do that. And the moment you begin to reason with them, they do not refer to what the Scriptures say, but they have a preconceived notion as to what ought to be done or not done. That is to say, you could tie His hands so that He must do what you judge to be right. But if He judges any particular course to be right and it does not meet your tastes, then, straightway, you will either have no god at all, or else a god that shall be handcuffed by your reason and held in bonds to do your bidding! In the Person of our blessed Master brought from Gethsemane with His hands tightly bound, we see an exact picture of what wicked men would always do with God if they could, and what they actually do to Him, spiritually, in their own minds and hearts. God save us from being guilty of such a sin as that! Oh, that the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ may cleanse that sin away if it lies as a load upon the conscience of anyone whom I am now addressing!

II. Secondly, we have here A LESSON OF LOVE.   
Our Lord Jesus was sent away, bound, by Annas to Caiaphas, but, before they bound Him, there were other bands upon Him. Christ was bound by the cords of love and who but Himself had bound Him thus? Of old, or before the earth was, His prescient eye foresaw all His people and their sinand He loved them and He gave Himself to them, then, in the eternal purpose. And often did He look through the vista of the ages upon the men and women who were yet to be born and, with a near and dear love to each one of them, He pledged Himself that, for them, He would bear the shame and the spittingand that He would even die in their place that He might redeem them unto Himself. So, when I see our Divine Master thus led to the judgment seat, I grieve over the bonds of cord with which men tied Him, but my heart exults over those invisible bands with which He bound Himself on purpose, by covenant, by oath, by Infinite, Immutable Love that He would give Himself to be a ransom for His people!

Then, following upon those cords of love, if you look closely, you will see His love again displayed in that He was bound with our bonds. We, dear Friends, had sinned against God and so had incurred the sentence of Infallible Justice. And now that sentence must fall upon Him! We ought to have been bound, but Christ was bound instead of us. If you and I had been bound with despair and hopelessly led away to that prison from which none shall ever escapeif this had been the moment when we were commencing to feel the torments of the Hell which our sins deservewhat could we have said? But, lo, in our place Jesus is led away to bear the wrath of Heaven! He must not lift His hands in His own defense, or raise a finger for His own comfort, for He is bearing

*That we might never bear*

**His Fathers righteous ire.**   
III. But now, thirdly, learn here A LESSON OF GREAT PRIVILEGE. Our Lord Jesus Christ was bound and there flows from that fact its

opposite then His people are all free. When Christ was made a curse for us, He became a blessing to us. When Christ was made sin for us, we were made the righteousness of God in Him. When He died, then we lived. And so, as He was bound, we were set free. The type of that exchange of prisoners is seen in the fact that Barabbas was set free when the Lord Jesus Christ was given up to be crucified. And still more in His plea for His disciples in the garden, If therefore you seek Me, let these go their way. It is with wondrous joy in our hearts that we sing

**We were sore in bondage bound,   
But our Jesus set us free.**

Do you think we, dear Friends, use our liberty as we should? Do we not, sometimes, pray to God as if we were tongue-tied and had the bonds upon our tongue? Do we not go to the great coffers full of Grace and, instead of helping ourselves, as we have the right to do, we stand there as if our hands were bound and we could not take a single pennyworth of the abundant fullness that is laid up there for us? Sometimes when there is work to be done for Christ, we feel as if we were in bonds. We dare not stretch out our handswe are afraid to do soyet Jesus has set us free! O Believer, why do you go about as if you still wear shackles on your ankles? Why do you stand like one who is still in bonds? Your freedom is sure freedom and it is righteous freedom. Christ, the great Emancipator, has made you free and you are free indeed. Enjoy your liberty! Enjoy access to God! Enjoy the privilege of claiming the promises which God has given to you! Enjoy the exercise of the power with which God has endowed you! Enjoy the holy anointing with which the Lord has prepared you for His service! Do not sit and mope like a bird in a cage when you are free to soar away! I can conceive of a bird that has been in a cage for yearsthe cage may be all taken awayevery wire of it and yet the poor thing has been so accustomed to sit on that perch inside the cage, that it takes no notice of the fact that its prison is gone! And there it sits and mopes. Away with you, sweet songster! The green fields and the blue sky are all your own. Stretch your wings and soar away above the clouds and sing the carol of your freedom as though you would make it reach the ears of the angels! So let it be with your spirit, and with mine, Beloved! Christ has set us free! Therefore let us not go back into bondage, or sit still as though we were in prisonlet us rejoice in our liberty this very hour and let us do so all our days!

IV. The fourth lesson from the binding of Christ is A LESSON OF OBLIGATION.   
This may seem like a paradox in contrast with the previous lesson, yet it is equally true. Beloved, was Jesus bound for you and for me? Then let us be bound for Him and to Him. I rejoice in the sweet inability that results from perfect love to Christ. Inability? you ask. Yes, I mean inability. The true child of God cannot sin, because he is born of God. There are many other things that he cannot do. He cannot forsake His Lord, for he says with Peter, Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. He cannot forget his obligations. He cannot withhold his time, his strength, his substance from His Lord. He cannot become an earthworm and a money-grabber. He cannot wed his soul to any other, for Christ has espoused him to Himself as a chaste virgin. There are times when the child of God says, with Nehemiah, Should such a man as I flee? Or, How can such a privileged individual as I am indulge in such-and-such a sin? The ungodly sometimes jeer at us and say, Ah, you cannot do such-and-such! We can. And we reply, We have lost no power that we ever wished to have, but we have gained the power of concentrating all our force upon righteousness and the Truth of God. And now our heart is bound too fast to Christ for us to go after your idols. Our eyes are now so taken up with the sight of our Savior that we cannot see any charms in the things with which you would bewitch us. Our memory is now so full of Christ that we have no desire to pollute the precious stores that lie therein by memories of sin.   
Henceforth we are crucified with Christ and that brings to us a blessed inability in which we greatly rejoice! Our heart may stir, perhaps, a little, but our hands and feet are fastened to the wood and cannot move. Oh, blessed is the inability when, at last, neither heart can love, nor brain can think, nor hand can do, nor even imagination can conceive anything that goes beyond the sweet circle of a complete consecration to the Lord and absolute dedication to His service! Come, then, you angels of the Lord, and bind us to Him! Let this be the prayer of every Believer Bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar. Let nothing ever tempt us away from our Lord. You may count the cost of all Egypts treasure and then let it goand it shall vanish like a dream, for there is nothing in it   
*Solid joys and lasting treasure,   
None but Zions children know*   
and these shall remain with you who are bound to Christwith Him to live, and for Him to die, if necessary. So, whenever we see Christ in bonds, let us pray that we, also, may wear His bonds and be just as much bound as He was. O God, let every Christian say, I am Your servant and the son of Your handmaid. You have loosed my bonds, now bind me to Yourself and to Your blessed service once and for all!   
V. The last lesson is one which I pray that we may all learn whether we are saints or sinners. It is A LESSON OF WARNING.   
Dear Friends, I have tried to picture, though I have done it in a very feeble way, Christ being bound with cords. And now I want to very solemnly say to all of youDo not bind Christ with cords. Beware, you who are unconverted, that you never bind Christ. You may do so by not reading His Word. You have a Bible at home, but you never read itit is clasped, laid away in a drawer with your best pocket handkerchiefs. Is it not so? That is another picture of Christ in bondsa poor shut-up Bible that is never allowed to speak with youno, not even to have half a word with you, for you are in such a hurry about other things that you cannot listen to it! Untie the cordslet it have its liberty! Commune with it sometimes. Let the heart of God in the Bible speak to your own heart. If you do not, that clasped Bible, that shut-up Biblethat precious Book hidden away in the draweris Christ in prison and, one day, when you little expect it, you will hear Christ say, Inasmuch as you did this to the greatest of all My witnesses, you did it unto Me. You kept Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah and all the Prophets in prison! And all the Apostles and the Master, Himself, you bound with cords and you would not hear a word that they had to say! Let not that be true of any one of you, dear Friends.   
There are others who will not go to hear the Word. They do not attend any place of worship. They may have dropped in here once, but, as a rule, they never go anywhere to worship God. Here in London people live in the street where there is a soul-saving ministry, yet many of them never cross the threshold of the House of Prayer. In some streets, not one in a hundred ever darkens the doors of the place where Gods people gather for worship. Is not that tying Christs hands? How can the Gospel get to people who will not hear itabsolutely refuse to listen to it? They are really gagging our blessed Master and that is even worse than binding Him with cords! They thrust a gag in His mouth and make Him hold His tongue, as far as they are concerned. Some of them, if they could, would gag the messenger as well as His Master, for they do not want him. Trouble us not, they say. Are you come to torment us before the times. And so they bind Christ and send Him away, just as Annas sent Him bound to Caiaphas.   
There are some who both read the Bible and go to hear the Gospel, but they tie Christ up, all the same, by prejudice. Some people can never get a blessing through certain ministers because they have made up their minds that they will not be profited by them. You know how they come, with some preconceived notion, and though an angel from Heaven were to speak, they would pick holes in whatever he might say because of the prejudice which exists in their minds. Probably they can give no better reason for their antagonism than the person gave who did not like Dr. Fell

*I do not like you, Dr. Fell,   
The reason why, I cannot tell.   
But this I know and know full well,   
I do not like you, Dr. Fell.*   
I have known men bind Christ in another way, by delaying their decision. They have heard a sermon and have felt its powertheir soul has been impressed by itbut their chief idea has been to try to escape from Christ, or to bind His hands, if possible. I think I have told you before that once, when I was preaching in the country, the gentleman with whom I stayed, suddenly got up, towards the end of the sermon and went out. And a dear friend who had gone with me, followed him outside and asked him, what brought you out here? He replied, If I had stayed there another five minutes, I would have got converted. Mr. Spurgeon seems to treat me just as if I were made of India rubberhe squeezes me into any shape he likesso I was obliged to come out. But, my friend said, might it not have been a great blessing to you if you had been converted? Well, no, he replied, at least, not just now. I have some things in prospect that I really should not miss, so I cannot afford to be converted just now.   
There are others who do not act quite like that, but the result is the same. They say, by their actions, if not in so many words, Now, Lord, I am going to tie You up for a little while. I mean to give heed to You, byand-by. I hope Your blessed hand will be laid upon me for my salvation, but not just now, pleasenot just now. Such people always use silken cords, but the binding is just as effective as it would be if they took an ugly pair of handcuffs, such as a policeman pulls out for a thief. The man says, Permit me, Lord, to tie Your hands for just a little while another month, perhapspossibly another year. Oh, that accursed procrastination! How many have been ruined to all eternity by it! It is the bond that binds the hands of Christ, the Savior, who say, Now is the day of salvation.   
Other men bind the hands of Christ by seeking pleasure in sin. After having been impressed under a sermon, they go straight to some ungodly meeting placea bar, perhaps, or the next day they go into society where every serious thought will, in all probability, be stamped out as men stamp out a fire! And what is this but binding the hands of Christ? I know someI tremble as I think of themwho persistently do that which they know will prevent them from ever feeling the power of the Word of God. Oh, that, by some means, they could be wrenched out of their present position and be carried right away where the Truth of God might influence them so that they might be led to Jesus feet! I think I hear someone say, That is a shocking way to bind Christs hands. Then mind, my Friend, that you do not fall into that sin!   
Now, in closing I need to speak to the Lords own people for just a minute or two.   
Do you not think, Beloved, that you and I have sometime tied Christs hands? You remember reading this sentence, He could not do many mighty works there? His hands were tied, but what tied them? Finish the quotationbecause of their unbelief. Are there not many churches where they have tied the hands of Christ because they do not believe He can do any mighty works there? If the Lord Jesus Christ were to convert 3000 people, at one time, under their pastors preaching, what do you think the deacons and elders of that church would probably say? Well, we never thought that we would see such excitement as thisto think that it should have come into our place of worship! We must be very careful. No doubt these people will be wanting to join the church. We shall have to summer them and winter themand try them a good deal we do not like such excitement. Ah, Sirs, you need not trouble yourselves with any such expectation! God is not likely to give such a blessing to youHe never sends His children where they are not wanted and, as a ruleuntil He prepares His people to receive the blessing, the blessing will not come.   
Do you not think, also, that a minister may very easily tie the hands of Christ? I am afraid I have done so, sometimes, without meaning to. Suppose I were to preach some very fine sermonsI do not do that, mark youbut just suppose I were to preach some very fine sermons that went right over peoples heads? And what if a good old woman were to say, I would not have the presumption to understand it, but it was very wonderfuldo you not think that I would be tying Christs hands with garlands of flowers? And may we not come into the pulpit and talk a lot of theological jargon, and use words which are appropriate to us in the classroom, but quite misunderstood, or never understood at all by the mass of the people? Is not that tying Christs hands?   
And when a preacher is what they call very heavyby which is not meant that he is weightybut dull! Or when he is very cold and heartless, and preaches as if he were working by the piece, and would be glad to get it all overwhen that is the case, do you not think that Christs hands are tied? Have you never heard sermons of which you might fairly say, Well, if God were to convert anybody by that discourse, it certainly would be a miraculous kind of miraclesomething altogether out of the common way of miracles, for He would be using an implement that was positively calculated to produce just the opposite effectand making it accomplish His purposes of Grace? I have heard such sermons, now and then, to my great sorrow. And you Sunday school teachers must take care that you do not so teach as really to be hindrances to your scholars rather than helps, for that is to tie the hands of Christand to lead Him into your class like Samsonbound to make sport for Philistines than to get honor to Himself. May we all have the Grace given to us to avoid such an evil as that!   
And do you not think, dear Friends, that we who love Christ bind His hands when we are cowardly and retiring, and never say a word for Him? How can the Gospel save sinners if it is never spoken to them? If you never introduce Christ to your companionsnever put a little book on your friends table, never try to say a word about the Savior to himis not that tying Christs hands? The next thing to having no Christ at all is for the church to be silent concerning Him! It is an awful thing to contemplate what it would be if there were no Savior, but what difference is it if there is a Savior, but men never hear of Him? Come, you very timid people, do not excuse yourselves any longer! Oh, but, says one, I always was of a very timid disposition. So was that soldier who was shot for running away in the day of battle! He was guilty of cowardice and was put to death for it. If you have been, up to the present time, binding the Master by your retiring spirit, you should at once come forward and declare what Christ has done for you, that, with unbound hands, He may do the same for others!   
And do you not think that whenever we are inconsistent in over conductespecially in the familywe tie the hands of Christ? There is a father praying for his children that they may live before God. Five minutes later, listen to Him! Why, his boys hate the sight of him! He is such a tyrant to them that they cannot endure him. There is a mother, too, who is praying God to save her daughters. She goes upstairs and pleads very earnestly for them. Yet she comes down and lets them have whatever they ask for and never says a word by way of checking them in their evil courses! She acts like a female Eli to everyone of themis not she tying the hands of Christ? What can she expect but that God, who works according to rules, will be more likely to let her unkind kindness influence her girls for evil, than to answer her prayers for their conversion? Let us be holy, dear Friends, for then we shall, by faith, see the holy God freely moving and working among usand doing great deeds to His own Glory! So may He do, for our Lord Jesus Christs sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: BY  
*JOHN 18:12-14, 19-26; MARK 14:53-65; LUKE 22:63-71; 23:1.*

The passages which we are about to read from three of the Evangelists, make up a continuous narrative of our Lords trial before the high priest.

First, John gives us an account of our Saviors appearance before Annas, of which I need not say much, as I recently preached upon it. [Sermon  
#2820, Volume 49CHRIST BEFORE ANNASRead/download the entire sermon, free of charge at http://www.spurgeons.org.]

John 18:12-14. Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound Him, and led Him away to Annas first; for he was father-in-law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year. Now Caiaphas was he which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.

19-21. The high priest then asked Jesus of His disciples, and of His doctrine. Jesus answered Him, I spoke openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, where the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing. Why ask you Me? Ask them which heard Me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said. What an admirable answer that was! Whatever He might have said about His doctrine, they would have twisted into a ground of accusation against Him, so He simply said, Mine has been public teaching, open to all. I was not found in holes and corners, secretly fomenting sedition. I spoke in the streets; I spoke in the synagogue; I spoke in the temple; ask those who heard Me to tell you what I said. What more convincing answer could He have given?

22-24. And when He had thus spoken, one of the officers, who stood by, struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answer you the high priest so? Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why do you strike Me? Now Annas had sent Him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest. So there we see Him standingbound before Caiaphasthe acting high priest for that year. Now follow the narrative as given by Mark.

Mark 14:53, 54. And they led Jesus away to the high priest: and with him were assembled all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes. And Peter followed Him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire. We may regard what was said to Jesus, by Annas and Caiaphas, as a sort of unofficial preliminary examination and, meanwhile, their fellow conspirators were scouring the streets of Jerusalem to gather together the members of the Sanhedrimand also searching among the slums in order to find witnesses who could be bribed to give false evidence against Jesus.

55. And the chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put Him to death; and found none. A pretty court that was, occupied in seeking for witnesses who might enable them to condemn to death a Prisoner against whom no charge had yet been formulated!

56-59. For many bore false witness against Him, but their witness agreed not together. And there arose certain ones and bore false witness against Him, saying, We heard Him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands. But neither so did their witness agree together. It was a rule that they should be examined separately, but there had not been time for them to be coached as to what they were to say, so one contradicted the other and it looked as if the trial must break down.

60. And the high priest stood up in the midst. Losing all patience, he stood up, in a furious rage at the way things were taking.   
60, 61. And asked Jesus, saying, Do You answer nothing? What is it which these witness say against You? But He held His peace and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked Him, and said unto Him, are You the Christ? The Son of the Blessed? This time, according to Matthews account, the high priest said to Jesus, I command You by the living God that You tell us whether You are the Christ, the Son of God. Being thus, as it were, put upon His oath, the Savior felt compelled to answer. He could not remain silent when such a great and important question was at stake.  
62-65. And Jesus said, I am: and you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of Heaven. Then the high priest tore his clothes, and said, What need we of any further witnesses? You have heard the blasphemy: what do you think? And they all condemned Him to be guilty of death. And some began to spit on Him, and to cover His face, and to buffet Him, and to said unto Him, Prophesy: and the servants did strike Him with the palms of their hands. Perhaps we have the same narrative in Luke. Possibly, however, he gives us a continuation of the sad storyit is difficult to say which is the case. Luke 22:63-71. And the men that held Jesus mocked Him, and struck Him. And when they had blindfolded Him, they struck Him on the face, and asked Him, saying, Prophesy, who is it that struck You? And many other things blasphemously spoke they against Him. And as soon as it was day, the elders of the people and the chief priests and the scribes came together and led Him into their council, saying, Are You the Christ? Tell us. And He said unto them, If I tell you, you will not believe: and if I also ask you, you will not answer Me, nor let me go. Thereafter shall the Son of Man sit at the right hand of the power of God. Then they all said, Are You, then, the Son of God? And He said unto them, You say that I am. And they said, of what need we any further witness? For we ourselves have heard from His own mouth.   
Luke 23:1. And the whole multitude of them arose, and led Him unto Pilate.

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SECRET DISCIPLES ENCOURAGED   
NO. 3207

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, JULY 21, 1910.   
DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.   
Are not you also one of His disciples?   
John 18:25.

BLESSED be His name, there are some of us who count it our highest joy to answer this question, Yes. Whatever may be entailed by the confession, we shall be glad to endure! We could not do otherwise than say, He acknowledged us of old and He is still not ashamed to call us brethren and, therefore, we are not ashamed of Him, but we delight to call Him Master and Lord. In an interview I had about a fortnight ago, with a dear and venerable friend who is just upon the borders of the grave, he said to me, There is a verse in the Hymn-Hook which I know you do not like, Sir, and which I do not like, though both of us have sometimes been obliged to sing it

*Tis a point I long to know,   
Oft it causes anxious thought.   
Do I love the Lord, or no?   
Am I His, or am I not?*

But I have no doubt about it, he went on to say, any more than I have about my own existence! Let others doubt if they like. I know I love the Lord. I am sure I do. If there is anything in all this world that is beyond a question to me, it is that I do love Him with all my heart, soul and strength. That ought to be the condition of every Christian! There ought to be no question here. We should, each one, be able to reply at once, when asked, Are not you also one of His disciples? I am! I count it my honor, my joy that He permits me to sit at His feet and to be instructed by Him, and to go forth into the world bearing His reproach. But, at the same time, dear Friends, there are some in the world who could not go that length, of whom, nevertheless, we have the hopeful belief that they are His disciples.

I thought of speaking a little to such persons. This, perhaps, will be unfortunate for most of you, for I shall not be addressing many, perhaps, here present. Still, if there are but a few such, we must look after the one at the risk even of leaving the ninety-nine. So I address myself to those whom we assuredly suspect to be followers of Jesus, concerning whose faith we need to have a little better evidence and whose life we would see a little more consistent with their being truly His followers.

I. First, then, I would ask, WHY ARE YOU SUSPECTED OF BEING A DISCIPLE OF CHRIST? Please observe the reasons why Simon Peter was suspected, for the same reasons may be applicable to you.

He was suspected by some of being a disciple of Christ because he had been seen with the disciples. One of the servants of the high priest said to Peter, Did not I see you in the garden with Him? Now, there are some of you who are always seen in the House of Godnot only at stated services which are attended by the general public, but you are seen at the Prayer Meetings, you are seen at times when the interest is more spiritualand when only the spiritual, it would be supposed, would be attracted and find anything that would interest themthere are you found. It is not only in the House of God that you are seen with Christs people, but out-ofdoors, too. You do not enjoy frivolous society. You are not at home in the haunts of vanity. Your companions are the godly. You delight in their conversation and the more spiritual the conversation becomes, the more you enjoy it!

Now, I do not know that you are a follower of Christ, but I have a strong suspicion that you may be and I would like to put these questions to you, if I might. Are not you, also, one of His disciples? Did not I see you in the garden with Him? Why do you keep such company and love such society, if you are not one of them? Is not the old proverb true, Birds of a feather flock together? How is it that you love the footsteps of the flock and the way of the shepherds tents, if you are not one of the sheep? I dare not say that you are, for I cannot read your heart, but I will venture again to put the question, Are not you also one of His disciples?

They suspected him, again, because of his conversation. Peter did not want to be known and, therefore, I do not suppose that he voluntarily said anything that would betray him. I daresay, if he conversed at all at the fire, he kept clear of all topics and subjects that would reveal him, or lead to the question being put as to whether he was a disciple or not, but, somehow or other, whatever he talked about, there was a sort of brogue, a twang in his speech, a something which showed that, at any rate, he was a Galileanand they began to suspect that he might also be a companion of Jesus of Nazareth. It was his talk that betrayed him!

Now I do not know, dear Friend, whether you are a disciple of Christ, and I do not propose to press you to tell me, but excuse my asking the question. Your language and accent have about them a seasoning and a flavor of Christianity. You earnestly put aside from your speech everything unclean and you delight to speak words that honor Christ. If at any time in conversation there is a word said that seems to reflect upon the Lord Jesus, you are grieved at it and you would not repeat any sentiment or sentence that would dishonor Him. You are cautious and careful, too, about truth in your speech. You also desire to speak for the good of others. Especially during the last few months you have been very particular, and your prayer has been, Open You my lips. You have been afraid of speaking those idle words for which God will bring men into judgment. Now, I do not know that you are Christs disciple, but I suspect it, for a man is judged by his speech. We generally know what is in the well by what comes up in the bucket, and the metal of a bell can be pretty well judged by the stroke of the clapper. And I think we can form some estimate of who you must be when we perceive in your conversation the tone of a Christian, when we hear that you speak as one does whose heart has been renewed by Divine Grace. I shall, therefore, put the question to you, expecting an affirmative answer, Are not you also one of His disciples?

Further than this, Peter was recognized, I suspect, as having acted for his Lord, for the person who said, Did not I see you in the garden with Him? was a relative of him whose ear Peter had cut off. As for you, it is not long since you were angry when someone had blasphemed or spoken unkind words against one of Gods servants, or against Gods Gospel. I am not sure that you did well to be angry, but at any rate, it was a holy zeal that made you angry. Why, you were quite red in the face as you defended the Truth of God! I say again, I am not sure that you did well to be angry, but at any rate, while you were cutting off that fellows ear with that sharp sword of yours, and dealing such hard blows for Christif I had been there to see you, I would have thought that you were one of His discipleseven though I would have known that your Master would not have wished you to use that sword, or to be so violent as you were. Yet your very zeal for Him though, perhaps, it was indiscreet, and perhaps not altogether what He could approve, showed that you really had some love to Him, some concern for His cause, some zeal for His Glory. Is it not so? Surely you are also one of His disciples! These things led them to suspect Peter, and these things lead us to suspect you.

One other thing, I doubt not there was about Peter, as he stood warming himself by the firehe was especially interested in the fate of Jesus. Alas for him, he had so far forgotten himself that he tried, perhaps, to avoid showing that he took any particular interest in the trial. But I will guarantee you that those who could read faces could read something in Peters face as it was lit up by the glare of the coals! When he heard them smite his Master with the palms of their hands upon His cheek, did you not see that tear roll down his face? He pretended he was brushing away a drop of sweat from his brow, but anyone who was watching him, especially one with the quick eyes of the maid that spoke, could see that it was a dewdrop of another sort that was falling from his eye!

Now, you have not said that you are a disciple of Christ, but have we not sometimes caught you unawares and read it in your face? The other Sunday, when we spoke of the Redeemers sufferings, your soul was melted. When we talked of His glories, we could see how you exulted in the theme. And when the Gospel was freely preached to the chief of sinners, your eyes looked as if you understood itand as if you loved it. Though, perhaps, even now, you would hardly venture to say, I am saved, yet you experience a joy and delight in hearing the Truth of God which you would not have known if you had not been one of Christs disciplesand a holy trembling and heart-searching under the Word of God that you would not have experienced unless you had been first of all quickened by the Spirit of His Grace. Yes, the countenance will often betray what is going on withinand those dear ones who are savedI have no doubt they have observed about you a great many things and have compelled them cheerfully to say, We believe So-and-So is a Christian. We cannot doubt it. There is a something about his whole manner and conversation, his manner of speech, his mode of thought and style of action that betrays him as being a disciple of Christ.

Now, Beloved Friend, I cannot follow you home and judge as to your secret life, but I will put this question to you in various ways, in which, of course, I must leave Simon Peter out of the question. You have lately put your trust in Christ Jesus, alone. That is to say, if you have not done so, or if you are not sure you have done so, at any rate you have not any other trust and all the trust you have is set on Him. You see that there is an end of all perfection in the flesh and you are looking for the perfection which He gave to His people when He finished His atoning Sacrifice and sat down at the right hand of God. Though you cannot see much light, yet you know that there is no light except in Him and you have cast away forever that false light in which you once rejoiced. Well, I am glad, and I am inclined to put to you the question, Are not you also one of His disciples?

You have lately begun to pray and that not as a matter of form. You have left off that form you once repeated and now you pray from your very heart. Sometimes you cannot pray as you wouldin fact, you never do make your petition quite such as you desire. Still, you pray as well as you can, with groans and tears and longings that you may be taught how to pray better. Well, I never yet heard of a praying soul that was not one of Christs disciples! It was a token that Saul of Tarsus was a convert to Christ when it was said, Behold, he prays. So I will put to you the question, since you utter the living prayer of a truly earnest soul, Are not you alsodespite your doubts, questions, and humble lamentationsare not you one of His disciples?

Moreover, you now have an interest in the Word of God. The Bible was very dull to you once. A three-volume novel pleased you much better. But now anything that will tell you of your Lord and of His love, and will instruct you in His Truthanything of that sort you care foryou have a hungering after it. Well, I have not yet known dead people become hungry and I do not know that I ever yet heard of a carrion crow that desired to feed on the food of the dove! I think there must be some change in you, or you would not love the clean winnowed grain which delights Gods children. I am not sure about it, but still, I shall venture to put the question and believe that I know what answer you will give, Are not you also one of His disciples?

Besides, you know that there is a change in your life. As a child, you are now striving to honor your parents. As a tradesman, you have now left off many practices that you once allowed yourself to adopt. As a common man speaking to others, you are now more charitable in your words than you used to be. There are things that were once amusements to you which yielded you pleasure, but which have now become vanity of vanities to you. Now you know that when you rise in the morning, the thing you are most afraid of is that you should do wrong during the dayand if you are troubled at night, it is because you have done a wrong. And the matter that pains you about it most is not the loss of custom, but the loss of a peaceful conscience. Now, I think if you are all this, surely you are also one of Christs disciples!

I have suggested many hopeful things that would lead me to think that you are His disciple, but if you are not, then assuredly you are His enemy! What do you think of that? If I should make a list of this congregation and should write down all the disciples of Christ, (supposing I were able to do that), and if my pen were just about to be withdrawn from the paper, could you bear that I should say, I am about to close this roll. I have written down all the disciples of Christ here. I have finished the list, and your name is not there? I am sure you would say, Oh, stay your hand a while, Sir! I was afraid I was not one of His, but now it comes to the push, I dare not withhold my name! And I am certain that if I were then to take another roll and to begin to write down the names of all those who did not believe in Jesus, you would say, Oh, no, do not do that! Stop a moment. Do not let my name be written down there! I could not stand that, for I think I am not quite His enemy. At any rate, I long to be His disciple.

I sometimes wish you would push yourself into this corner. If it came to the point, Belovedif it really came to the pointsome of you who have said, I am afraid I do not love Him, because you do not love Him as you ought. Some of you who have said, I am afraid I do not trust Him, because you have some doubts and some fears, I have no doubt that if it came to the point, notwithstanding all things, God would lead you to trust Him and to rejoice in Him! Remember that story of one of the martyrs who had been condemned to die for Christ, and who, about a week before he died, was full of fear and trembling? He was afraid of the fire and much cast down by the prospect of being burned. There was a fellow prisoner with him who scolded him for it and told him that he ought to trust in God, that he ought not to be dismayed, and ought not to be cast down. When the day came for them to burn together, the poor, weak, trembling man stood on the firewood and he said, before the fire was kindled, Oh, He has come! He has come! He has come and He has filled my soul with His Presence! He died triumphantly, while the other man, who had scolded him for his lack of faith, recanted at the last moment and became a traitor to the Truth of God. The Lord will help you if you are but right toward Him. Still, I pray that you may be delivered from every question about whether you are His disciple or not.

II. Now, having thus uttered my suspicions about some of you, I shall, in the second place, demand from those of you who seem to be Christs disciples, WHY DO YOU NOT ACT AS IF YOU WERE A DISCIPLE? Are not you also one of His disciples?

Why, then, are you not sharing His reproach? Peter is standing there warming his hands, looking to his personal comfort. His Master is over yonder being despised and rejected, maltreated and smitten. If you are one of His disciples, Peter, is this the place for youamong the ribald crowd around the fire? Is not your proper place at your Lords side, to be laughed at as He is, falsely accused as He is, and buffeted as He is? I may be speaking to some who love Christ, or are to be suspected of it, but they have never borne His reproach. You are not numbered with any Christian Church because well, it is not a very respectable thing in the circle in which you move! You have not professed those Truths of God which you have believed because it would render you extremely unpopular if you did! You have not said in your household, I am a Christian, because it is clear to you that your husband might not like it, or that your father might not have patience with it. You have slunk into the workshop and you have hidden your colors and you have been comfortable with ungodly menand when they have uttered hard things about Christ, though you have not liked what they said, you have not expressed your disapprovaland so your silence gave consent to them.

Are not you also one of His disciples, and do you refuse to share the reproach of Christ? Have you forgotten Moses, who, though he might have been like a king in Egypt, yet took his place with the poor despised, enslaved Israelites, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt? Can you not take your place with Christs poor people? Are you ashamed of them because they are not titled and rich, or because their literary standing is not very high? Are you ashamed of them because other people misrepresent and slander them? Has the offense of the Cross ceased? Do you expect that true Christianity will ever be fashionable? Do you believe for a moment, in your heart, that Christ spoke a lie when He said to His disciples, Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves? If there is a religion concerning which all men speak well, woe be unto it, for it cannot be the religion of Christ! Do you not know that the way to Heaven is upstream? The current runs downward to the Gulf of Destruction! Are you not willing to take the Cross and go against popular opinionand against everything else that is necessary for Christs sake?

The day comes when they who have been ashamed of His Cross will find themselves losing His crown. No Cross, no crown. This is what Christ, Himself, says Whoever shall be ashamed of Me and of My Words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed when He shall come in His own Glory, and in His Fathers, and of the holy angels. If you dare not follow Him because you fear shameshame shall be your perpetual inheritance! Remember that verse, But the fearful, and unbelieving...shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone: which is the second death. Oh, that we may never be among those cowards, for those are the persons He means, not the fearing ones, but the fearful ones who dare not be reproached for Him! Is there listening to these words one who loves his Lord and knows the Truth, and knows where Gods Church is, but has been afraid to join His peopleashamed to confess the Truth and to follow Christ? I come to you with this word and I would gladly look you in the face and say, Are not you also one of His disciples? Yet you go in and out with the ungodly and you warm your hands at their fire! And you are mirthful with their jollity and you are pleased with their ungodliness. Come out from among them, and be you separate, says the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing. Confess Christ before men that He may confess you before His Father and the angels in Heaven!

Again, if you are among Christs disciples, why are you not witnessing for Him? It was not only that Peter was not sharing His shame, but that when Christ was on trial, it was due to Him that every person who could have spoken a good word for Him should do itbut everyone was silent. When Christ said, I spoke openly, Peter might have said, Yes, I have heard all He said and I have never heard Him utter sedition or blasphemy! Nothing of the kind has ever come from my Masters lips. If anything has been spoken in secret, I have been there. I have been with John and James in the most select circle of all His disciples and thus, too, I can bear witness that He is innocent. But, no, Peter is silent and instead of witnessing he denies his Master!

It is the duty of every Christian to be witnessing for Christ. Jesus is still on trial every day. He stands before the world, as it were, at this very hour, and the question isIs He the Son of God or not? Witnesses are being examined every day for Him and against Him. What do you think of Christ? is a question which is stirring all this city and all lands, more or less! And now shall He who claims to be the Savior of men and the Head of the Churchshall He, while so many speak against Him, lack the evidence of anyone who knows Him, who has been with Him and loves Him? There are some of us who find it sweet to witness for Him that He is the very Christ of Godand we do not take any honor to ourselves for so doingfor flesh and blood have not revealed it to us!

But is anyone keeping back his testimony? Why, asks one what would my testimony be worth? You do not know what it would be worth. Nobody would notice me. I am only a humble woman in my family. What? Have you no desire that your family should know the Truth of God? Have you one little child on your knee, and have you never put your arms about that little ones neck and prayed that she might belong to Jesus, or that the boy might be the Saviors? Have you never told those darlings of yours what Christ has done for you? You could not do it, do you say? Not talk to your own child of what is written in your own heart concerning your own Lord? Ah, if you cannot, cry to God against such a disability and be not satisfied till you have conquered your unholy shame, for unholy it is! If you are also one of His disciples, bear your witness to Him, even if it is but one who can hear it! If that one is all the congregation that God sends you, you have done your part. I am not accountable for the people that hear me, but only for the witness that I bear! And you shall not be accountable for the largeness or smallness of your sphere, but for the faithfulness of your testimony for Christ. Tell all with whom you come in contact that He is your Savior, a precious Savior, a true Promiser, a Promise-Keeper, a faithful Friend, a Helper in life and in death! And I say again you know not what may be the value of your testimony, for if it is borne but to a child, that child may grow up to bear testimony to tens of thousands! You know not what may come of a spark of fire. Do but let it drop and you may set half a continent on a blaze! Are not you also one of His disciples? If you are, then bear your witness as well as take up your cross!

Now, diverging a little from what some of you will think most practical, let me ask, Are not you also one of His disciples? Then why are you not enjoying the privileges which belong to His disciples? You have not been baptized! Yet He who said, Believe, also said, Be baptized. It is written of some, These are they which follow the Lamb wherever He goes. I ask you, did not the Lamb go down into the Jordan? Was He not baptized? Have you followed Him wherever He goes? If You have not done so, in being disobedient to His will you have lost a great privilege! There is His Supper, too. Tis but an outward form, as the other ordinance is. Both are but emblems, but still the Lord has been pleased to say, This do in remembrance of Me, and He often gives to His people very sweet manifestations of Himself in the breaking of bread. You are one of His disciples, or at least I suspect you arebut You have never been to the Lords Table!

There are others that can observe those things, you say. Stop! Suppose it is right for any one Christian to neglect the ordinances of Gods House? Clearly there can be no exceptional privilegesit would, therefore, be right for all Christians to neglect these two ordinances! You are not a member of any Christian Church, but you think you are right in standing alone. If you are, so would all be! And clearly, the visible Church would become extinctbut it could never have been the Lords intention that it should be so! He has not ordained that His people should live as individuals alone. He calls Himself a Shepherd, because sheep are gregarious. They gather together and they make a flock in a fold, and He would have His people so. If He had called them by the name of some other creature, it might be supposed that they would go to Heaven separately and alonebut He calls them His flock and that signifies fellowshipunion.

If you are right, then we should all be right in doing as you do. And where and how could the means of Grace be maintained? Would not almost the very preaching of the Gospel become extinct? For the Church of God is the pillar and ground of the Truth, by which is meant, I suppose, that, as in the Roman forum there were certain pillars upon which the decrees of the Senate were put up, so the Church is a pillar upon which God hangs up the Gospeland its proclamation of the Gospel to the sons of men is the pillar and ground upon which God exhibits the Gospel to all onlookers. And truly it must be so. It is the Churchs business to evangelize the world and to maintain Christs ordinances. But where would the Church be to do this if all Christians were to be allowed to remain separate from the Church? Your business is to find some company of Believers, unite yourself with them and enjoy the privileges which Christ has given, such as His two ordinances of Baptism, and the Lords Supperand all the other blessings which belong to the Church as constituted in His name. Are not you also one of His disciples? His disciples meet to remember Him and some of you turn your backs! They gather around His Table and feed upon the bread and wine which are emblems of Him, but you go away and seem to say, We do not need these emblems. Christ has instituted an ordinance which we do not require, we can do without it. We are so spiritual that we do not need it. O Sirs, say not so! If you are one of His disciples, do as He bids you!

But now a more cheering thought with which to close. Are not you also one of His disciples? Then why are you not resting in His love, in His Grace and in His power? You came in here tonight with a burden upon your spirit which is crushing you into the very dust. You are low and depressed and miserable, and people in the house where you live know it and yet they know that you are a professed Christian! Are not you also one of His disciples? and did not He say, Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them...Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these...Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? Or, What shall we drink? You also are one of His disciples and yet you are vexing yourself with cares and troubles just like a heathen and a publican! Oh, but you have lost a friend, a child, a husband, or a fatherand you are crushed into the very dust! You now have no hope and you are angry with your Godand yet Christ said, Not as I will, but as You will. Are not you also one of His disciples? Is this like your Master? He drank the gall cup and you put it away and fight against your God!

But I am afraid of a trial that is coming upon me, you say. Yet Paul said, Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. Your heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things! And you, one of His disciples, are fearing for the future? O Friend, O Friend, does this become you? Is this right? I have come, just now, from the bedside of a dearly-beloved friend to whom I have already referred. Strange as it is, he has been unconscious two days to everybody else, but the moment he hears my voice, he opens his eyes and says, Oh, how happy I am to see your face once again, my dear pastor! And then he begins to pour out a blessed torrent of adoration and praise to his God! Barely alive and yet he says he is the happiest man alive and Christ is more precious to him than ever! He is gently sinking away rejoicing. He says he is as happy as ever he was in his life and, he thinks, more happy, though the death-gurgle is in his throat and he can scarcely breathe.

And you are afraid to die, are you? You are a disciple of that blessed Lord who is helping our dear Brother to die, but you think He will not help you, too? Why, thousands of His people have closed their eyes on earth, only to open them in Heaven! Thousands have died triumphantly! Thousands have passed through the River of Death calmly rejoicing in Jesus! And you also are one of the disciples of the same Master, the same Master who can

*Make a dying bed   
Feel soft as downy pillows are*   
the same Master who has said, Fear you not, for I am with you: be not dismayed, for I am your God. Yet you cannot trust Him who has been so faithful to othersyes, and let me also say, who has been so faithful to

you up till now! Oh, if you are, indeed, His disciple, go and put that aching head of yours right on the bosom of your Lord, for within that bosom palpitates a heart that never changes and that never fails one of His disciples! Go and rest there. You may rest, for it is wellit will be well with you for the present, for the future, for time, for eternity! If you are one of His disciples, take His yoke upon you and learn of Him! Like He, be meek and lowly of heart, and you shall find rest unto your soul. Remember that it is not your place to question what God does, nor to arraign Him at your bar. Your duty is not to say, My will be done, but to remember that it is enough for the disciple that he be as his Master, and the servant as his Lord.

I trust the questions I have put to you, my Hearers, will not be lost upon you. It may strike you that it is not necessary to answer at once whether you are Christs disciple or not, but it will be very necessary to answer that question soon. I have lately been struck beyond measure with the fact of our mortality and the suddenness with which many of our friends depart out of this world. I heard, only this last week, Brother So-and-So walked into my shop on Thursday. On the Sunday I heard that he was dead. Sister So-and-So was at the Communion service, and within 48 hours she died. This is the world of the dying! You seem to be passing before me in a procession and I, too, am part of the procession, myself! Oh, make sure work for eternity! Run no risk concerning your soulsnot even this nights risk, for this night, at midnight, without a knock at your door there may come the messenger saying, Prepare to meet your God. And thenand then, it will matter if you are Christs disciple, or not! It will not matter, then, whether you have been rich or not, educated or notbut it will matter for all eternity whether you are His or not, for remember the divisionThese shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal. God grant that you then may be with the company of the disciples of Jesus for Jesus Christs sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 18:12-27.**

Verses 12, 13. Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus and bound Him, and led Him away to Annas first; for he was father-in-law to Caiaphas, who was the high priest that same year. [See

Sermons #2820, Volume 49CHRIST BEFORE ANNAS and #2822, Volume 49CHRIST IN BONDS Read/download both sermons, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] Annas had

been high priest before, and he seems to have been still regarded as high priest and to have been a leading spirit among the adversaries of Christ. The old sinner would not go to bed that night until he had seen the Man whom he hated brought bound before him. Sometimes hatred becomes a more powerful passion than even love, and here, while the disciples of Jesus all fled in terror, Annas, the Saviors bitter foe, was wide awake and awaiting His arrival with those who had taken Him captive.

14. Now Caiaphas was he who gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people. Therein uttering a prophecy which he did not fully understand, speaking like another Balaam through whom God spoke His Truth, as once He did through the ass that Balaam rode! Sometimes God makes the basest men the unconscious utterers of His Truth which they do not, themselves, comprehend.

15. And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple. Here is Johns usual modestyhe will not mention his own name, but simply speaks of another disciple.

15, 16. That disciple was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest. But Peter stood at the door outside. John boldly followed Jesus and so was safe. Peter stood at a distance from his Lord and so was in danger.

16-18. Then went out that other disciple who was known unto the high priest and spoke unto those whom kept the door and brought in Peter. Then said the damsel that kept the door, unto Peter, Are not you also one of this Mans disciples? He said, I am not. And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals, for it was cold: and they warmed themselves; and Peter stood with them, and warmed himself. Peter was in bad company. While he was warming his body, his soul was growing cold to his Master. Men cannot go into bad company without getting some hurt. It is said by a quaint old writer that if men go to Ethiopia, they may not become Ethiopians, but by the scorching of the sun they will grow blacker than they were before. It is always better to keep out of harms way if we can. He that would not fall into a ditch should take care not to walk near the edge of it. So, if Peter wanted to stand fast, he should not have gone where he would be sure to be tempted.

19. The high priest then asked Jesus of His disciples, and of His Doctrine. This was a sort of preliminary examination before the Sanhedrin should try Him officially.

20-22. Jesus answered him, I spoke openly to the world; I taught in the synagogue and in the Temple, where the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing. Why do you ask Me? Ask them who heard Me what I have said to them: behold they know what I said. And when He had thus spoken one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand saying, Answer You the high priest so? Here we get an exposition of one of Christs own sayings. You know that He said, Whoever shall smite you on your right cheek, turn to him the other, also. Of course Christ would carry out His own precept, so we see that He did not mean that His disciples were literally to turn the other cheek to those who struck them, but that they were to bear such treatment patiently, and not to give a railing answer. See how Jesus Himself turned the other cheek.

23. Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why do you strike Me? Nothing could have been more calm or more dignified and, at the same time, more full of the spirit of forgiveness.

24-27. Now Annas had Him sent bound to Caiaphas the high priest. And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. They said therefore unto him, Are not you also one of His disciples? He denied it, and said, I am not. One of the servants of the high priest, being his kinsman whose ear Peter cut off, said, Did not I see you in the garden with Him? [See Sermon #2106, Volume

35IN THE GARDEN WITH HIMRead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at

http://www.spurgeongems.org.] Peter then denied again: and immediately the cock crew. We know that the Lord turned and looked upon Peter. He did not speak a word, perhaps lest Peter should fall into the hands of those who were round about himbut His look was sufficient to kindle in Peter the fires of repentanceand he went out to weep bitterly over his shameful denial of his Lord.

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #2106 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

IN THE GARDEN WITH HIM   
NO. 2106

**DELIVERED ON THURSDAY EVENING, AUGUST 8, 1889, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**One of the servants of the high priest, being his kinsman whose ear Peter cut off, said, Did not I see you in the garden with Him? John 18:26.**

PETER was on dangerous ground. When his Master was being buffeted, he was trying to make himself comfortable. We read of the high priests servants, that they warmed themselves and Peter stood with them and warmed himself. He stood with them and they were rough servants of ill masters. He was in bad company and he was a man who could not afford to be in bad companyfor he was so impulsive and so easily provoked to rash actions.

The Holy Spirit, having notified us once that Peter was on unsafe ground, in the words, Peter stood with them and warmed himself, especially observes that he remained there, which was worse still. Any man may inadvertently stumble upon a boggy piece of ground. But if he is a wise man, he will make every effort to pass it and be on sound soil again. He does ill to linger upon a quagmire, for thus he toys with danger and courts destruction.

The Holy Spirit has recorded it further on, in the twenty-fifth verse, a second time, Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. Take heed of abiding in the place of danger. You may be called in Providence to go through the Campagna when it reeks with malaria, but you are not called to live there. If you have to cross a sea, cross it. But do not try to cast anchor in mid-ocean and thus keep your ship continually amid the billows. Where there is peril there should be a prudent haste. Quick! Pilgrim, be quick and tarry not in the place of danger!

The enchanted ground may lie on the road to the Celestial City, and therefore it may be your duty to traverse it with anxious speed. But if you sit down in itif you take your rest in any of the arbors there provided by the evil Prince, you may sleep yourself into no end of misery. Linger no longer in the wilderness than you are forced to dohurry through the enemys country, and rest not till you are in Immanuels land.

Voluntary continuance on evil ground leads to repeated temptations. First the maid, then several men, and last of all this kinsman of the man whom he had wounded, began to try Peter in the high priests hall. They put to him questions which led him to deny that he ever was a disciple of the Prophet of Galilee. The longer you stop in an evil place, the more numerous will your temptations become. Temptations are like fliesthey come one or two at the first but by-and-by they buzz about you in swarms. When the deadly arrows from Satans bow fly in such showers, it ill becomes you to be at ease. While you tarry on dangerous ground, your weakness increases.

Peter, who might at first have acknowledged his Master, did not do it, but denied Him. Having once denied Him, it was almost inevitable that he should do the same again. And so, again and again, he said, I know not the Man. And as the weakness increases and the sin gains force, the fault deepens in blackness. Thrice he denied his Master and in the end he added oaths and curses, as if it would be a sure proof that he had never been with Christ if he could swear.

One distinguishing mark of a Christian, in those days, was that he swore not at all, by any oath of any sort, upon any subject, good, bad, or indifferent. Thus Peter, seeing that he could profanely swear, was giving good evidence, as the listeners thought, that he could never have been with Jesus of Nazareth.

And so, dear Friends, you see the reason why, when you come near the place of temptation, you should hasten by it as quickly as possible. Linger not where the plague ragesstay not where temptation abounds. While Peter was getting increased velocity into sin, he was losing all his strength to get out of sin. Why, at the very first, when he had denied his Lord to the maid, he ought to have crept away into a secret place and wept, or more bravely still, he should have rushed right through the crowd up to his dear Master yonder, and have said, Forgive Your servant for his treachery and cowardice. But no, he perseveres in the falsehood he has spoken. He adds lie to lie and sinks deeper in the mire. Left to himself, his course is downward and there is no hope for the deserter.

The lesson of this isagain I say ithasten out of the place of temptation. Flee from it as speedily as possible. There are some who are in positions of life which they ought to give uppositions which are sinful and cannot be held by persons who are honest, truthful and chaste. It is of no use to try to fight the battle of the Cross where some people arethey are harnessed to the chariot of the devil and they must come out of it, or be driven to destruction. If they are engaged in a trade which, in the very essence of it, is bad, let them get away from it.

If they are in associations which are distinctly sinful, they must break loose from those associations and not pretend to be Christians. Talking the other evening with a young girl who has, I trust, escaped from the grosser sin into which she might soon have fallen, I said to herThere are three things you can do and those three things I will set before you by an illustration. When you get outside the Tabernacle, there will be a tram car. Now, go up to the car and put one foot on the car and keep the other foot on the ground, and if you do not come down with a smash I am very much mistaken. Yet many people try to keep in with the world and keep in with Christ and they will never do itbut will make a terrible fall of it before long.

Now, the second thing that you can do is keep standing in the road in the mud and not get into the car at all. You can stop there and let the tram car go bythat is all fair and straight. If you want to live in the world and be of the world, well, live in the world and be of the world, and take what pleasure it can give you and reap the fruit of it at last. But there is a third thing you can do, namely, get right off the road into the car and let the car take you right away where it is going.

Now, it is this third thing that I commend to each of you. Get right into Christ and let the Lord Jesus, by the power of His Holy Spirit, carry you away from the unclean place where you now stand, bearing you in safety along the tram-lines of holiness till He brings you to the terminus of Glory at His own right hand. May the Lord deliver you from halting between two opinions, or choosing the wrong opinion. And may He now grant you Divine Grace to leap into the Gospel chariot and leave all sinful company and doubtful ways behind so that you may acknowledge the Lord Jesus and be His true disciple!

So much concerning Peter and the mischief that he fell into. This brings me to consider one of the questions which led Peter into his denial of his Master. It is this question, Did not I see you in the garden with Him? Let us try to handle that a little. And may the Lord cause it to do us as much good as once to Peter it did harm!

I. And the first thing I say about it is thisMANY OF US HAVE HAD SPECIAL ASSOCIATION WITH OUR LORD. If any were to ask us, Did not I see you in the garden with Him? we should right gladly answer, Yes, you have probably seen me. For I have often been there. We are by no means ashamed to admit that we have been much in the company of the despised Redeemer. Let us think how we have been, many of us, associated with our Lord Jesus Christit will do us good to consider our close connection with our Well-Beloved Lord.

The large proportion of the friends present tonight have been associated with him in Church fellowship. Our names are on the Church Roll as belonging to Jesus. We, voluntarily and cheerfully, first gave ourselves to the Lord and afterwards to His people, according to His Word. Some of us have had our names enrolled among baptized Believers for many years, and we are right glad to have them there. May   
they never be erased by any shameful act of ours.

But there may they stand until that day when the Church Rolls of earth shall all be swallowed up in the muster roll of the redeemed above! It is no small thing, to my mind, to have my name in the family register of God

*Recorded in some humble place*

*Beneath my Lord the Lamb.*   
Yes, so far as the Church is concerned, we have been in the garden with Him. For the Church is the garden wherein He walks and takes delight.

In consequence of this, we have been associated with our Lord in fellowship of worship. When His name has been praised, we have praised it. When solemn prayer has been offered in His name, we have said, Amen. How many times have those of us who are in the period of middle life been gathered in His name in the great congregation! We have thousands of times expressed by word of mouth and, I trust, with our inmost hearts, our solemn union with our Divine Lord. This we have testified at the footstool of Grace, when we have been adoring the Most High in private, at the family altar, and in the more public assemblies of Believers. Several thousands of times we have been in the garden with Him in the early morning and in the cool of the day and on happy Sabbaths without number.

Many of us have gone further than this. We have been baptized into His death and thus we have solemnly declared that we are dead with Him and have also risen with Him. Even more solemn still, if anything can be more solemn, we have eaten and drunk at His Table and the viands have been

nothing less than His flesh and blood, representatively set forth in broken bread and the fruit of the vine. What sweet communion we have had with our blessed Lord at His Table! I am sure I could not tell you, and I think you could not tell me, how very near our Well-Beloved has been to us.

As I heard a newly-converted one say the other day, in simple accents, There has been a mysterious mix-up. He has come into me to build me up and I have been as joined to Him as if I had eaten His flesh and had drunk His blood. This is a very, very solemn business. If it has been true, it is solemnly delightful. If it has been false, it is solemnly ruinous. I know of nothing that can minister more to our condemnation than to have falsely avowed such a union with Christ as that which is set forth in the Holy Supper. I pray that we may not be found mere pretenders.

In a hundred acts of Church life we have been in the garden with Him in fact, we have professed to be part and parcel of His mystical body. We have received others into our fellowship and we have sent them forth to other Churches in the name of Jesus. We have prayed with them as they have gone forth, as missionaries to the ends of the earth, to proclaim that same adorable name. We have been one with our Lord in acts of worship and fellowship and service. We count it our privilege, honor, and delight that it has been so.

But then, dear Friends, we have, some of us, been associated with Him in a yet higher sense stillI mean in distinct open testimony. We have preached His namewe have borne witness to the truth of His Word. We have pleaded with others. As though God did beseech them by us, we have prayed them, in Christs place, to be reconciled to God. We have proclaimed, in Christs name, mercy to the chief of sinners. And we have felt His power working with us, so that what we bound on earth was bound in Heaven, and what we loosed on earth was loosed in Heaven.

So much have we been identified with the Lord Jesus, that when, in the preaching of the Word, we declared the remission of sins to those who sought the Savior, they did seek Him and their sins were remitted. The Lord made us to be girt with His own solemn power and to stand in the place of His risen Self. What an association with Christ has this been! Others of you, Beloved, have been associated with Him in teaching the children. And you have come very near Him, for He said, Suffer the little children to come unto Me and forbid them not.

You have brought the young to Him and He has smiled upon you while you have been bringing them. Oh, yes, you have been associated with Christ in visiting the sick, and those in prison, in instructing the ignorant, in bringing in the wandering, in cheering the faint. You have taken upon yourself, by His Grace, this holy ministry, each one according to his ability. And thus, in the most practical ways, you have been in the garden with Him.

Yes, and to go further still, you have not only been associated with Him in service but also in suffering for His names sake. You had a battle to fight in your youth, against ungodly relatives and associates. And you fought it well for Christs sake. Some of you godly women have had to bear a living martyrdom, ever since you have been married, through the ungodliness and unkindness of your husbands. Certain of you have been despised, ridiculed, and rejected with Christ, and for Christ. Oh, it is a glorious thing!

Some of us know what it is to have our name cast out as evil and to have come down, in some mens esteem, from the brightest heights to the darkest depths, solely and only because we will follow the Lamb wherever He goes and will shake ourselves clear of the infidelity of the present age, which is defiling the visible Church with its filthy leprosy. It is very sweet to be accounted a fool for Jesus! It is most joyful when one can go into his chamber and sing

*If on my face, for Your dear name,   
Shame and reproaches be,   
All hail reproach and welcome shame,   
For Youll remember me!*

This is no small fellowship. And in this we have, many of us, possessed our full share. Yes, we can say that we have been in the garden with Him.

Once morenot only have we been with Him in Church fellowship, in service, and in some small measure of suffering, but we have been with Him in secret. O Beloved, we dare not tell that which we have enjoyed behind the veil with our All-Glorious Lord. But we have been with Him, sometimes, in His joy, till whether in the body or out of the body, we could not tellGod alone has known! It would not have taken us any trouble to slip into Heaven, we were so near the door and the door was so open. There would scarcely have needed to be a death, for we were already in the beginnings of the heavenly life. Our joy has been full when we have been in the garden with Him.

We have also had a measure of fellowship with Him in His anguish, when we have groaned out our very soul to see the apostasy of His Church. To see how those that should preach His Gospel do not preach it, but preach the very reverse of it. We have felt as if it were better for us to die than to live when we have seen this exceedingly great evil. When the sins and iniquities of Christians have come under our eyes, and the name of Christ has been blasphemed, and the precious Gospel has been despised because of the inconsistencies of professors, and the silly amusements of Church members, we have been afflicted with our Lord.

We have been with Christ almost in a bloody sweat concerning His base betrayal by His disciples. You know what I am talking of, some of you. The Lord does bring some of His people very near to Him, till they are in the garden with Him, in an agony of soul for sinful men. There have you been made to know what you cannot tell and to behold in your soul what no eye can ever seeand to hear in the heart that which shall never greet the ear of mortal man. Beloved, in these senses, you would be bound to confess your association with the Lord Jesus, and to say, Yes, I have been in the garden with Him.

II. Now I go a step further in the text. The question is, Did not I see you in the garden with Him? which leads me to observe that MANY OF US HAVE BEEN SEEN OF MEN IN OUR ASSOCIATION WITH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

We did not want to be observedwe were far from courting observation.

There are some of the Lords people who would like to go to Heaven without being seen with the Lord Jesus in the streets by daylight. They desire to be saved and yet never be seen with their Savior. I do not think that the sin of this age, with most Christians, is obtrusiveness. Far more likely it is unholy fear. Some think it modesty. But I question whether this is its real name. I will not call it cowardice, but I will take their own expression and call it backwardness. They say they are of a retiring disposition, which I

interpret in a way very little to their credit.

I have heard of a soldier who was of a very retiring disposition when the battle was on and he retired with great diligence as soon as the first shots were fired. I think I heard that he was hung up as a deserter and a coward. No good comes of a retiring disposition of that kind. We have that sort of retiring person with us nowadays but such people will have to answer for it when the Lord denies those who denied Him.

But, without desiring to be known, dear Friends, you that have been with Christ have been found out. And, first, you have been seen in the garden with your Lord by those associated in family life with you. It was not long before they discovered that you were a Christian. A man who carries in his hand a lot of roses will soon be known to bear it by the perfume which is scattered abroad. He that has Divine Grace in his heart needs not to advertise it. It will advertise itself.

Mother finds out that there is something very different in John from what there used to be. Sister Jane finds out that Mary seems quite altered from what she used to be. Father discovers that Mother is so different from what she was a little while ago. Like water in a leaking vessel, religion oozes out. Love to Jesus is sure to be found out. Believe me, Christian Brothers and Sisters, your friends know that you follow Jesus. They have known it long and they will yet say to you, Did not I see you in the garden with Him?

You were observed at private prayer. You were noticed reading the Scriptures. At first you blushed to find it commended, or to find it blamed. You do not do so now, for you are aware that everybody knows it. If you have not been found out, I should think you have no Divine Grace to spare, for even a little true religion is spied out in these days.

And you, dear Friends, have been found out by certain curious people that are always prying about. We do not admire them, but we can never get rid of themcertain persons from whom no secret can ever be hid. They seem to know things by instinct, and they tell them by compulsion whispering them with the preface that nobody must repeat what they saythough they, themselves, take license to communicate the secret to everybody they meet. These tattlers soon find out that a man is a Christian and they speedily spread the intelligence, not always with pleasure in some instances with malicious sarcasm.

They ferret out the fact of your change and when they see you, they sneeringly ask, Did not I see you in the garden with Him? We have been found out, especially by those whom our holy faith opposes. Here was one that had come to take the Savior as a prisoner and he was the man to pitch upon Peter. Did not I see you in the garden with Him? Just so. And when you come out and bear witness against an error, or when your life bears hard upon evil conduct, you will assuredly be found out. Those who are on the other side will know you.

I hope that they will have good reason for knowing you. I hope that they will oppose you very much, and thus effectually drive you out of their fellowship. There are two seeds in the worldthe seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent. And if the seed of the serpent never hisses at you, you may be afraid that you do not belong to the seed of the woman. God has put an enmity between the serpent and the womanbetween the serpents seed and the womans seedand so it must be till the end of time.

Take any opposition that you get from worldlings as a token for gooda sign that you are of a different race from those who despise youa testimonial to your character from those whose homage to goodness embodies itself in persecution. Oh, yes, yes, these people will say, Did not I see you at the meeting house? Did not I hear of your being with that canting crew? Are not you one of those vile hypocrites? And so on. That is the way in which they compliment us. Do you know all the pretty things they say of your leaders? We are not spared by foul tongues.

Oh, you that are common soldiers in the ranks, you may very well bear your portion of abuse. For if I heard you fretting, I should remind you that your leaders have had worse things to bear. Do you think that I lie on a bed of roses? Am I never opposed and slandered? I have my full, fair share of the worlds abuse. But I am ready for twice as much, if necessary. We are willing to be so publicly in the garden with our Master, that His enemies may quote it against us, if they wish, and sneeringly ask, Did not I see you in the garden with Him?

Especially will this be known to those who are affected by our procedure. The gentleman whose ear had been cut off knew Peter. So did his kinsman, who, to his alarm, saw a sword come so very close to his kinsmans skull. He recognized Peter at once. And no wonder. It was only by the flash of one of those torches that he caught a glimpse of the disciple with the sword. But, as Peter cut off that mans cousins ear, the impression made was particularly vivid.

So, if you begin to talk about Christ to people, if you ask them whether they are saved, some of them will thank you for your holy anxiety. But others, who choose to feel annoyed, will judge that you wantonly tread upon their feet, and they will feel that you have assaulted them. Deal faithfully with their souls and they will photograph your portrait on the sensitive plate of a very angry nature. They do not want to see you any more. They fight shy of you, and so on. For they judge you to be very rude and personal.

I hope that you will always have a little company of friends who will remember you by reason of their smarting ears. I do not invite you to cut their ears offquite the reverserather heal their ears with a touch of Christs golden ointment. But at the same time, make their ears tingle with your warnings and entreaties. Tell them about Christ Crucified. And then, the next time they see you, they will say, That is the man that spoke to me about my sin and my Savior. Be recognized because of the earnestness of your concern for the salvation of others.

There are some of usand a very considerable number of friends here tonightwho are known to have been in the garden with Christ by a vast number of persons. If some of you were to fall into grave sin and desired to hide yourselves, where would you go? Especially myselfwhere could I go? I could not go into any doubtful or questionable place, with the hope of being unknown, for someone would point me out in a moment. I wonder where I could get to without being perceived. I say I wonder, but I do not want to discover. Where could a well-known preacher go without being recognized?

I sat with a good Brother minister one day in the midst of a pine plantation, on the top of a hill, which is quite a ways from the usual haunts of men. We were talking together about the things of God and I was saying, if we deserted our Master where could we flee, so as not to be known? I said, If we sat long enough even in this lone spot, I dare say some person would come along who would know us. Almost immediately I saw the head of a man moving among the pine trees and watched him coming up the hill. I said, I should not wonder if a friend of ours is coming now.

It was a Brother who sits in the right-hand gallery, come to search for a secluded spot for a picnic. Yes, he had found us out. We could not get anywhere without being known. You and I had better keep our regimentals on and go through with the war and never be ashamedfor we cannot go away incognito. The day is past in which we can be hidden. If you are a Christian and have declared yourself out-and-out for Christ, never think of going back. For you cannot, without having the finger of shame pointed at you. In the district where you live you have become enthusiastic for the conversion of souls, you have lifted high the banner of Truth. You have declared that for Christ and Him crucified you desire to live and die.

Well, then, my dear Brothers and Sisters, you are bound to go forward even to the end. Else many a man and maid will point their fingers at you and say, Did not we see you in the garden with Him?and how will you answer, if, afterwards, you are seen serving self and this present evil world?

III. That leads me to the third point, to which we have climbed up insensibly, namely, thisWE ARE NOW THE SUBJECTS OF EXPECTATION.

As we have been in the garden with Jesus and we have been seen there, we are now the subjects of very high expectations. That is to say, people expect a great deal from those who are known to be associated with Jesus. They are very unreasonable, sometimes, and expect far more than they are warranted in looking forand consequently much more than they will ever get. I have known some to expect young Christians, who have just come to Christ, to be perfectto know everything, to be able to preach a sermon, pray in public, give a five pound note and listen patiently to all the nonsense everybody chooses to talk.

Well, they may expect what they like, but they will not get unreasonable things. Should we expect from another what we cannot render ourselves? In these days they expect a man to do everything and then to attempt more. When you have toiled from morning to night and laid yourself out in your Masters servicetime, talents, substance, everythingsomebody will snarl because you cannot do what he   
demands of you. The mercy is that we are not the servants of manwe are the servants of God. And if we please our Master, that is quite enough for us.

One Master is enough for the best of servants. If we are popular in Heaven, we may wisely be indifferent to the judgments of men. Unreasonable expectations we are not bound to meet. But there are expectations which are just and righteous. Men are quite right in expecting that, if you have been with Jesus, your character should be affected by association with Him.

For, first, you make a very high profession. You say, I am Christs. Well, then, they come to look at you and see what Christs men are. If you are in an ugly temper, they will say, Surely, this is not the work of God. If you are awfully stingy and never give anything away, they will conclude that it is not desirable to be a Christian. If you are sarcastic and find fault with everybody and everything, they will say, That is not a very beautiful spirit. They are right, are they not? Can you blame them for thus judging?

Do you know how to turn a dirty penny in your business? That is no credit to the name of Christian. If you promise to send work home on Saturday night and your customers do not get it till a fortnight after, they will set small store by your Christianity. No one will think well of your religion if you do not tell the truth. When your word is passed, be sure that you keep it, or you will discredit your Lord and Master. I am not going into all the ways in which a man can so act in common life, as to lead people to exclaim, That is not what we should have expected of a man that talks of following Jesus.

They have a right to expect a good deal from our sacred profession. What is our religion? Is it a semi-moral religion, like Mohammedanism? No, it is a holy religion, that would make you perfect if, by the Grace of God, you followed it to its ultimate issue. For it sets before you this as the object of ambitionBe you perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect. Such a faith as ours ought to bring forth the noblest form of character. And when it does not, I do not wonder that the world is disappointed, and in its indignation speaks sharp things of us and of our faith. They have a right to expect a great deal from the disciples of such a Lord. Such a Leader! What ought not the followers to be? Such a Savior! What should the saved ones be? What manner of persons ought we to be who serve the holy, harmless, undefiled One?

Beloved, they may well expect great things on account of our comrades, with whom we are proud to be numbered. Consider who they were that went before usthose holy men and women who counted not their lives dear unto them. How faithfully they lived and served the Lord Jesus! Many of them went in a chariot of fire to Heaven, burnt quickly to death for Christs sake. We are bound by our associations, bound by our Master, bound by the Truth of God we believe. We are bound by the profession we have made, to live, not as other men, but as men who are of noble lineage.

Men lifted up by a second birth, twice born, the elect of Godredeemed from among menthat we may be a kind of first fruits of His creatures.

IV. So, you see, we are brought where the world expects a good deal of us and when the world does not get it (that is the fourth point)IF WE DISAPPOINT SUCH EXPECTATIONSTHE QUESTION MAY BE VERY PROPERLY PUT TO US, Did not I see you in the garden with Him?

It is a salutary thing for a man to know that his inconsistency is observed. Then he begins to see himself as others see him. It is very painful, very disagreeable. But, at the same time, very likely to bless the man. A man is apt to get a little angry about it. But it is a good thing for him to know how his conduct strikes other people. I have read of an old lady who gazed into a looking glass and remarked that they did not make good mirrors nowadays, for those which she used to look into, fifty years ago, showed her quite differently from what she now was. She said the looking glasses were very inferior in these times.

When the world observes that your character is inconsistent, it may be that it is a truthful looking glass, although it does not exhibit your beauties but shows up your wrinkles and blotches. Do not quarrel with the looking glass but quarrel with your own self. Depend upon it, you are disfigured with spots which you need to get rid of. When convicted by your conscience of an inconsistency, even though the conviction comes to you through an unkind, ungenerous remark of a wicked man, yet still take the lesson home and go to God for Divine Grace and forgiveness and begin again. A very plain-spoken enemy may do us ten times more service than an indulgent friend.

Such a question as this should effectually recall us to holinessto deep repentance of the past and to strong resolves for the future. I will imagine that a certain Christian man has come to town for a holiday and during the season of his holiday in London, he is asked by a friend to go to a questionable place of amusement. I will imagine that he yields to the invitation and goesthough I am sorry even to imagine such a thing. Well, he has gone where he should not have gone.

And I should like some venerable minister, some saint of God, to meet him in the street as he comes out, and say to him, Did not I see you in the garden with Him? What a rebuke! How it would cut him to the heart! I have heard that even professing Christians, when they go over to Paris, will go where they ought not to go. And they have pleaded, as an excuse, that they wanted to see the manners and customs of the Continent. To put it in plain English, they want to join in with the manners and customs of Satan.

You have no more right to go into wrong places in Paris than in London. I should quite as soon be seen in a theater or a music hall in London as in Paris. Indeed, I am told that our home production is by far the safer of the two. You have no right to go anywhere where you are ashamed to be seen by Christian people, or by the whole world. We are surrounded by a cloud of witnesses in Heaven and in Hell and we should mind how we act. Take that to yourself, if you have crept into the devils dominions on the sly. Someone will catch you there and say, Did not I see you in the garden with Him?

And if you are ever tempted to conceal your religion, then I hope that this question will come whistling in your ears, Did not I see you in the garden with Him? I have sometimes been obliged to a wicked world for what it has done to inconsistent professors of religion. I remember a young man, in my early pastorate, going to a certain place of doubtful fame and in the midst of a dance, somebody cried out, That is one of Spurgeons people. Fling him out of the window. And out he went.

I felt grateful for that act of discipline from the Adversary. I wish that they would fling out of windows all among the people of God who dare join with the world and its evil pleasures. Those who were gathered in that assembly felt that they did not want the company of a downright hypocrite, and so they put him out of their synagogue. If you should ever be found in gay company, or even in respectable company where evangelical doctrine is at a discount, I hope you will have things made uncomfortable for you. If you hold your tongue and are quiet and try to be one of the clan, where Jesus is dishonored, I hope this question will fall into your ear like a drop of burning lava, Did not I see you in the garden with Him? Stand up for your Master in all companies and in all places, or else renounce His service.

Now, I am going to use this question very briefly in several ways. The question may be put to a person by a friend who is very anxious to see him decided against the evil tendencies of the times. The only way of dealing with evil, according to the Scripture, is, Come you out from among them: be you separate. When expediency pleads, Do not come out. Make friends with error and be liberal, then may the Reprover ask, Did not I see you in the garden with Him? Your hope is fixed on Him that died without the gatewill you not take up your cross and go without the camp bearing His reproach? Did not I see you in the garden with Him?

The question may apply again, when a friend is hard at work for Christ, and under difficulty, requires your help. Laying his whole life upon the altar, he is hard put to it for want of money, or for want of personal assistance in teaching or preaching, and he appeals to youhe says, You have something to spare, help me, for the Lords sake, for whom I am striving with all my heart and soul! I am in a difficulty, come to my help. When you turn away and coldly say, No, I cannot afford money or time, he might well ask, Did not I see you in the garden with Him? Have you not had fellowship with the Lord. And will you not have fellowship with His servant in His work? It is a good and profitable question.

I should like, at this time, to speak to some here whom I have never spoken to in my life before and introduce myself and beg for their sympathy and aid, saying to them, Did not I see you in the garden with Him? Did not I notice you at the Prayer Meeting? I think I saw your face light up at a certain part of the sermon, as if you enjoyed it. Did I not see you in the garden with Him?

A kind of freemasonry exists between Christians. If we meet with any that have been with Christ, it is, Hail, fellow! Well met! You are my Brother, whatever your opinions may happen to be upon minor points. Oh, you that have been in the garden with my Lord and followed Him in the time of His shame, you are a Brother of mine, for I saw you in the garden with Him and I rejoice to own the everlasting kinship! Give me a

place in your sympathy. Mention me in your prayers.

We will put the question also in one other waywe will use it as an enquiry full of cheer to a faithful heart under depression. Yonder tempted Believer cries, I am half afraid that I really cannot be a living child of God. I am very dull and drooping and distressed. My dear Brother, years ago we used to have fellowship with you in joy and peace, in hope and song. Not so very long ago you came out of the House of Prayer, saying, It is none other than the House of God and the very gate of Heaven!

You are down in the valley now. But, like Jeshurun, you were likely to ride upon the high places of the earth. Pluck up courage. You may now be in the desert with your Lord but you have been in the garden with Him and you will be again. Those bright days will come back. For dark nights last not forever.   
You have become sleepy and dull and, perhaps, Laodicean and lukewarmbut the Lord will revive you. Remember the old times, the days of Heaven upon the earth, the Hermonites and the hill Mizar. Hope on, hope ever. He who has been with you, will be with you yet again. Did not I see you in the garden with Him?

I should like to be welcomed with that question as I enter the skies at the last. I should not object to have that spoken to me by some bright spirit as I pass through the pearl gateDid not I see you in the garden with Him? Yes, bright seraph, you may have seen me. And now you see that He casts not off His poor Friend in the day of His Glory. The angel of the Lord saw you when you repented, he spied you out in that little room where you wept alone because of sin. Upstairs in the solitary chamber, where you told the Lord how father and mother were opposed to you and yet you meant to follow the Lamb in all the ways of service and obedience, you were seen of angels.

Beloved, the brave adherence of the least of our Lords disciples is seen, known, and remembered in heavenly places. In the Last Great Day you that have been with Christ here and trusted Him amid the clouds and the darkness and the derisionyou shall see Him and reign with Himand He shall acknowledge you as His, since you were in the garden with Him in the day of His humiliation. God bless you! Amen.

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SECONDHAND

NO. 2624

A SERMON   
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, MAY 28, 1899.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 12, 1882.

**Are you speaking for yourself about this, or did others tell you this concerning Me?   
John 18:34.**

I EXPLAINED this morning, [Sermon #1644, Volume 28Our Lords First Appearance before Pilateread/download the entire sermon free of charge at

http://www.spurgeongems.org ] why our Savior put that question to Pilate. The Roman governor had asked Him, Are you the King of the Jews? And Jesus as good as said to him, Have you, of your own knowledge, seen anything in Me that looks like setting up to be a king in opposition to Caesar? You intend, by asking Me that question, to enquire whether I have led a rebellion against your government, or the imperial authority which you represent. Now, has there been anything which you have observed which would have led you to make this enquiry, or do you only ask it because of what the Jews have been saying in their enmity against Me? You will see, dear Friends, that our Lord asked this question in order that He might get from Pilates own lips the acknowledgment that he had not seen any sign of sedition or rebellion in Him and that it might be proved that the charge had been brought to Pilate by those outside, and had not come from the Roman governor himself.

We will, now, forget Pilate for a while, for I want to use this question in two ways with reference to ourselves. First, I shall utilize it as a warning against secondhand quibbles at Christ and His Gospel. Some people have a large stock of them and we might say to each one of these quibblers, Are you speaking for yourself about this, or did others tell you this? Then, in the second place, I shall use the text as a warning against all secondhand religion, pressing this question home upon each one who speaks up for Christ, Are you speaking for yourself about this, or did others tell you this?

I. We will begin with the opponents of the Lord Jesus and consider our text, first, as A WARNING AGAINST SECONDHAND QUIBBLES AT CHRIST AND HIS GOSPEL.

There are a great many people in the world who really do not know why they oppose religionand if you ask them the reason, they repeat some old bit of scandal, some stale slander upon Jesus and His Cross and they give that as their answer. I firmly believe that there are thousands, who are ranked among the opposers of the Gospel who have not anything to say against Christ of their own knowledge, but others have told them something or other, and they go on repeating and reiterating the old exploded obsolete objections that have been demolished thousands of times! And I suppose they and others of their kind will keep on doing the same thing right to the end of time.

As soon as Jesus Christs Gospel was launched upon the worlds sea, it had to encounter opposing winds, storms and tempests. Like a scarred veteran, the Gospel has had battle after battle to fight. In our Lords own day it was opposed most vigorously. His Apostles found that wherever they went, their feet were dogged by those who railed at Jesus and His Word. And when the Apostles had all fallen asleep, the early Churches found that they had need of an order of men who became the apologists for the Gospel and who bravely stood up to defend it against the attacks of divers heathen philosophers, skeptics and heretics who arose wherever the Truth of God was preached. There was opposition everywhere to the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christand His servants girded up their loins to do battle for Him and for His Truth.

That great campaign has continued even down to this day and there is this very remarkable fact about it, that, at the present moment, most of the objections that are brought against the Gospel are those that were answered and silenced some hundreds of years ago! And even when they appeared, all those centuries ago, they were then only reproductions of some older objections which had been answered and, as the defenders of the faith thought, had been trampled out, like sparks of fire trodden under foot! But, somehow an ill wind has begun to blow, again, and the fire, which some hoped was finally extinguished, has burned up once more. Originality in skepticism has almost ceased to bewe scarcely ever hear anything fresh in the way of heresy nowadays. We are troubled with the very errors which our forefathers answered a hundred years ago, yet the adversaries of the Truth of God go on cleaning and sharpening their blunted shafts, that they may once more shoot them at the great shield of faith which is impervious to their puny assaults, for it can quench even the most fiery darts of the devil himself! The modern arrows of skepticism will be broken against that glorious shield, yet they will probably be gathered up by another generation that will follow the present one and the heretics and objectors in the future will do just as their fathers did before them. I want, at this time, to put to any quibbler whom I may be addressing, the question of our Lord to Pilate, Are you speaking for yourself about this, or did others tell you this?

And, first, I ask you to observe that there are many unreasonable prejudices. Some persons have great prejudices against the Bible. I will not repeat what they say, but I would like to ask every person who thinks ill of this blessed Book, Have you read the Bible through, and read it thoroughly? Have you studied it? Are your objections your own? Come, now, did you make them yourself? It is almost always found that objections are like the axe the young Prophet was usingthey are borrowed and often they are objections against a Book which has not been read at all, and which has not been allowed to exercise its own influence upon the heart and the judgment of the person who is prejudiced against it to his own hurt! Other people have told men, such-and-such things, so they shut the Book and refuse to look into it for themselves.

There are other people who are prejudiced against public worship. You see, I am starting at the very beginningthose matters with regard to religion which are elementary. Of course, we are told that we shut ourselves up on Sunday in these dreary buildings of ours, and here we sit, in a horrible state of misery, listening to the most awful twaddle that ever was taught, our singing being nothing better than droning and the whole of our worship being something very terrible! If I were to read to you the descriptions of an English Sabbath which I have sometimes seen in newspapers, they might make you almost weep tears of blood to think that we poor souls should suffer so much as we do! Only you know that we are altogether unconscious of any such suffering! We really have been under the notion that we very much enjoyed ourselves while worshipping the Lord in His House. Many of us have the idea that the Sabbath is the happiest day in all the week and that, when we hear the Gospel preached, it is sweeter than music to us and makes our hearts leap within us for very joy!

Of course we are very much obliged to our friends for telling us how dull and how unhappy we are and for wishing us to be in a better condition. We can only say that, not being enabled to perceive any of these sorrows, we would advise them to retain their pity and exercise it upon themselvesfor they certainly need it far more than we do! To any of you who make remarks of the kind I have indicated, I askDo your difficulties concerning public worship really arise out of your attending the House of God, out of your hearing the Gospel preachedout of your joining in the songs and praises of Gods people? Oh, no! It is those people who never come to our services who believe the Sabbath to be dull, the House of God to be dreary and the preaching of the Gospel to be a monotonous sound from which every sensible man would escape! I put the question of my text to every person who is prejudiced against the Bible, and prejudiced against our public worship in Gods House, Are you speaking for yourself about this, or did others tell you this?

Sometimes, the prejudice concerns the preacher. I will not say that it is so about myself, though I have had, in my time, more than my fair share of it. Hear him? says one, I would not go across the road to listen to such a fellow. Many have said that and the preacher, whoever he may be, is condemned without a hearing. If the objector were asked to give a reason for his prejudice, he might answer by quoting the old lines

*I do not like you, Dr. Fell.   
The reason why, I cannot tell,   
But this I know, and know full well   
I do not like you, Dr. Fell.*

I should like to say to everybody who is prejudiced against any servant of Christ, Do you say this of yourself? Those absurd stories about the preacherdid you really hear them, yourself, or did somebody tell you them? Would you like to be judged by the mere idle tittle-tattle of the street or of the newspapers? And if you would not, then be an honest, reasonable man and at least give the servant of God a hearing before you condemn him or his message! And, take my word for it, the most-abused preacher is very likely to be the very man whom God will bless the most! Not the one who is most praised, but the one who is most censured by the world, is probably the man who has been most faithful to his Master and to the Gospel committed to his charge. At any rate, be honest enough to reply to the question which our Lord put to Pilate, Are you speaking for yourself about this, or did others tell you this?

There is a remark sometimes made, and I fear it is a very common one, Oh, I would not be a Christian, I would not be religious, for it makes men so dreadfully miserable! Now, Friend, do you say this, yourself, or did somebody else tell you? Come, now, you say that religion is such a miserable thinghave you tried it for yourself? Have you experienced the misery that comes out of prayerout of faithout of repentanceout of love to Godout of being pardonedout of having a good hope of Heaven? Have you ever proved what that dreadful misery is? I think if you had ever really tested these things for yourself, your verdict would be the very reverse and you would join with us in singing the lines that express what many of us most firmly believe about this matter

*Tis religion that can give   
Sweetest pleasures while we live!   
Tis religion must supply   
Solid comfort when we die.*

Yet you go on repeating that slander upon religion though you cannot prove it to be true and might easily learn its falseness! Let me appeal to you. Had you a godly mother? Yes, you say, and it was her life that prevents my being altogether an unbeliever. I thought so, but, if I remember her aright, she was a quiet good soul who, in her home, tried to make everybody happy. And though she had not much pleasure in her son, for he was wayward and willful, yet there was no unkindness on her lipsthe law of love always ruled the house. She was a weak and feeble creature who derived but slender gratification from any of the outward enjoyments of life, but she had a deep, secret spring of peace and joy which kept her calm, quiet and happy. And now that she has gone to be with God, she has left a gleam of sunlight still behind in her sweet memory. You did not get from your mother, nor from other godly friends, your belief that religion makes men miserable! And I venture to say that, so far as you have had any actual personal observation of it, you have been inclined to come to quite the opposite verdict and to confess that, though you do not know how it is, yet, somehow or other, godliness does give to the people who possess it, peace of mind, happiness of heart and usefulness of life.

There is another slander that is spread abroad very widely, and that is that the Doctrine of the Grace of Godthe Doctrine which we try to preach from this pulpithas no sanctifying effect. That, on the contrary, it is likely to lead people into sin. They say that if we preach, He that believes on the Son has everlasting life, and do not preach up good works as the way of salvation, it is clear that such teaching will lead people into sin! Clear, is it? It is not so to me! But, my Friend, will you answer this question, Are you speaking for yourself about this, or did others tell you this? Is it not a matter of history that there never have been stricter living men than the Puritans? What is the great quarrel against John Calvin, himself, but that when he ruled in Geneva he was too stern and too exacting in his requirements? It is an odd thingis it notthat these Doctrines of Grace should, on the one hand, make men too strict as a matter of fact, and yet that the wiseacres who object to them should say that these doctrines are likely to lead into sin those who accept them? It is not found to be so by those who believe them!

Let me again appeal to any candid objector. My dear Sir, did you ever prove what it is to believe in the great love of God to youthat, for the sake of His dear Son, out of pure, unmerited Grace, He has chosen you, saved you and appointed you to eternal life? Did you ever believe that and then feel, as a natural consequence, that you would go and live in sin? I know that you never did, but that it was quite the reverse! Here, said some boys to a companion, we are going to rob an orchard. Come along with us, Jack. No, he said, my father would not approve of such a thing. But your father is very fond of you and never beats you as our fathers do. Yes, said the boy, my father loves me very much and I love him very muchand that is the reason why I am not going to rob the orchard and so grieve him. Now, you believe in the beating of the boys by the rod of the Law, do you not? And we, on the other hand, feel that because God loves us and will, in His infinite mercy continue to love us, therefore we must keep out of sin as much as we possibly can. We cannot do that horrible thing which would grieve His blessed Spirit. So I ask you, as truthful men, not to repeat that old slander concerning the Doctrines of Grace leading to sin until you have really had some reason to assert it because of what you, yourselves, have witnessed in the lives of Christian people! Do not say it again until you can truly say it from your own experience or observation! Do not repeat it simply because others tell you it is so.

Yes, and there are some who say that there is no power in prayer, that we may pray, if we like, but that we cannot change the purposes of Godthat the laws of nature are fixed and immutable and, therefore, to pray is a piece of absurdity. Are you speaking for yourself about this, or did others tell you this? I will speak personally to you. Did you ever try to pray? Did you ever put this matter to the testwhether God will hear prayer or not? I do not think you can have put it to a fair test and I would like you to see whether God will or will not hear even your prayer if you cry to Him. If any say to me, God does not hear prayer, I have scarcely the patience to give them an answer! I live from day to day crying to God for this or that favor which I receive as certainly and as constantly as ever my sons had their meals when they sat at my table! I knew how to give good gifts to my children and I know that my Heavenly Father gives good gifts to me. My evidence, of course, is only that of one manand it may not suffice to convince others, though many of you, here, could add your testimony to minebut I should like all objectors just to give prayer a fair trial before they are quite so sure about the inefficacy of it. Let them see whether real prayer, offered in the name of Jesus Christ, will not be heard even in their case!

I am certain that there is not a praying man anywhere on the face of the globe who does not bear this testimonythat God hears him. And if any say, We do not pray and do not believe that God hears prayer, what evidence have you to bring? You are altogether out of court, for you know nothing about the matter! But the man who does pray and then says, God hears me, is the man to be a witness, and the one who has a right to be heard. I have told you, more than once, what the Irishman said when there were five witnesses to prove that he had committed murder. He said to the judge, You must not condemn me on their evidence there are only five people here who saw me do itI can bring 50 people who did not see me do it! But that was no evidence at all and, in like manner, there are many who say, You bring a certain number of people who pray, to prove that God hears them. But we can bring ten times as many, who do not pray, and who do not get heard. What has that to do with the matter? Where is the evidence? You say it not of yourself but merely repeat, secondhand, what has been said by others, so often and so foolishly, that it sickens one to hear it!

It is beginning to be questioned in many quarters, nowadays, whether there is any real effect produced by prayer, except that of exciting certain pious emotions in the breasts of those who pray. This is a very pretty statement! We ought to be extremely obliged to those superior persons who allow that even so much may be done! I am amazed they do not assert that prayer is ridiculous, or hypocritical, or immoral! Their moderation puts us under obligations. And yet I do not knowwhen I look again at their admission, I thank them for nothingfor they as good as call us fools! Do they think that we perform a useless exercise merely for the sake of exciting pious emotions? We must be grievous idiots if we can receive benefit from a senseless function! We are not willing to whistle to the wind for the sake of the exercise. We should not be content to go on praying to a god who could be proven to be both deaf and dumb. We have still some little common sense left, despite what our judicious friends consider to be our fanaticism. We are sure that we obtain answers to prayer! Of this fact I am certain and I solemnly declare that I have received of the Lord that which I have asked at His hands. I am not alone in such testimony, for I am associated with multitudes of men and women who bear witness to the same fact and declare that they sought the Lord and He heard them. Take care, Brothers and Sisters, to record all instances of answered prayer so as to leave this unbelieving generation without excuse. Accumulate the facts and demonstrate the grand Truth of God! Multiply the testimonies till even the philosophers are obliged to admit both the phenomena and the deduction rightly drawn from them.

There is one other gross slander to which I would reply, and that is a saying that goes round among troubled consciencesthat Christ will not receive sinnersthat the very guilty cannot be saved. They say that Christ can forgive and deliver up to a certain point, but if you get beyond that, He is no longer willing to pardon. Dear Hearer, has that foolish and wicked notion entered your head? Then I ask you, Are you speaking for yourself about this? Did you ever prove it to be true? Have you ever sought His face? Have you cried to Him for mercy? Yes, you say, I have. And then, further, have you thrown yourself at His feet, trusting Him to save you, and have you been refused? I know you have not! There was never a sinner, yet, who fell down before Him and determined to lie there and perish if He did not speak a word of mercy, to whom the Lord has not, sooner or later, spoken the Grace-word which has sent that poor sinner on his way rejoicing! I would at least like you to go and see whether Christ will receive you or not before you say that He will not do so.

Say not that the door of His mercy is shut, but go in while it is still open! If He casts you out, then He will have broken His word, for He has said, Him that comes to Me, I will in no wise cast out. Do not call Him a liar and say that He will cast you out till you have, yourself, proved that it is so! And that, I know, will never be the case. I am afraid that there is another being who has been whispering that vile insinuation into your earand he is your archenemy who is seeking your destruction and, therefore, he has come and told you this lie against the infinitely-loving and gracious Savior! Believe him not, but come even now and put your trust in Jesus and you shall find that He will give you eternal life!

I have thus examined the question of my text with reference to the opponents of the Gospel. I shall now leave that part of the subject, praying the Holy Spirit to bless it to all whom it may concern.

II. Now, in the second place, I am going to speak briefly, but with much earnestness, to the many here present who are friends of the Gospel, but who have only a SECONDHAND RELIGION, if they have any at all. I want to have a word with you, dear Friends, about this matter. You and I have been talking a great deal about Christ. Now, have we been simply quoting what others have said? Have we been making extracts from other peoples experience, or is what we have said something that we can say of ourselves, and not what others have told us?

For, Brothers and Sisters, first, a secondhand testimony for Christ is a powerless thing. Take a manas I am afraid is often donewith no Grace in his heart and send him to Oxford or Cambridge, with the view of making him a parson. Teach him the sciences, languages, mathematics and give him a degree. His friends want to get a living for him and the bishops chaplain proceeds to examine him. The first question ought to be, Is this young man a Christian? Is he truly converted? Does he know the Lord? Does he understand, in his own soul, the things he is going to preach to others? For, if he does not, what good can he do in the Christian ministry? Perhaps he is sent to a school of theology to learn the various systems of doctrine. He must read the judicious Hooker. He must study Jeremy Taylor. He must take lessons in elocution and rhetoric. Then, possibly, his friends buy him some lithographed sermons that he may read and they get him some books, that he may make extracts from them to put into the sermons he preaches. Suppose that man is, all the while, unconverted? Suppose that he does not know anything about the working of the Grace of God in his own soul? What is the good of him as a teacher of others? No good at all! At any rate, at the best, he may be only as good as one of those newly invented phonographs which can repeat what is spoken into them. This man can read out what he has selected from other books, but that is all. We will suppose that he is a very decent sort of fellowan amiable gentleman, well-instructed, wellbehaved and so onbut all that he has to say is what other people have told him!

But now put into that mans pulpit, only for one Lords-Day, a preacher who has known what it is to feel the burden of sin and to have it removed by faith in Jesus. Let him begin to speak to the people in downright earnest about the pangs and sorrows of true repentance. Let him tell them about their need of the new birth and about his experience of obtaining that great blessing and how, by Sovereign Grace, he was brought out of the darkness into the light, and even from death to life. Let that man be moved to speak of the peace of pardon through the precious blood and of the joys of Heaven laid up for all Believersand then the people will wake up, I will guarantee you! This is something very different from the preaching to which they have been accustomedand they will soon feel the power of it.

Yet the Lord sometimes uses even a preacher who does not, himself, understand the Truth he proclaims. I know a man who went and heard a certain minister preach, or rather, read a sermon, and it was such a good one that the hearers conscience was smitten by it. The discourse was about the new birth and, the next morning, the man went off to the clergyman, and said, Sir, I want you to explain this matter further to me, for I am dreadfully distressed by what you preached last night. What, do you think, this preacher said? He said, Well, Jonathan, I am sure I never meant to cause anybody any uneasiness. What was it that gave you such trouble? Why, he replied, it was that part of the sermon where you said that we must be born again. So the preacher said, Well, here is the discourse. You see, by the dates upon it, that I have used it 13 times before, so I could not have made it with any special view to your case. I am very sorry, indeed, that it caused you any discomfort, and I will never preach it again if it brings people into trouble in this style. That was all the help the poor man could get from the parson, so he went out and found a true servant of God who knew the Truth of God, himself, and was not a secondhand retailer of it, and, through conversation with him and prayer, and the reading of the Scriptures, he was brought into peace and liberty! I need hardly tell you that he does not go to hear that secondhand preacher now! He listens to a far humbler minister, who, nevertheless, preaches what he has tasted and handled of the good Word of Life.

Now, if any of you are going to be Sunday school teachers, or streetpreachers, do not begin to talk about what somebody else has told you. Go and say what you, yourself, know, of a heart first broken by the power of the Holy Spirit, and then bound up by the application of the Atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ! Proclaim your message in a living way from the heart to the heart, or else your hearers will feel that there is no power about it, however nicely you put the Truth and however sweetly you describe it. There is all the difference between personal testimony to the Truth of God and a parrot-like repetition of it, that there is between the living and the dead! Let us only bear witness to what we really knowand then no one will need to ask us what our Lord asked Pilate, Are you speaking for yourself about this, or did others tell you this?

Now, further, the same thing is true with regard to professors. We have many friends who come, at different times, to join the Church, and their stories vary greatly. Some who come to see me cannot say much and they think that I shall be very dissatisfied with them because they make a great muddle of their narrative, and there is not much, after all, that comes out. But the people with whom I am least satisfied are those who reel off their yarn by the yardthey have it all ready to repeat and everything is arranged as prettily as possible! Yes, and as I listen to it, I know that someone has told them what to say and they have memorized it all for me to hear! But I like far better the testimony that I have to pick out in little bits, but which I know comes fresh from the heart of the trembling convert! Sometimes it costs the poor soul a tear or a real good cry and I have to go round about in all manner of ways to get hold of the story at allbut that shows that it is true and that the man never borrowed it. I like to hear the experience of a Believer, when he comes straight out of the world and out of the ways of sin, to confess his faith in Christ. He does not know anything about the terms that Christian people use. He has not learned our phrases and it is a great delight to hear it all fresh and new. Yet it is always the same story in all the essential parts of it. However strangely he may narrate it, it tallies with that of others in the main points. Take the experience of a Christian man who has been brought up in the sanctuary from his childhood and extract the pith and marrow of it. Now take the experience of a man who has been a gambler, a drunk, a swearer, but who has been truly convertedand extract the pith of that. Talk to a peer of the realm who has become an heir of the Kingdom of Heaven and take the pith of his experience. Now get a chimney-sweep who has been brought to the Lord and get the pith of his experience. Put them all side by side and you will not know one from the other! There are always the same essential marksdeath, birth, life, foodChrist in the death, the life, the birth, the foodrepentance, faith, joy, the work of the Spirit of God! But it is very sweet to hear the story told in the many different ways in which the converts tell it. The true child of Grace is always the same in heart, although the outward appearance may continually vary.

But, dear Friends, whenever you begin to make a profession of religion, take care that you never profess more than you really possess! Go just as far as you can go, yourself, by the Grace of God, and do not repeat what others tell you. To borrow another mans experience is dishonest. If it is not mine, how dare I say that it is? It is also very apt to be self-deceptive, for a man may repeat another persons experience until he really thinks he did pass through it, himself, just as a man may repeat a lie until it almost ceases to be a lie because he, himself, gets to believe what at first he knows was not true! That borrowing of the experience of others is usually worthless with those who have had much to do with men, for we who do know the Lord and are familiar with His people, very readily trip up those who only repeat what they have learned! Freemasons recognize one another by various grips and signs. A man may, perhaps, find out one of the grips, but he does not learn them all and, at last, he gets caughtand people say to him, You are pretending to be what you really are not.

Take, again, a mans handwriting. Someone may imitate my writing for a long while, but, at last, he does not copy some peculiar dash, or stroke, or mark which is characteristic of my style. And those who know, say, That is not Mr. Spurgeons writingit is a forgery. So there is a somethinga sort of freemasonryabout Christianity. People may learn some of our grips, signs and passwords, but, by-and-by, they make a blunder and we say, Ah, you are an impostor! They may try to write after the fashion of a child of God and they may make the pot-hooks, hangers and straight strokes, but, as they get on further, there is a something or other that comes out in the long run which proves that they are only copyists after all. Therefore, I say to you, dear FriendsDo not attempt to repeat what others have told you about experimental godliness, but let your testimony only consist of what you can truly say out of your own heart and soul!

Let this be the case, also, with regard to every man, whether he makes a profession of religion or not. May God grant that all that we think we know, we may really know in our own souls and not have because we have borrowed it from others! In religion, proxies and sponsors are altogether out of place. I pray you never to be guilty of that horrible blasphemyfor I think that it is nothing less than thatof standing up before God and promising that a child shall keep His Commandments and walk in the same all the days of its life! Remember that in religion, there are certain things that must be personal. For instance, every man must be, himself, bornanother person cannot be born for you. In like manner, You must be born againpersonally, for yourself! There is no possibility of another person experiencing that new birth for you. If a man lives, he must eat for himself. You cannot take my meals for meit is I, myself, who must eat them. And we must eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ by faith, each one for himself or herselfnobody can do it for another. In daily life each man must be clothed for himself. You may wear silk and satin, you may be dressed in the best broadcloth, but you cannot be clothed on my behalfI must be dressed myself, or else go naked. So must each man put on the robe of Christs righteousness, or be naked, to his shame, before God. Every man must repent of his own sinmake confession of his own sin, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ for himselflove God for himself, obey the Lord for himself. There is no possibility of any other person, by any means, doing this for you! There must be personal godliness, or else there is no godliness at all. So, whenever you feel inclined to say for yourself, I believe that I am a Christian. I believe this and I believe that, let this question come home to you, Are you speaking for yourself about this, or did others tell you this?

And, lastly, Brothers and Sisters in Christ, let me utter a word specially for your ears. Never get, in your prayers, or in your talk, an inch beyond your actual experience. Our calling is a very high one and one of the most serious difficulties in the way of ever attaining its greatest height is the impression that we have reached it when we have not. My own impression is that some Brothers and Sisters might have been almost perfect if they had not thought that they were so already! But they missed the blessing through that very thought! Many a man might have become wise, but he imagined that he had learned wisdom, so he was never really wise. You know that if you see a man who thinks that he is wise, you say to yourself, How very foolish he is! And you speak truly, too. The doorstep of wisdom is a consciousness of ignorance and the gateway of perfection is a deep sense of imperfection. Paul was never so nearly perfect as when he cried, O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? But if he had sat down and said, I have attained and am already perfect, then would he have been in a fair way of missing the blessing of God. No, dear Brothers or Sisters, say no more than you can justify. There are many who do that in businessmind that you do not so act in spiritual matters! Look at that shop window what a wonderful display! Now go inside the shop. Why, there is nothing there! No, for the man has all his goods in the window! You would at once say to yourself, if he wanted to deal with you, I shall not trust him very deeply. Ah, and do we not know some who, spiritually, have all their goods in the window? It is a grand thing to have a great stock in reserve. Never mind if it is in the cellar, where you cannot see itit is none the worse for being out of sight!

The great thing for all Christians is to have a good background, something behind that is real so that, if you pray, or if you speak to another, you will be prepared to back it up! I remember trying to be a blessing to a very shrewd boy in a Sunday school class when first I knew the Lord. I told him the GospelHe that believes and is baptized shall be saved. Then he asked me a straight question, Teacher, have you believed? I replied, Yes, I hope so. He said, Dont you know, Teacher? You ought to. Yes, I answered, yes, I do know. I have believed in Jesus. Well, Teacher, he enquired next, have you been baptized? I replied, Yes, I have. Then, he said, Teacher, you are saved. I said, I hope so. But, he insisted, you are. Just so, and I found that I must say so, toothat I must not use even Christs words unless I meant to back them up by my own consistent characterotherwise I am throwing suspicion on my Masters truthfulness! May the Lord bring us up to this point of Christian honestythat when we cannot truthfully say a thing from our own experience, we will be honest enough to resolve, I shall not say it till I can truly say it.

When you think of a verse of a hymn, and it is a little in advance of your own position, wait till you come up to that point. There are numbers of hymns that I laid by, in that fashion, years ago. I wished that I could sing them, yet they seemed to stick in my throat and I could not. But my throat has been cleared a good deal lately, and I have been obliged, at last, to feel that I must have those very hymns, for they have become true to my soul and have made my experience a very happy one. Do not be in too much of a hurry in spiritual things any more than in temporal things. If you cannot eat meat, stick to your milk. Milk is for babes, so keep to milk till you outgrow it, You will choke with that tough bit of meatyou had better leave it for somebody else. Do not find fault with it, it is good for strong men, they do not need to be always drinking milk. Do not deny the strong man his meat, but let him have as much as he likes of it! As for yourself, if you are a babe in Grace, keep to your milk diet. But, in all your testimony, do not go beyond what is actually true to yourself. Often let my text lay its hand upon your shoulder and repeat this searching enquiry, Are you speaking for yourself about this, or did others tell you this?

May God grant a rich blessing to you all, dear Friends, for our Lord Jesus Christs sake! Amen.   
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JESUS, THE KING OF TRUTH   
NO. 1086

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON THURSDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 19, 1872, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Pilate therefore said unto Him, Are You a king, then? Jesus answered, You say that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Everyone that is of the   
truth hears My voice.   
John 18:37.**

THE season is almost arrived when by the custom of our fellow citizens we are led to remember the birth of the holy child Jesus who was born king of the Jews. I shall not, however, conduct you to Bethlehem, but to the foot of Calvary. There we shall learn, from the Lords own lips, something concerning the kingdom over which He rules and thus we shall be led to prize more highly the joyous event of His nativity. We are told by the Apostle Paul that our Lord Jesus Christ before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession. It was a good confession as to the manner of it, for our Lord was truthful, gentle, prudent, patient, meek and yet uncompromising and courageous.

His spirit was not cowed by Pilates power nor exasperated by his sneers. In His patience He possessed His soul and remained the model witness for the Truth of Godboth in His silence and in His speech. He witnessed a good confession, also, as to the matter of it, for though He said but little, that little was all that was necessary. He claimed His crown rights and, at the same time declared that His kingdom was not of this world, nor to be sustained by force. He vindicated both the spirituality and the essential truthfulness of His Sovereignty.

If ever we should be placed in like circumstances may we be able to witness a good confession, too! We may never, like Paul, be made to plead before Nero but, if we should, may the Lord stand by us and help us to play the man before the lion! In our families or among our business acquaintances we may have to meet some little Nero and answer to some petty Pilatemay we be true witnesses! O that we may have Grace to be prudently silent or meekly outspoken as the matter may require, but in either case be faithful to our conscience and our God!

May the sorrowful visage of Jesus, the faithful and true Witness, the Prince of the kings of the earth, be often before our eyes to check the first sign of flinching and to inspire us with dauntless courage! We have before us, in the words of the text, a part of our Saviors good confession touching His kingdom.

I. Note, first of all, that OUR LORD CLAIMED TO BE A KING. Pilate said, Are You a king, then? asking the question with a sneering surprise that so poor a being should put forth a claim to royalty. Do you wonder that he should have marveled greatly to find kingly claims associated with such a sorrowful condition? The Savior answered, in effect, It is even as you say, I am a king. The question was but half earnestthe answer was altogether solemnI am a king. Nothing was ever uttered by our Lord with greater certainty and earnestness.

Now, notice that our Lords claim to be a king was made without the slightest ostentation or desire to be advantaged thereby. There were other times when, if He had said, I am a king, He might have been carried upon the shoulders of the people and crowned amid general acclamations. His fanatical fellow countrymen would gladly have made Him their leader. At one time we read that they would have taken Him by force and made Him a king. At such times He said but little about His kingdom and what He did say was uttered in parables and explained only to His disciples when they were alone.

Little enough did He say in His preaching concerning His birthright as the Son of David and a scion of the royal house of Judah, for He shrank from worldly honors and disdained the vain glories of a temporal diadem. He who came in love to redeem men had no ambition for the gewgaws of human sovereignty. But now, when He is betrayed by His disciple, accused by His countrymen and in the hands of an unjust rulerwhen no good can come of it to Himselfwhen it will bring Him derision rather than honor, He speaks out plainly and replies to His interrogator, You say that I am a king.

Note well the clearness of our Lords avowal! There was no mistaking His wordsI am a king. When the time has come for the truth to be spoken, our Lord is not backward in declaring it. Truth has her times most meet for speech and her seasons for silence. We are not to cast our pearls before swine, but when the hour has come for speech we must not hesitate but speak as with the voice of a trumpet, giving forth a certain sound that no man may mistake us. So, though a prisoner given up to die, the Lord boldly declares His royalty though Pilate would pour derision upon Him in consequence thereof. O, for the Masters prudence to speak the Truth at the right time and for the Masters courage to speak it when the right time has come!

Soldiers of the Cross, learn of your Captain! Our Lords claim to royalty must have sounded very singular in Pilates ear. Jesus was, doubtless, very much careworn, sad and emaciated in appearance. He had spent the first part of the night in the garden in an agony. In the midnight hours he had been dragged from Annas to Caiaphas and from Caiaphas to Herod. Neither at daybreak had He been permitted to rest, so that from sheer weariness He must have looked very unlike a king. If you had taken some poor ragged creature in the street and said to him, Are you a king, then? the question could scarcely have been more sarcastic.

Pilate, in his heart, despised the Jews as such, but here was a poor Jew persecuted by His own people, helpless and friendless. It sounded like mockery to talk of a kingdom in connection with Him. Yet never earth saw a truer king! None of the line of Pharaoh, the family of Nimrod, or the race of the Caesars was so intrinsically imperial in Himself as He, or so deservedly reckoned a king among men by virtue of His descent, His achievements or His superior character. The carnal eye could not see this, but to the spiritual eye it was clear as noonday.

To this day, pure Christianity, in its outward appearance, is an equally unattractive object and wears upon its surface few royal tokens. It is without form or comeliness and when men see it there is no beauty that they should desire it. True, there is a nominal Christianity which is accepted and approved of menbut the pure Gospel is still despised and rejected. The real Christ of today among men is unknown and unrecognized as much as He was among His own nation 1,800 years ago! Evangelical doctrine is at a discount, holy living is censured and spiritual-mindedness is derided.

What? they say, This evangelical doctrine, do you call it the royal truth? Who believes it nowadays? Science has exploded it! There is nothing great about it! It may afford comfort to old women and to those who have not capacity enough for free thought, but its reign is over, never to return. As to living in separation from the world, it is called Puritanism or worse. Christ in doctrine. Christ in spirit. Christ in lifethe world cannot endure as King!

Christ chanted in cathedrals. Christ personified in lordly prelates. Christ surrounded by such as are in kings houses He is well enoughbut Christ honestly obeyed, followed and worshipped in simplicity, without pomp or formthey will not allow to reign over them. Few nowadays will side with the Truth of God their fathers bled for. The day for covenanting to follow Jesus through evil report and shame appears to have gone by. Yet, though men turn round upon us and say, Do you call your Gospel, Divine? Are you so preposterous as to believe that your religion comes from God and is to subdue the world?we boldly answerYes!

Even as beneath the peasants garb and the pale visage of the Son of Mary we can discern the Wonderful, the Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, so beneath the simple form of a despised Gospel we perceive the royal lineaments of Divine Truth! We care nothing about the outward apparel or the external housing of the Truth of Godwe love it for its own sake. To us the marble halls and the alabaster columns are nothingwe see more in the manger and the Cross. We are satisfied that Christ is the King, still, where He was likely to be kingand that is not among the great ones of the earth, nor among the mighty and the learnedbut among the base things of the world and the things which are not, which shall bring to nothing the things that are, for these has God from the beginning chosen to be His own.

Let us add that our Lords claim to be a king shall be acknowledged one day by all mankind! When Christ said to Pilate, according to our version, You say that I am a king, He virtually prophesied the future confession of all men. Some, taught by His Grace, shall in this life rejoice in Him as their altogether lovely King. Blessed be God, the Lord Jesus might look into the eyes of many of us and say, You say that I am a king, and we would reply, We do say it joyfully! But the day shall come when He shall sit upon His Great White Throne and then, when the multitudes shall tremble in the Presence of His awful majesty, even such as Pontius Pilate and Herod and the chief priests shall own that He is a king! Then to each of His astounded and overwhelmingly convinced enemies He might say, Now, O Despiser, you say that I am a king, for to Him every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that He is Lord!

Let us remember, here, that when our Lord said to Pilate, You say that I am king He was not referring to His Divine dominion. Pilate was not thinking of that at all, nor did our Lord, I think, refer to it. Yet, forget not that, as Divine, He is the King of kings and Lord of lords. We must never forget that, though He died in weakness as Man, yet He ever lives and rules as God. Nor do I think He referred to His mediatorial sovereignty which He possesses over the earth for His peoples sakefor the Lord has all power committed unto Him in Heaven and in earthand the Father has given Him power over all flesh that He may give eternal life to as many as are given Him. Pilate was not alluding to that, nor our Lord, either, in the first place.

But He was speaking of that rule which He personally exercises over the minds of the faithful by means of the Truth. You remember Napoleons saying, I have founded an empire by force and it has melted away. Jesus Christ established His kingdom by love and it stands to this day and will stand. That is the kingdom to which our Lords word refersthe kingdom of spiritual Truth in which Jesus reigns as Lord over those who are of the Truth. He claimed to be a king and the Truth which He revealed and of which He was the personification, is, therefore, the scepter of His empire. He rules by the force of the Truth of God over those hearts which feel the power of right and Truth and therefore willingly yield themselves to His guidance, believe His Word and are governed by His will.

It is as a spiritual Lord that Christ claims sovereignty among men! He is King over minds that love Him, trust Him and obey Him because they see in Him the Truth which their souls pine for. Other kings rule our bodies, but Christ our souls! Other kings govern by force, but He by the attractions of righteousnesstheirs is, to a great extent, a fictitious royalty, but His is true and finds its force in the Truth of God. So much, then, upon Christs claims to be a king.

II. Now, observe secondly that OUR LORD DECLARED THIS KINGDOM TO BE HIS MAIN OBJECT IN LIFE. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world. To set up His kingdom was the reason why He was born of the virgin. To be king of

men it was necessary for Him to be born. He was always the Lord of AllHe needed not to be born to be a king in that sensebut to be king through the power of Truth it was essential that He should be born in our nature.

Why so? I answer, first, because it seems unnatural that a ruler should be alien in nature to the people over whom he rules. An angelic king of men would be unsuitable. There could not exist the sympathy which is the cement of a spiritual empire. Jesus, that He might govern by force of love and truth alone, became of one Nature with mankindHe was a Man among men, a real Manbut a right noble and kingly man and so a King of men. But, again, the Lord was born that He might be able to save His people. Subjects are essential to a kingdoma king cannot be a king if there are none to govern.

All men must have perished through sin had not Christ come into the world and been born to save. His birth was a necessary step to His redeeming deathHis Incarnation was necessary to the Atonement. Moreover, truth never exerts such power as when it is embodied. Truth spoken may be defeated, but Truth acted out in the life of a man is Omnipotent through the Spirit of God. Now Christ did not merely speak the TruthHe was Truth. Had He been truth embodied in an angelic form, He would have possessed little power over our hearts and lives. But perfect Truth in a human form has royal power over renewed humanity. Truth embodied in flesh and blood has power over flesh and blood and therefore, for this purpose was He born.

So when you hear the bells ringing out at Christmas, think of the reason why Jesus was born! Dream not that He came to load your tables and fill your cupsin your mirth look higher than all earth-born things. When you hear that in certain Churches there are pompous celebrations and ecclesiastical displays, think not that Jesus was born for this purpose. No, but look within your hearts and say, For this purpose was He bornthat He might be a Kingthat He might rule through the Truth in the souls of a people who are, by Grace, made to love the Truth of God.

And then He added, For this cause came I into the world. That is, He came out of the bosom of the Father that He might set up His kingdom by unveiling the mysteries which were hid from the foundation of the world. No man can reveal the Counsel of God but One who has been with God! And the Son who has come forth of the ivory palaces of gladness announces to us tidings of great joy! For this cause He also came into the world from the obscure retirement of Josephs workshop, where, for many years He was hidden like a pearl in its shell. It was necessary that He should be made known and that the Truth to which He witnessed should be sounded in the ears of the crowd.

Since He was to be a King, He must leave seclusion and come forth to do battle for His Throne. He must address the multitudes on the hillside. He must speak by the seashore. He must gather disciples and send them forth by two and two to publish on the housetops the secrets of the mighty Truth of God! He came not forth because He loved to be seen of men or courted popularitybut for this purposethat the Truth being published, He might set up His kingdom. It was necessary that He should come out into the world and teach, or the Truth of God would not be known and consequently could not operate.

The sun must come forth like a bridegroom out of his chamber or the kingdom of light will never be established. The breath must come forth from the hiding place of the winds or life will never reign in the valley of dry bones. During three years our Lord lived conspicuously and emphatically came into the world. He was seen of men so closely as to be beheld, looked upon, touched and handled. He was intended to be a pattern and therefore it was necessary that He should be seen. The life of a man who lives in absolute retirement may be admirable for himself and acceptable with God, but it cannot be exemplary to men. For this cause the Lord came forth into the worldthat all He did might influence mankind.

His enemies were permitted to watch His every action and to endeavor to entrap Him in His speech. By way of test His friends saw Him in privacy and knew what He did in solitude, thus His whole life was reported. He was observed on the cold mountainside at midnight as well as in the midst of the great congregation. This was permitted to make the Truth known, for every action of His life was Truth and tended to set up the kingdom of Truth in the world. Let us pause here. Christ is a King. A King by force of Truth in a spiritual kingdom. For this purpose was He born. For this cause He came into the world.

Beloved, ask yourself this questionHas this purpose of Christs birth and life been answered in you? If not, what is Christmas to you? The choristers will sing, Unto us a Child is born; Unto us a Son is given. Is that true to you? How can it be unless Jesus reigns in you and is your Savior and your Lord? Those who can in truth rejoice in His birth are those who know Him as their bosom Lord, ruling their understanding by the Truth of His doctrine. He rules their admiration by the Truth of His life. He rules their affections by the Truth of His Person. To such He is not a personage to be portrayed with a crown of gold and a robe of purple like the common theatrical kings of men.

He is one brighter and more heavenly, whose crown is real, whose dominion is unquestionable, who rules by Truth and love! Do we know this King? This question may well come home to us, for, Beloved, there are many who say, Christ is my King, who know not what they say for they do not obey Him. He is the servant of Christ who trusts in Christ, who walks according to Christs mind and loves the Truths of God which Jesus has revealedall others are mere pretenders.

III. But now I must pass on. Our Lord, in the third place, REVEALED THE NATURE OF HIS ROYAL POWER. I have already spoken on that, but I must do so again. We should have thought the text would have run thusYou say that I am a king; to this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should establish My kingdom. It is not so in words, but so it must mean, for Jesus was not incoherent in His speech. We conclude that the words employed have the same meaning as that which the context suggests, only it is differently expressed.

If our Lord had said, That I might establish a kingdom, He might have misled Pilate. But when He availed Himself of the spiritual explanation and said that His kingdom was Truth and that the establishment of His kingdom was by bearing witness to the Truth of God, then, though Pilate did not understand Himfor it was far above his comprehensionyet, at any rate, he was not misled. Our Lord, in effect, tells us that the Truth of God is the preeminent Characteristic of His kingdom and that His royal power over mens hearts is through the Truth of God.

Now, the witness of our Lord among men was emphatically upon real and vital matters. He dealt not with fiction, but with factsnot with trifles, but with infinite realities. He speaks not of opinions, views, or speculations but of infallible verities. How many preachers waste time over what may be or may not be! Our Lords testimony was preeminently practical and matter-of-fact. It was full of verities and certainties.

I have sometimes, when hearing sermons, wished the preacher would come to the point and would deal with something that really concerned our souls welfare. What concern have dying men with the thousand trivial questions which are flitting around us? We have Heaven or Hell before us and death within a stones throwfor Gods sake do not trifle with us, but tell us the Truth at once! Jesus is king in His peoples souls because His preaching has blessed us in the grandest and most real manner and set us at rest upon points of boundless importance. He has not given us wellchiseled stones, but real bread! There are a thousand things which you may not know and you shall be very little the worse for not knowing thembut O, if you do not know that which Jesus has taughtit shall go ill with you!

If you are taught of the Lord Jesus you shall have rest for your cares, balm for your sorrows and satisfaction for your desires. Jesus gives sinners who believe in Him the Truths of God which they need to knowthe assurance of sin forgiven through His blood, favor ensured by His righteousnessand Heaven secured by His eternal life. Moreover, Jesus has power over His people because He testifies not to symbols but to the very substance of the Truth of God. The Scribes and Pharisees were very fluent upon sacrifices, offerings, oblations, tithes, fasting and the likebut what influence could all that exert over aching hearts?

Jesus has imperial power over contrite spirits because He tells them of His one real Sacrifice and of the perfection which He has secured for all Believers. The priests lost their power over the people because they went no further than the shadowand sooner or later all will do so who rest in the symbol. The Lord Jesus retains His power over His saints because He reveals the substance, for Grace and Truth are by Jesus Christ. What a loss of time it is to debate upon the fashion of a cape, or the manner of celebrating communion, or the color suitable for the clergymans robes in Advent, or the precise date of Easter! Vanity of vanities, all is vanity! Such trifles will never aid in setting up an everlasting kingdom in mens hearts!

Let us take care lest we also set great store on externals and miss the essential spiritual life of our holy faith. Christs kingdom is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit! The power of King Jesus in the hearts of His people lies much in the fact that He brings forth the unalloyed Truth of God without mixture of error. He has delivered to us pure light and no darkness. His teaching is no combination of Gods Word and mans inventions! It is no mixture of Inspiration and philosophysilver without dross is the wealth which He gives His servants. Men taught of His Holy Spirit to love the Truth of God recognize this fact and surrender their souls to the royal sway of the Lords Truth and it makes them free and sanctifies themnor can anything make them disown such a Sovereign, for as the Truth lives and abides in their hearts, so Jesus, who

is the Truth, abides also.

If you know what Truth is, you will as naturally submit yourselves to the teachings of Christ as ever children yield to a fathers rule. The Lord Jesus taught that worship must be true, spiritual and of the heart or else it would be worthless. He would not take sides with the temple at Gerizim or that on ZionHe declared that the time was come when those who worshipped God would worship Him in spirit and in truth. Regenerate hearts feel the power of this and rejoice that it emancipates them from the beggarly elements of carnal ritualism. They accept gladly the Truth of God that pious words of prayer or praise are vanity unless the heart has living worship within it. In the great truth of spiritual worship Believers possess a Magna Charta dear as life itself. We refuse to be again subject to the yoke of bondage and we cleave to our emancipating King.

Our Lord taught, also, that all false living was base and loathsome. He poured contempt on the phylacteries of hypocrites and the broad borders of the garments of oppressors of the poor. With Him ostentatious alms, long prayers, frequent fasts and the tithe of mint and cumin were all nothing when practiced by those who devoured widows houses. He cared nothing for white-washed sepulchers and platters with outsides made cleanHe judged the thoughts and intents of the heart. What woes were those which He denounced upon the formalists of His day! It must have been a grand sight to have seen the lowly Jesus roused to indignation thundering forth peal on peal His denunciations of hypocrisy!

Elijah never called fire from Heaven half so grandly. Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, is the loudest roll of Heavens artillery! See how like another Samson Jesus slays the shams of His age and piles them heaps upon heaps to rot forever! Shall not He who teaches us true living be King of all the sons of Truth? Let us even now salute Him as Lord and King. Besides, Beloved, our Lord came not only to teach us the Truth of God but a mysterious power goes forth from Him through that Spirit which rests on Him without measurewhich subdues chosen hearts to truthfulness and then guides truthful hearts into fullness of peace and joy.

Have you never felt, when you have been with Jesus, that a sense of His purity has made you yearn to be purged of all hypocrisy and every false way? Have you not been ashamed of yourself when you have come forth from hearing His Word, from watching His life and, above all, from enjoying His fellowshipquite ashamed that you have not been more real, more sincere, more true, more upright and so a more loyal subject of the truthful King? I know you have! Nothing about Jesus is false or even dubious. He is transparentfrom head to foot He is Truth in public, Truth in private, Truth in word and Truth in deed. Hence it is that He has a kingdom over the pure in heart and is vehemently extolled by all those whose hearts are set upon righteousness.

IV. And now, in the fourth place, our Lord DISCLOSED THE METHOD OF HIS CONQUEST. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness for the truth. Christ never yet set up His kingdom by force of arms. Mohammed drew the sword and converted men by giving them the choice of death or conversion. But Christ said to Peter, Put up your sword into its sheath. No compulsion ought to be used with any man to lead him to receive any opinion, much less to induce him to espouse the Truth of God. Falsehood requires the rack of the Inquisition, but Truth needs not such unworthy aid. Her own beauty and the Spirit of God are her strength.

Moreover, Jesus used no arts of priestcraft or tricks of superstition. The foolish are persuaded of a dogma by the fact that it is promulgated by a learned doctor of high degree, but our Rabboni wears no sounding titles of honor. The vulgar imagine that a statement must be correct if it emanates from a person who wears lawn sleeves, or from a place where the banners are of costly workmanship and the music of the sweetest kindthese things are arguments with those who are amenable to no other.

But Jesus owes nothing to His apparel and influences none by artistic arrangements. None can say that He reigns over men by the glitter of pomp or the fascination of sensuous ceremonies. His battle-ax is the Truth of God! Truth is both His arrow and His bow, His sword and His buckler. Believe me, no kingdom is worthy of the Lord Jesus but that which has its foundations laid in indisputable veritiesJesus would scorn to reign by the help of a lie! True Christianity was never promoted by policy or guile, by doing a wrong thing, or saying a false thing. Even to exaggerate truth is to beget error and so to pull down the Truth we would set up.

There are some who say, Bring out one line of teaching and nothing else, lest you should seem inconsistent. What have I to do with that? If it is Gods Truth, I am bound to deliver it all and to keep back none of it! Politics in religion, like a sailing vessel dependent on the wind, tacks about here and therebut the true man like a vessel having its motive power within, goes straight onward in the very teeth of the hurricane. When God puts Truth into mens souls, He teaches them never to tack or trim but to hold to the Truth of God at all hazards. This is what Jesus always did. He bore witness to the Truth and there left the matter being guileless as a lamb.

Here it will be fit to answer the question, What Truth did He witness to? Ah, my Brothers and Sisters, what Truth did He not witness to? Did He not mirror all Truth in His life? See how clearly He set forth the Truth that God is love. How melodious, how like a peal of Christmas bells was His witness to the Truth that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him might not perish but have everlasting life. He also bore witness that God is just. How solemnly He proclaimed that fact! His flowing wounds, His dying agonies rang out that solemn Truth as with a knell which even the dead might hear!

He bore witness to Gods demand for truth in the inward partsfor He often dissected men and laid them bare and opened up their secret thoughts and revealed themand made them see that only sincerity could bear the eyes of God. Did He not bear witness to the Truth that God had resolved to make for Himself a new people and a true people? Was He not always telling of His sheep who heard His voice? Of the wheat which would be gathered into the garner and of the precious things which would be treasured up when the bad would be thrown away? Therein He was bearing witness that the false must die, that the unreal must be consumed, that the lie must rust and rotbut that the true, the sincere, the gracious, the vital shall stand every test and outlast the sun. In an age of shams He was always sweeping away pretences and establishing Truth and right by His witness.

And now, Beloved, this is the way in which Christs kingdom is to be set up in the world. For this cause was the Church born and for this end came she into the world, that she might set up Christs kingdom by bearing witness to the Truth. I long, my Beloved, to see you all witness bearers. If you love the Lord, bear witness to the Truth! You must do it personally. You must also do it collectively. Never join any Church whose creed you do not entirely and unfeignedly believe, for if you do, you act a lie and are, moreover, a partaker in the error of other mens testimonies. I would not for a moment say anything to retard Christian unity, but there is something before unity and that is, Truth in the inward parts and honesty before God.

I dare not be a member of a Church whose teaching I knew to be false in vital points. I would sooner go to Heaven alone than belie my conscience for the sake of company. You may say, But I protest against the error of my Church. Dear Friends, how can you consistently protest against it when you profess to agree with it by being a member of the Church which avows it? If you are a minister of a Church, you do in effect say before the world, I believe and teach the doctrines of this Church, And if you go into the pulpit and say you do not believe them, what will people conclude? I leave you to judge that.

I saw a Church tower the other day, with a clock upon it, which startled me by pointing to half-past ten when I thought it was only nine. I was, however, quite relieved when I saw that another face of the clock indicated a quarter past eight. Well, I thought, Whatever time it may be, that clock is wrong for it contradicts itself. So if I hear a man say one thing by his Church membership and another by his private protest, why, whatever may be right he certainly is not consistent with himself! Let us bear witness to the Truth of God since there is great need of doing so just now, for witnessing is in ill repute.

The age extols no virtue so much as liberality, and condemns no vice so fiercely as bigotryalashonesty. If you believe anything and hold it firmly, all the dogs will bark at you. Let them bark! They will have done when they are tired! You are responsible to God and not to mortal men. Christ came into the world to bear witness to the Truth and He has sent you to do the sametake care that you do it, offend or pleasefor it is only by this process that the kingdom of Christ is to be set up in the world.

V. Now, the last thing is this. Our Savior, having spoken of His kingdom and the way of establishing it, DESCRIBED HIS SUBJECTS Everyone that is of the truth hears My voice. That is to say wherever the Holy Spirit has made a man a lover of the Truth of God he always recognizes Christs voice and yields to it. Where are the people who love the Truth? Well, we need not enquire long. We need not Diogenes lantern to find themthey will come to the lightand where is light but in Jesus?

Where are those that would not seem to be what they are not? Where are the men who desire to be true in secret and before the Lord? They may be discovered where Christs people are discoveredthey will be found listening to those who bear witness to the Truth of God. Those who love pure Truth and know what Christ is, will be sure to fall in love with Him and hear His voice. Judge you, then, this day, Brothers and Sisters, whether you are of the Truth or notfor if you love the Truth, you know and obey the voice which calls you away from your old sins, from false refuges, from evil habitsfrom everything which is not after the Lords mind. You have heard Him in your conscience rebuking you for that of the false which remains in you. You have heard Him encouraging you for that of the true which is struggling there.

I have done when I have urged on you one or two reflections. The first is, Beloved, dare we avow ourselves on the side of Truth at this hour of its humiliation? Do we own the royalty of Christs Truth when we see it every day dishonored? If Gospel Truth were honored everywhere, it would be an easy thing to say I believe it. But now, in these days, when it has no honor among men, dare we cleave to it at all costs? Are you willing to walk with the Truth through the mire and through the slough? Have you the courage to profess unfashionable Truth? Are you willing to believe the Truth against which science, falsely so-called, has vented her spleen? Are you willing to accept the Truth although it is said that only the poor and uneducated will receive it? Are you willing to be the disciple of the Galilean whose Apostles were fishermen? Verily, verily, I say unto you, in that day in which the Truth in the Person of Christ shall come forth in all its glory, it shall go ill with those who were ashamed to own it and its Master!

In the next place, if we have heard Christs voice, do we recognize our life-object? Do we feel, For this end were we born and for this cause came we into the world, that we might bear witness to the Truth of God? I do not believe that you, my dear Brother, came into the world to be a linen draper, or an auctioneer and nothing else! I do not believe that God created you, my Sister, to be merely and only a seamstress, a nurse, or a housekeeper! Immortal souls were not created for merely mortal ends. For this purpose was I born, that, with my voice in this place and everywhere else, I might bear witness to the Truth of God! You acknowledge that then I beg you, each one, to acknowledge that you have a similar mission. I could not occupy the pulpit, says one. Never mind thatbear witness for the Truth of God where you are and in your own sphere. O waste no time or energy, but at once testify for Jesus!

And now, last of all, do you own Christs superlative dignity, Beloved? Do you see what a King, Christ is? Is He such a King to you as none other could be? It was but yesterday a prince entered one of our great towns and they crowded all their streets to welcome himyet he was but a mortal man! And then at night they illuminated their city and made the heavens glow as though the sun had risen before his appointed hour. Yet what had this prince done for them? Loyal subjects they were and that was the reason of their joy. But O, Beloved, we need not ask, What has Christ done for us?we will ask, What has He not done for us?

Emmanuel, we owe all to You! You are our new Creator, our Redeemer from the lowest pit of Hell! In Yourself resplendent and altogether lovely, Your beauties command our adoration! You have lived for us. You have bled for us. You have died for us! And You are preparing a kingdom for us. And You are coming again to take us to be with You where You are! All this commands our love. All hail! All hail! You are our King and we worship You with all our soul! Beloved, I beseech you, love Christ and live for Him while you can. Work while opportunity serves.

While I have been laid aside and able to do nothing, the great sorrow of my heart has been my inability to do Him service. I heard my Brothers shouting in the battlefield and I saw my comrades marching to the fight and I lay like a wounded soldier in the ditch and could not stirexcept that I breathed a prayer that you might all be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

This was my thoughtOh, that I had preached better while I could preach and lived more for the Master while I could serve Him! Dont incur such regrets in the future by present sluggishness, but live now for Him who died for you! If any present in this assembly have never obeyed our King, may they come to trust in Him tonight, for He is a tender Savior and is willing to receive the biggest and filthiest sinner who will come to Him! Whoever trusts in Him will never find Him fail for He will save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him!

May He bring you to His feet and reign over you in love. Amen.   
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THE KING IN PILATES HALL   
NO. 2826

A SERMON   
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, APRIL 12, 1903.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, MAY 4, 1884.

**Pilate therefore said unto Him, Are You a king, then? Jesus answered, You say that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the Truth. Everyone that is of the Truth hears My voice. John 18:37.**

OUR Lord was being cross-questioned by an unscrupulous, vacillating, contemptuous Roman official. So, as our blessed Lord and Master did not escape the ordeal of malicious questioning, let no disciple of His imagine that he will escape. The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he is as his master, and the servant as his lord. Sooner or later the day will come when the profession that you have made shall be questioned and tested. To some of Christs followers, this time of trial comes very soon after their conversion. Others are assailed at a later period. The cool, calm, calculating doubter suggests a question about this or that and everything that can be moved is shaken. Just as Pilate said to Christ, Are you a king, then? so will men say to you, Are you a Christian? Are you really believing in Jesus? Have you been born-again? Are you a new creature in Christ Jesus? Are you fully sanctified? And they will make these enquiries in such a tone of contemptuous ridicule that you will need all your strength, all your patience, an increase in your faith and in all your graces if you are to witness a good confession, as your Master did before Pontius Pilate.

When such a time comes to you, I cannot suggest to you a better model for your answer than that which your Lord gave to the Roman governor. At first, He did not answer Pilate. Jesus gave him no answer. And a large portion of the inquisitive questioning to which we have to submit is not worth answering. Nor is it worthwhile for you and me to go up and down the world fishing for questions, or inviting the objections and quibbling of skeptics because we think ourselves so exceedingly clever that we are easily able to answer them. Believe me, you will have quite enough to do if you catch on your shield all the fiery darts that come without your invitation! You will have no need to ask to be led into temptation, or to seek permission to rush into it. Our Savior invited no questions from PilateHe did not even condescend to answer all that Pilate had to say to Himand the best thing for a Christian to do, in many of his times of trial, is to say, with David, I was dumb with silence. I held my peace, even from good; and my sorrow was stirred.

When the Master did reply, He set us an example that we may safely follow. Observe how He replied without any tartness, without even the appearance of anger. He was very courteous towards Pilate. He put what He had to say in a fashion which would commend itself to him. He knew that Pilates chief jealousy was about His being a king and He tried to remove it by explaining that His Kingdom was not of this world, otherwise His servants would fight for Him so that He should not be delivered to the Jews. I cannot conceive of replies, to such a man as Pilate, more suitable, more calculated to have done him good if there had been any soil in Pilates heart upon which the Good Seed could have fallen with the hope of growth. I pray that you and I, when we are assailed and questioned, may be wise as serpents and harmless as doves, giving a reason for the hope that is in us with meekness and fear, answering not with the objective of displaying our own skill or learning, but always with the motive of seeking the good of the questioner, if, perhaps, God may grant unto him repentance that he may come to the knowledge of the Truth of God. I admire and hold up as an example to you the exceeding sweetness of our Saviors replies to His carping critic.

Note, however, how bold He was, as well as wise and gentleYou say that I am a king. He does not flinch from admitting the Truth, however distasteful it may be to His hearer. If this Truth troubles Pilate after our Saviors explanation that His Kingdom is not of this world, He cannot deny the fact that He really is a King, for He must speak the Truth come what may of it. I fear that sometimes, in our endeavors to be sweet in disposition, we have not been strong in principle. Charity is a word that is greatly cried up nowadays, but, often it means that in trying to be courteous, we have also been traitorous. Our speech has been soft and smooth, but it has not been sincere and true. Did you ever catch yourself wishing to trim off the corners of a Truth of Godor, at least, seeking if you could not omit something that might prejudice your hearer? If so, let me tell you plainly that he who wishes to alter any truth has already began to lie! Though he may not actually do it, yet the very wish to change the Truth of God in any degree is a proof of perversity of heart which needs to be repented of and forgiven! We have already turned aside from the right path when we do not dare to say what God has taught us. Our Savior never acted like thatHe was always true, transparent, clear, faithful. There was never in Him any holding back in the least degree. As He said to Pilate, You say that I am a king. To this end was I born and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the Truth. Oh, that we might learn from our Savior the sacred art of blending Christ-like gentleness with holy courageand Christ-like courage with gentleness such as His!

Observe, toofor it is worthy of noticehow modestly and unobtrusively our Savior answered Pilates questioning. It is an unhappy circumstance that some men seem as if they cannot speak boldly without having somewhat of pride mixed with their courage. Full often our very virtues lie quite near to the borders of vice. We aim at what is right, but, alas, we go beyond it, or we fall short of it, or hit the target where our shots do not count. Ah, Lord, what imperfect creatures we are! But our Savior was perfect in every respect. He only answered the questions of Pilate when it was right for Him to answer them and even then He seemed to take the words wherewith to frame His answer out of Pilates own mouthYou say that I am a king. It is even as you have said. Our gracious Master is very straightforward, yet how modest He is! He seems to hide Himself even behind Pilates words. He does not hide the Truth, yet, in a perfectly sinless way, He somewhat conceals Himself. I wish we could imitate Him in that respect. Even when we are, like Bayard, without fear, and without reproach, we are very apt, at the same time, to be without any desire for the conflict against evil, or any wish to impose ourselves in the least degree upon the attention of others, even if a protest would be right from us. We never see any of this false shame in our Savior. So, if we have at all given way to it in the past, let us never repeat that sin.

The words of Paul, in his First Epistle to Timothy, are very properly rendered in the Revised Version, Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed the good confession. It was more than a good confession that our Lord Jesus witnessed before Pontius Pilate, so the definite article is rightly used and, the good confession, stands out prominently as an example for all His followers. It is concerning that good confession that I am about to speak as the Holy Spirit shall graciously guide me.

I. First, let us askWHAT WAS THE GOOD CONFESSION THAT JESUS WITNESSED BEFORE PONTIUS PILATE?   
I think the good confession of our Lord was, first, His avowal of His KingshipYou say that I am a king. Dear Friends, do not forget that our Savior was, at that time, a prisoner in bonds, on trial for His life. As far as the eye could see, He appeared to be absolutely in the power of Pilatea man who was destitute of any kind of conscience and who cared nothing about what means he employed so long as he could attain his own evil ends. There stands Jesus, a bound Prisoner, before one who can order Him to be put to death. And the judge contemptuously says to Him, Are you a king, then? And He answers, with great gentleness, but most decidedly and undoubtedly, I am a king, even as You say. I think I see Pilates lip curlI can imagine the supreme contempt with which he looked upon the miserable Victim before him, disowned by His own countrymen, who had brought Him there because, in their hate, they wished to have Him put to deathyet He talks about being a king! It may have been a merry jest for Pilate at the moment, but he did not dare to make it one afterwards. His wife would have stopped him had he sought to find amusement in Jesus of Nazareth!   
At the time, it must all have seemed very strange to him. It takes a great deal of courage for a man to avow that which seems to be improbable and, indeed, impossible. He knows it is true, but the other man thinks it is a piece of fanaticism. Ridiculous nonsense, he says, and he scorns the idea with a sarcastic grin. It is not easy, then, for a humbleminded spirit just as determinedly to acknowledge it. I believe that there is many a man who could stand upon a public platform and announce his convictions to an infuriated crowd, who would not dare to say the same things to a single individual. It took more courage for Christ to speak to Pilate, alone, as He did, than it has done for many a man to stand and burn at the stake, yet the Savior did it. Calmly and deliberately, He avowed the Truth of God, blessed be His holy name! I am a King, He said, and so He is. In our hearts, we acknowledge His Sovereignty over us as individuals and His supremacy over the entire Church. No, more, His Father has given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as He has given Him. He has said it, Yet have I set My King upon My holy hill of Zion. And He shall reign forever and ever, and all loyal hearts cry, Hallelujah! It was a good confession for the Nazarene, clothed in the common smock frock of a Galilean peasant, with gory sweat still upon His brow, with the ropes that bound Him still about His wrists, with the howling savagery of His countrymen behind Him, to say to Pilate, I am a King.   
Next, Christs good confession was His announcement of a spiritual Kingdom. Pilate could not comprehend what He meant when He said, My Kingdom is not of this world; if My Kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews. A spiritual Kingdom! Pilate would not have given the smallest Roman coin for such a kingdom as that! Our Saviors own countrymen did not understand what He meant by a spiritual Kingdom not of this world. They were looking for a temporal prince, an earthly leader who would deliver them from the Roman yoke, but Jesus asserts that His Kingdom, whatever it is, and wherever it is, is a spiritual thing! This is the testimony that we are also trying to bear today and, sometimes we have to bear it before the very temporal power that thinks the church to be an instrument to be used for its own purposesa sort of mental and moral police force to keep people in orderthe officers themselves to be kept in order and dressed, governed, fed and maintained by an Act of Parliament and not able to lift so much as a little finger should the State forbid them to do so! This is a doctrine which needs some courage to utter it even now, but it is to be spoken, and must be spoken more and more loudly! Christs Kingdom is not of this world! It borrows no power from the secular arm and would not accept it if it were offered. It is a rule of spirit over spirit, of mind over mind, of the Truth of God over the souls of menand that man is a faithful witness for Christ who can unflinchingly bear this testimony even before the greatest and the proudest of the land! Our Savior did so when He said to Pilate, My Kingdom is not of this world.   
Another part of Christs good confession was a declaration of His life purposeTo this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the Truth. There is many a man who is pursuing a calling which he would scarcely like to acknowledge. And there are others who think that their calling can be best pursued by stealthy, crafty, Jesuitical plans. But it was not so with the Savior. He boldly declared the purpose for which He had come into the worldwhy should He conceal it? He who seeks to bear witness to the Truth of God should be true enough to declare what the objective of his witness is. And the Savior did so, before Pilate, and wherever He was! All His life He was a witness to the TruthHe was the truest man who ever lived! It is beautiful to notice the Truth of the Lord Jesus Christ even in small particulars. There is no rhetoric about our Saviors speech, because rhetoric is too often but a lie. He speaks as simply as a child. There is no attempt at any display of learning in our Saviors teaching. Because it is all solid Truth and Divine Revelation, there is no need that He should use the jargon of the schools, or call Himself a Rabbi or Doctor.   
He spoke with authority and you can see how simply, how plainly, how heartily He did it. There was no particular garb to attract attention to the Savior, no priestly robes with which to dignify a kind of babyish authority. He was a Man among men, speaking what He knew in the language of the people which they could understand. There was no pomp, or ceremony, or show about His life and, especially, there was no sham or pretence. He was what He seemed to be, and He seemed to be just what He was! If you look upon any other man, you can see some attempt to hide his deficiencies, or to increase his influence by an appearance of greater strength than actually exists. In the Savior, you see Him altogether as He is. He wears His heart upon His sleeve. He speaks straight on and never turns aside to crooked ways. He never blushes or stammerswhy should He? What has He to conceal? His teaching is delivered as from a mountaintop and men may stand and gazeand, the longer they gaze, the better will they see what He wishes them to see! He has no curtain behind which there is something concealedall is as open as the day. As a truthful man, He was a fit witness to bear testimony to the Truth of God. And what a breaker of idols, what a smasher of all shams He was! Pharisees and Sadducees, and Herodians got but short notice from Him. Nothing false could stand before Him. Even a scourge of small cords, when it was held in His hands, sufficed to sweep the buyers and sellers from the temple! And when He used the sledgehammer of denunciation, who could resist Him? His fan was in His hand and He thoroughly purged His floor. And this was His life purposethat He might bear witness to the Truth of Godand He acknowledged that purpose even before Pontius Pilate.   
Our Savior also witnessed the good confession by His acknowledgement that there is such a thing as positive TruthTo this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the Truth. There is need of just such witness as that today. Now be very careful upon that point, says one. Do you mean to say that there really is such a thing as the Truth? By your leave, dear Sir, or without it, I will venture to assert that there is! That reply is a very bigoted one because if there is a Doctrine that is the Truth, then that which is contrary to it is a lie. Precisely so, and by your leave, or without your leave, I say again that it is so and it must be so in the natural order of things. If this Doctrine is true, then that which contradicts it cannot be true! If God has spoken thus, that which is opposed to God and His Truth, is not from Him and cannot stand on the same footing with that which is Divinely revealed. It takes a good deal of courage to say that, nowadays. If you go into society, you will get three cheers if you declare that you are an Agnosticthat you do not know anythingyou are not sure of anything.   
Others say that whatever a man believes, or does not believe, it really doesnt matter provided he is perfectly sincere. That is to say, if a man sincerely takes cyanide, it will not kill him! And if he sincerely goes without food, he will not starve. And if he sincerely refuses to breathe, he will do as well as those who do breathe, which is another lie. The statue of Christ was set up among the statues of Plato, Socrates and other notable menand some thought it was an honor to Christ, but it was not. They would crown Christ, so they say, among the great ones of earth. Ah, but they cannot crown Him unless they crown Him Lord of all. Our blessed Savior is honestly intolerant! He says, He that believes and is baptized shall be saved, but He that believes not shall be damned. Because He loves the souls of men, He will not bolster up the fiction of universal charity. And even before the Broad-church or No-church PilateHe says that He has come to bear witness to the Truth. So there is the Truth, and that which is contrary to it is not Truth!

One other point in our Lords good confession was His separation of characters, for He went on to say to Pilateand I fear that most of us would have left out that sentenceEveryone that is of the Truth hears My voice. Do you hear that declaration, Pilate? You are the Roman procuratora very great manand this poor Prisoner of yours, whose life is now at your mercy, tells you plainly that everyone that is of the Truth hears His voice. Then, Pilate, if you are of the Truth, you will have to sit at His feet and listen to His words, and learn of Him! I can well conceive what Pilate thought as he turned on his heels and contemptuously asked, What is truth? He had heard quite enough of such talk as thathe did not want any more of such close dealing. But therein lies the Glory of the Master, that He is not content with merely teaching Truth of God, but, in His good confession before Pontius Pilate, He presses it home even upon His judge! And He divides and separates between the precious and the vile. So must you and I do, dear Friends, if we are faithful followers of the faithful Witness.   
I dare not preach to this congregation as if you were all Christians, for you are not. I dare not deliver even one discourse under the delusion that all my hearers are saved, for, alas, they are not. This is the fault with multitudes of sermonsthat they seem to carry the whole congregation to Heaven when possibly the major part of those present may be going down to Hell! That will not do. Remember what the Lord said to the Prophet Jeremiah, If you take forth the precious from the vile, you shall be as My mouth. But if there is no winnowing fan in our hand to separate the chaff from the wheat, we are not like Christ, nor has Christ sent us on His service. In this good confession of His, we see how clearly and solemnlygently, I admit, but still most decidedlyHe made a division and separation of characters and gave a test by which Pilate could judge himself if he had been willing to do so.   
II. The time will not suffice for me to go fully into all the teaching of my text, but I want to ask, in the second placeTO WHAT TRUTH DID OUR LORD WITNESS?   
He said to Pilate that He was bornthat proves His Humanity. He also said that He came into the world and that, I think, shows His Divinity as well as His Humanity. He came on purpose to bear witness to the Truth and I believe that the life of Christ witnessed not only to all Doctrinal Truth, but also to everything that is true, especially to true-heartedness, simplicity, sincerity. His life was a testimony against all guile, craftiness, cunning, concealmentin that sense it was as testimony to the Truth of God.   
But with regard to special Truths to which He testified, did not His very coming here and being born, bear witness to the grand Truth that God is love and that God loves men? The Infinite takes upon Himself the nature and form of an Infant. The Illimitable is encased within a human body. The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. We never can have a clearer testimony to the thoughtful care of God to men than we find in the coming of the Son of God as the Son of Man, except this that, being found in fashion as a Man, He proved the love of God to sinners by the tears which He wept over the guilty and perishing and, best of all, by the blood which He shed for many for the remission of sins. As you see Christ dying on the accursed tree, say, Behold, what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us. He wills not the death of any, but longs that they should turn unto Him and live. The Saviors death for the guilty proves that God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. All His life the Savior was bearing witness to this grand Truth of God. Oh, that we may, none of us, dare to doubt it after He has backed it up by a life of self-abnegation and a death of sublime self-sacrifice!   
He also bore witness, all His life, to the spirituality of true religion. He was always teaching Truth like thisGod is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. He wore no phylactery, He assumed no airs of an ascetic. Even in His eating and drinking, He was like other men, insomuch that they said of Him that He was a man gluttonous, and a wine bibbera vile charge, without an atom of truth in it! He taught that true religion consisted not in long prayers, but in entering into the closet and sincerely seeking the Fathers face. It was not fasting thrice in the week, but it was truly praying, God be merciful to me, a sinner. It was not giving alms in public and sounding a trumpet before him, and in secret devouring widows houses, but it consisted in love to God and love to man. It was the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart that Jesus preachedand He grandly witnessed against all the idolatrous and false forms of faith which, even down to this day, prostitute His blessed name!   
In that sad hour our Lord Jesus was also a wonderful Witness to the enmity of men to God. He in whom there was no roughness or sternness, as there was in John the Baptist, came as the Messenger of love and mercy, for God sent Him not into the world to condemn the world, but that the world, through Him, might be saved. He was the great Householders Son, who was, last of all sent to receive the fruits of the vineyard, but the husbandmen said, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. The men of this world were never so basethey never displayed so much of their utter malice against God as when they took His Son and put Him to a cruel and ignominious death. This was the culmination of human guilt. All the adulteries, murders, unnatural vices and accursed blasphemies that had ever defiled the race of mankind have not so certainly proved it to be a desperately fallen thing as the murder of the Son of God, the Savior and the Friend of men! This appalling crime of Deicide stands out without a parallel in the history of the universe! There was no guilt in the Lord Jesus for which He deserved to die, yet, with wicked hands, they crucified and slew Him.   
Our Savior was also always a Witness to the great necessity of a new creation, a change of heart, a regeneration. To Nicodemus He said, You must be born-again. And to His disciples, Except you are converted and become as little children, you shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. He also preached the absolute necessity of faith in Himself and did not mince the matter in the leastHe that believes on the Son has everlasting life: and He that believes not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him. To all this Jesus steadfastly witnessed in life and in death.   
And to this Truth of God He also bore witness, that salvation was to be found only in Himself. As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. If any man thirsts, let Him come unto Me and drink. His teaching was always concerning Himself I am the way, the truth, and the life. Come unto Me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. He never hesitated to bear witness to the Truth of God so it was but natural that part of His good confession before Pilate should be this plain declaration, To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the Truth.   
III. Now I will try briefly to answer a third questionWHAT HAD THIS GOOD CONFESSION OF JESUS TO DO WITH PILATE?   
I answer, first, that it gave Pilate a reason for acting justly. It ought to have helped to stir any little conscience that Pilate still had and, also, to allay the jealousy which he may have felt because of the Saviors royal claims. Our Lord spoke thus out of kindness to Pilate.   
I think, however, that the main reason for our Saviors testimony was that it gave Pilate an opportunity to learn the Truth. Had his soul been like the good soilhad he really ever been the subject of Sovereign Grace, he would have said to Jesus, I will gladly hear what this Truth is if you will tell me. He would, at least, have spared time enough to hear from his strange Prisoner what this Truth was. There must have been an unusual force about our Saviors few short sentences that ought to have convinced even Pontius Pilate of His evident sincerity. Those eyes, so gentle, yet so piercing, must have looked Pilate through and through. The tone of His voice must have been very different from anything to which Pilate had been accustomed in the courts of Nero. Jesus spoke as no other man had ever spoken in Pilates Hall beforeand had there been anything hopeful about him, he would have said, Good Master, tell me what that Truth is to which You bear witness.   
And I say to you who are not converted, if you desire to be right with God, you will want to know what this Truth is for which the Lord Jesus lived and died. And when you do know it, if there is the right principle in your heart, then you will believe it and, believing it, you will assuredly be saved! There is such life-giving Truth in the Saviors teaching that you have but to hear it, and turn it over in your mind, and weigh it with the best judgment that you have, to be convinced that it is most certainly true! So I put it to youif it is true, will you not believe it? Believing it, will you not yield to it and let it reign over your whole being, for it is the Truth of God from the mouth of the King? It is the scepter in the hand of King Jesus with which He rules over the hearts of all His loyal subjects!   
IV. Now, to finish, I have to askWHAT HAS THIS TO DO WITH OURSELVES?   
It has something to do with everyone of us, whether we acknowledge Christ or not. First, it suggests to our hearts this questionAre we of the Truth? For, if we are of the Truth, we shall hear Christs voice! It is the voice of the King eternal, immortal, invisible! He is the King of Truth and He rules over truthful minds. Coming to be the Chief Witness to all Truth, He really occupies the throne of Truth. Now, dear Friends, are we of the Truth? For, if we are not, we shall not accept Christ. But if we are, we shall be glad to have Him as our King. I ask any man or woman here who has up to now refused Christ, whether he is not conscious of something missing from his life? Are you not sometimes half-inclined to believe in Jesus? Do you not have to do violence to your conscience by what you call, reason, but by what I venture to say is a most unreasonable travesty of all good reasoning? If you would but let that reason of yours go its own way and follow the track of the Truth of God, I believe that, before long, by Gods Grace, you would be sitting at the Saviors feet and learning of Him!

The next thing that this testimony of Christ has to do with us is this. If, on our behalf, He witnessed the good confession for the Truth of God before Pontius Pilate, then it behooves you and me, not only to believe, but to bear witness to the Truth. Brothers and Sisters in Jesus, this looks to me to be but a small thing for us to do. If the Son of God has come into this world on our behalf and has not been ashamed to call us brethren, and to espouse our cause even at the cost of His life, I say that it looks to me to be but a small thing that He should ask of us that, if with our heart we believe in Him, we should with our mouth make confession of Himthat, if we believe in Him, we should also be baptized in His name, for it is His will that we should make an open confession before men if we really are His disciples.   
There are new fashions in theology and new gods lately come up, and even new Christs and all manner of nonsense and novelty. But I am a follower of the old Christ who is the same yesterday, today and forever and I glory in being a fool for Christs sake if it is a foolish thing to follow the Man of Nazareth, the Christ of Calvary who died as the Substitute for all who believe in Himthat by the shedding of His precious blood He might reconcile them unto God forever!   
I appeal to some who I believe really do love my Lord and Master, but who are, like Saul of old, hiding away out of sight. Are you never going forth to fight for your King? Will you still continue in the ways of the world and yet profess to be a lover of the Lord? Cowards that you are, come out boldly for Jesus! If you are on Christs side, acknowledge it. There never was a cause that better deserved to be openly confessed than His! If Christ is God, follow Him! But if Satan is God, serve him. If the world is worth your love, give your love to the world and say sodo not come sneaking in among Christians as if you belonged to them! But if the Lord Jesus Christ is worthy of your love, give it to Him and say that you have done so. Come to the front, unite with His people, share the scorn that falls upon them and whenever any man wishes to set Christ in the pillory, say to Him, Put me there, too, for I am one with Him and have taken up His cause. When He comesand He soon will come in all the Glory of His Father and of His holy angels, he who has denied Him before men, He will deny before the assembled universe! But he who has confessed Him before men, him will He confess in the Presence of His Father and of His holy angels. May that be my lot, and yours, dear Friends, without a single exception, for His dear names sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 18:28-40; PSALM 2.**

John 18:28. Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas unto the Hall of Judgment: That is to say, Pilates Hall. Pilate, at that time, was probably residing in one of the old and sumptuous palaces of Herod, there holding His court during the time of the Passover.

28. And it was early. They were very eager to prove their enmity to Christ. They had spent the night and the earliest moments of the dawn in examining their illustrious Prisoner, condemning Him, abusing Him and now they were off to Pilate.

28. And they themselves went not into the Judgment Hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the Passover. What could defile such wretches as these? Yet they were afraid of ceremonial defilement, though neither afraid nor ashamed to saturate their hands in the blood of Jesus!

29. Pilate then went out unto them. He loathed and detested them, yet, for his own evil purposes, he would yield to their wishes and whims.   
29, 30. And said, What accusation bring you against this Man? They answered and said unto him, If He were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered Him up unto you. As much as to say, You may take that for granted. We would not have brought Him if He had not done wrong. You need not look into the matter, we have already heard the evidence, and convicted Him, and so saved you all the trouble of trying Him. We only bring Him here for you to condemn Him.   
31. Then said Pilate unto them, You take Him, and judge Him according to your law. That is your way of doing such things, but it is not a method into which we shall fall. Our law does not condemn a man before it hears the evidence against him. I am not going to be your tool, to put this Man to death without hearing what is laid to His charge, and the proofs of His guilt. If you want that done, you must do it yourselves.   
31. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death. You Romans have taken from us the power of life and death, and we want Him put to death. There was a clear confession that nothing short of Christs death would satisfy them.   
32. That the sayings of Jesus might be fulfilled, which He spoke, signifying what death He should die. Crucifixion was a Roman, not a Jewish method of capital punishment, so God overruled the wanton wickedness of the worst of men for the accomplishment of His own eternal purposes, without, however, diminishing their responsibility and guilt in the least degree. It was by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God that Christ was put to death, yet it was with wicked hands that they took Him and crucified Him.   
33. Then Pilate entered into the Judgment Hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto Him, Are you the King of the Jews? He did not look much like it. There was little enough about His appearance or His apparel to suggest the idea of royalty.   
34, 35. Jesus answered Him, Say you this thing of yourself, or did others tell it you of Me? Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? I can imagine him throwing all the scorn and contempt possible into the question. It was characteristic of the Romans, as we learn from the works of their great writers, that they utterly despised and detested the Jews.   
35-37. Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered You unto me: what have You done? Jesus answered, My Kingdom is not of this world: if My Kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is My Kingdom not from here. Pilate therefore said unto Him, Are you a king, then? Jesus answered, You say that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I unto the world, that I should bear witness unto the Truth. Everyone that is of the Truth hears My voice. We might have expected that He would have said, I came into the world that I might be a king. But He explains that, as a Witness to the Truth, He was a King.   
38. Pilate said unto Him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and said unto them, I find in Him no fault at all. He did not want an answer. He merely thought it such an unnecessary piece of trifling to talk about truth. He had so slight an idea of what the word might mean, that when he had said, What is truth? he went out again unto the Jews, and said unto them, I find in Him no fault at all. That was the truth about the Truth, from the lips of a man who cared nothing about the Truth of God, yet who was compelled to bear this testimony, I find in Him no fault at all.

39. But we have a custom, that I should release unto you one at the Passover: will you therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews? Now Pilate may have thought if Christ were their King they would certainly prefer Him to a thief and a robber, so he was putting before himself an opportunity of escaping from judging Christand before them a test as to whether there really was in them any liking for the Christ, or any possibility of His becoming their King.

40. Then cried they all again, saying, Not this Man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber.   
Psalm 2:1, 2. Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the LORD, and against His Anointed, saying. This raging company of the Jews was but a example of the universal opposition which there is to the reign of Christ, for it is not alone in Israel, but among the heathen, and among all people, that there is this opposition to the Christ of God!   
3. Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. The bands of Jehovah and the bands of the Christ, His Anointed.   
4, 5. He that sits in the Heaven shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall He speak unto them in His wrath, and vex them in His sore displeasure. His word, it seems, vexes them. There is no need of sword or javelin. The weapons of Gods warfare are His words.   
6-12. Yet have I set My king upon My holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the LORD has said unto Me, You are My Son; this day have I begotten You. Ask of Me, and I shall give You the heathen for Your inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron: You shall dash them in pieces like a potters vessel. Be wise now, therefore, O you kings: be instructed, you judges of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and you perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him.

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #1644 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

OUR LORDS FIRST APPEARANCE BEFORE PILATE   
NO. 1644

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, FEBRUARY 12, 1882, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Pilate said unto them, I find in Him no fault at all. John 18:38.**

I SHOULD like, if God spares us, to present to you on Sabbath mornings the full story of our Saviors sufferings. We began last Lords Day by going with Him to the hall of Caiaphas and it was a sadly solemn time when we beheld the Prince of Peace a prisoner, heard Him falsely accused and unjustly condemned. And then we saw Him abused till servants and subjects did spit in His face and make a mockery of Him. I hope that you will not be wearied with this subject. If so, it will be the fault of the preacher, for the subject is always full and fresh. Or if the preacher is not to blame, there will be something of censure due to his hearers. If we grow tired of the story of the Cross it will be a sad indication of secret soulsickness and it will be well to observe the symptom and hasten to the great Physician for healing.

To true saints in a healthy condition there is no place more attractive than the place of our Lords passion, where He accomplished the glorious work of our redemption. They love to linger along that Via Dolorosa which leads from Gethsemane to Golgothalet us linger with them! When I stand and view my Lord, like the bush in Horeb, burning but not consumed, I hear a Voice saying to me, The place where you stand is holy ground. Nothing is more holy than the Person of our Divine Master! It is, therefore, well to be with Him. The anguish which He endured when He devoted Himself as a Sacrifice for us is holy, too, and so it is well to be with Him in His sufferings. His sorrows have a most sanctifying influence upon all who consider them with believing love.

I am persuaded that if we lived more in the atmosphere of the Cross, sin would lose its power and every Grace would flourish. When we draw very near to Jesus and have fellowship with Him in His sufferings, we raise a hue and cry against the sin which slew Him and resolve to be revenged upon it by departing from it, ourselves, and by warring against it whenever we see it in others. The Cross is that holy implement with which we make war with sin till it is utterly destroyed. Blessed and holy, then, are the thoughts which are awakened by our great Sacrifice. Nor is it only so, but the medicine which brings us health is, in itself, a joy

*Sweet the moments, rich in blessing,   
Which before the Cross I spend,   
Life, and health, and peace possessing,   
In the sinners dying Friend.*

There is no noise as of them that make merry over their wine, no shout of them that triumph, no song of them that feastbut here is a grave sweet melody as of hearts that have found rest. At the Cross we find a substantial joy, a far-reaching satisfaction, the peace of God, which passes all understanding. Here, you restless ones, is the cure of restlessness! Here shall you say, O God, my heart is fixed, my heart is fixed. I will sing and give praise. I shall not, therefore, make any excuse, even if for weeks to come I should lead you to the place of dragons where your Lord was sorely broken and help you to drink of His cup and to be baptized with His Baptism. May the Spirit of God come upon and open our eyes to read the sacred heart of Him whose sorrows are unrivalled sorrows borne for love of us!

Let us go to the narrative at once with loving and lowly carefulness. Our Lord was condemned by the chief priests for blasphemy because He declared Himself to be the Son of God and told them that they should hereafter see Him coming in the clouds of Heaven to be their Judge. Tearing his garments, the High Priest said, What need have we of any further witness? You have heard His blasphemy. When the morning light had come and they had gone through the formality of a set trial by daylight having really condemned Him in the nightthey led Jesus away to Pilate.

According to tradition, He was led with a rope about His neck and His hands bound. And I can fully believe in the tradition when I remember the words of IsaiahHe was led as a sheep to the slaughter. It was a strangely sad procession which moved through Jerusalem a little after six in the morning. Those men of the Sanhedrin, in all their pomp and power surrounding this one poor Victim, whom they were about to deliver to the Gentiles with the one design that He might be put to death! Those wicked men of pride were as the dogs of whom the Psalmist sang when the hind of the morning was his tender theme.

When they came to the house of the Roman governor, they would not, themselves, enter within its doors. It is said to have been one of the many magnificent palaces which Herod the Great built for himself. The architecture was gorgeous, the floors were inlaid with choice marble and all the chambers were richly gilded and furnished with Oriental splendor. Into the great hall these scrupulous hypocrites would not enter because they must, by no means, be defiled by the touch of a Gentile for they had already commenced to keep the Passover. So they waited in the courtyard and Pilate condescended to come out to them and learn the pressing business which brought them there so early in the morning.

The Roman governor was proud, cruel and abhorred the Jews. But still, knowing their fanaticism and the readiness with which they broke loose at Passover times, he stood at his palace gate and heard their demands. He soon ascertained that they had brought him a prisoner, evidently a poor man, and in personal appearance emaciated, weary and suffering. About Him there was a mysterious dignity combined with singular gentleness and Pilate, for this and other reasons, evidently took a singular interest in Him. Fixing his gaze, first, upon the extraordinary Prisoner, he turned to the angry priests and demanded, What accusation do you bring against this Man?

The one objective of the priests in bringing Jesus to Pilate was to get Him put to death, for when Pilate told them to go and judge Him according to their Law, they replied that they would gladly do so, but that the power of life and death had been taken from them, implying that nothing but His death would content them. They were, however, very anxious at this stage to lay the responsibility of His death upon the Romans. The fear of the people was still upon them and if they could secure his death by Pilate, then they might, in later days, protest that they merely handed Him over to the Roman governor and could not foresee that He would be handled so roughly.

They had not yet bribed the populace to cry, Crucify Him, and they were willing to be on the safe side should the people make an uproar on His behalf. Humanly speaking, they could have put Him to death themselves, for He was entirely in their power and they frequently forgot the Roman law and slew men in riotous fury, as when they stoned Stephen. They had frequently attempted to stone our Lord, Himself, so that they were not always so mindful of Roman law! They might have taken His life on this occasion, but they were led by a mysterious impulse to desire that the actual responsibility of the deed should rest on Pilate.

Further on they were willing to join with the fickle throng in sharing the guilt of His blood, but as yet they would gladly throw it upon others. During their great festivals, if they took innocent blood, their hypocrisy made them wish to do it by forms of law and by an alien hand. To do this they must bring an accusation, for no Roman ruler would condemn a man till an accusation had been made. We shall, this morning, consider the two accusations that they brought. And after that we shall hear the verdict of acquittal which Pilate gave in the language of the text, I find in Him no fault at all.

I. The first accusation, if you will turn to the chapter and read the 30th verse, was that our Master was A MALEFACTOR. They answered and said unto Him, If He were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered Him up to you. He was said to be a malefactor, or doer of that which is evila person of such a mischievous life that He ought not to live. Upon which we remark, first, that it was a novel charge! It was hot from their mint, for when He stood before Caiaphas nothing was said of any evil that He had done, but only of evil that He had spoken. They charged Him with saying this and that, but not with doing any evil deed. The accusation of evil speaking had broken down and they did not venture upon it a second time because they knew very well that Pilate did not care what the man had saidall he would attend to would be some actual breach of law by act and deed.

The Romans were a practical people and so when Pilate led our Lord into the audience chamber, he said to Him, What have You done? He did not say to Him, What have You taught or preached? but, What have You done? For this reason, the priests brought forward this newlyinvented accusation and totally unfounded charge that He was a bad doer, which might mean little or much, as the hearer chose to interpret it malice is seldom specific in its charges. The accusation of being a malefactor grew out of their malevolence and not out of any action of our Lords perfect life. One is surprised that even hate should be so blind as to assail His perfections! Whatever men may think of our Lord as a teacher, candor demands that they admire His example and award it the highest need of honor.

Observe, the priests herein brought against our Lord a charge which they did not attempt to sustain. How craftily they evaded the task of supplying proof! They brought no witnesses, their evil perjurers were left behind. They even refrained from specific charges, but the general statement that He was a malefactor was supported only by their reputation. If He were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered Him up to you, as much as to say, You must take it for granted that He is guilty, or we would not say so. Here is our High Priestcan it be supposed that such a gem of an individual would bring a false accusation? We also are the chief priests and the scribes, and teachers of Israelcan it be imagined that persons of our station and sanctity could by any possibility have brought an innocent person before you to be condemned!

This style of argument I have heard even in these dayswe are expected to give up the faith because scientists condemn itand they are such eminent persons that we ought to accept their dicta without further delay! I confess I am not prepared to accept their infallibility any more than that which hails from Rome! The Roman governor was not to be overridden by priests, neither are we to be led by the nose by pretended learned men. If He were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered Him up to you. Oh, the hypocrisy of this talk! They had tried to bring witnesses, but no witness had been found. They had hired false witnesses, but these had so differed in their testimony that the whole thing broke down. They, therefore, go upon another tack and put their own names at the back of the indictment, as if that were quite enough and enquiry need go no further.

I think I see the scornful glance of Pilate as he bade them judge Him, themselves, if that was their style of justice. As for him, he must hear an accusation or dismiss them to do their own pleasure if they dare. He knew that through envy they had brought Jesus to him and he loathed the hypocrites as he heard the wretched syllables sibilating from their sanctimonious lips! They could not have sustained the charge and, so far, they were wise in not attempting the impossible. They might be foolhardy enough to wrest His words, but they hesitated before the task of attacking His deeds. Before His awful holiness they were, for the moment, out of heart and knew not what slander to invent. O Lord, we marvel that any men should find fault with You, for You are altogether lovely and there is in You no spot for falsehood to light upon!

But I want to call your attention to this remarkable fact, that although this charge of being a malefactor was a grievous one, a trumped-up one and unsustained by any evidence, yet it was never denied by the Lord Jesus Christ! It was useless to deny it before the priests. He had already challenged them to find fault with His life, saying, I spoke openly to the world; I always taught in the synagogue and in the Temple, where the Jews always resort. And in secret have I said nothing. Why ask you Me? Ask them which heard Me what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said. His appeal had been unavailing, for it was as useless to argue with them as for a lamb to enter into controversy with a pack of wolves eager to devour him.

But there might have been some use, one would think, in his answering to Pilate, for Pilate was evidently very favorably impressed with his Prisonerand if the Savior had deigned to give a full account of His life to prove that instead of being a malefactor He had gone about doing good might He not have escaped? The answer is thisour Lord had come on earth on purpose to be the Substitute for guilty men and so when He was called a malefactor, although it was not a truthful charge, yet He patiently bore the shame of it, as it is written, He was numbered with the transgressors. He was willing to stand in the transgressors place and when they put Him there, He did not stir from it. He is dumb, He opens not His mouth. He says nothing because, though in Him is no sin, He has taken our sin upon Himself!

The question that Pilate put, What have You done? was one which Jesus might have grandly answeredWhat have I done? I have fed the hungry, I have healed the sick, I have raised the fallen, I have restored the dead. What have I done? I have lived a self-sacrificing life, caring nothing for Myself or My own honor. I have been the vindicator of God and the friend of man. What have I done? Certainly nothing for which they could put Me to death, but everything so they should accept me as their Leader and their Savior.

We hear not a word of this. The exculpation would have been complete, but it was not spoken. He might have baffled His enemies as He had, before, vanquished those who came to take Him, so that they went back to their masters, saying, Never man spoke like this Man. He might have cleared Himself before the Roman procurator and by coming forth in triumph, He might have escaped from their teeth. But because He would stand in our place, therefore when men imagined mischievous things against Him, He was as a deaf Man and, as a dumb Man He opened not His mouth. Let us adore and bless Him for His gracious condescension, His matchless Grace in standing in our place!

Yet further, our Lord willed that by being counted as a transgressor by Pilate, He might die the death appointed for malefactors by the Roman law. If the Jews had put our Lord to death for blasphemy, it would have been by stoning, but then, none of the prophecies concerning the Messiah spoke of His being dashed to the ground by stones. The death ordained for Him was crucifixion. John says in the 18th chapter at the 32nd verse, That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which He spoke, signifying what death He should die. What was that saying? Is it not the saying in the 12th chapter of Johns Gospel at the 32nd verse, I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me. This He said, signifying what death He should die.

Being lifted up from the earth on the Cross was death which could only come from the Romans. The Jews, as I have said before, executed men by stoning, therefore He must be condemned by the Romans that His own words may be fulfilled. He had spoken even more expressly in a passage recorded by Matthew, in the 20th chapter at the 17th verse, where He had declared how He would die. And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem and the Son of Man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify Him: and the third day He shall rise again.

In order that the Word which He had spoken might be fulfilled, our blessed Master refused to plead before Pilate anything in answer to the question, What have You done? He stands as a transgressor, to die a transgressors death! Therefore forever blessed be His adorable name for His voluntary endurance of penalty for our sakes! When I think of that word, malefactor, another word directly leaps to my lips. Call Him not malefactor, but BENEFACTOR! What a benefactor must He be who, in order to benefit us, allows Himself to be branded as a malefactor! Only think that He who at this moment sits in the center of adoring angels should have been called, malefactor! That He from whose inexhaustible store of goodness all the saints in Heaven and on earth are fed, should yet be called, malefactor! That He who never thought of harm to men, but whose very soul is love, whose every word and thought has been kindness towards this fallen race, should yet be called, malefactor!

O Earth, how could you bear so grave a lie against the infinite goodness of the Son of God! And yet, forever blessed be His name, He does not hurl back the charge, for that would have been to ruin us. He meekly bears the scandal for our sakes. Should not this sweeten every title of reproach that can ever fall upon us? What if they call us evil names! They called the Master of the home, malefactor, can they call us anything worse? Shall we look for honor where our Captain found nothing but shame? Therefore let it be our glory to bear shame and reproach for Jesus sake. So much for the first accusation.

II. Secondly, when the priests and scribes found that merely calling Him a malefactor was not sufficient, these wretched men changed their tactics and, according to Luke, they charged Him with setting up to be A KING. They said that He worked sedition, that He forbade to pay tribute unto Caesar and made Himself out to be a king. These were three great lies, for Jesus had preached peace, not sedition. His example was submission, not rebellion. His spirit was that of a servant, not that of a turbulent party leader. He had never said that men were not to pay tribute to Caesaron the contrary, He had said, Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesars, and submitted Himself to every ordinance of authority. He had never, in their sense, set Himself up to be a king.

If He had done so, many who were now His accusers might have been His partisans. The charge against Jesus of setting up to be a king in the sense in which they desired Pilate to understand them was utterly false, for when the multitude had been fed, they would have taken Him and made Him a king, but He hid Himself. No, so far from wishing to be a king, when one said to Him, Master, speak to my brother that he divide the inheritance with me, He said, Who made Me a judge or a divider over you? He put aside any approach to interfere with the reigning powers. His accusers must have known that if He had willed, He had power at His back to have supported His claims, even as He said to Pilate, that, if He had been a king of a worldly dominion, His servants would have fought for Him. His followers had been brave and courageous, and enthusiastic and they would, no doubt, have given no end of trouble both to the Jews and to the Romans if their Leader had claimed a temporal sovereignty.

But our Lord had made Peter put up his sword into its sheath and healed the wound which he had given. All His life He had preached peace and love and a kingdom which is righteousness and peace. He was no rival to Caesar and they knew it. And please notice that this charge of Christ being a king did not come from the governing power. When Pilate asked our Lord, Are you the King of the Jews? our Savior wisely replied, Do you ask this of yourself, or did another tell you it of Me? Have you any reason to think that I am a leader of sedition? As the governor of this nation, you have to watch carefully, for the people are seditious. Have you ever seen or heard anything of Me that looks like an attack on your authority? Have you anything of your own knowledge that would lead you to bring a charge against Me?

Pilate, knowing nothing whatever against Him and, indeed, scorning the idea that he knew anything about the Jewish people, whom he detested, replied haughtily, Am I a Jew? Your own nation and Your own rulers have brought this charge against You, not I. A great point was gained when Pilate said thisthe charge was shown to be a mere invention, since the eagle eye of the Roman procurator had never seen the slightest grounds for it. It was a frivolous charge on the very face of it. How could that harmless, forsaken Man be a peril to Caesar? What had the Roman legions to fear from that solitary Sufferer? He was too meek and pure to threaten warfare and strife in the domain of Tiberius! Look at Him and realize the absurdity of the situation!

Moreover, it would seem a strange thing that the Jewish people should bring before the Roman governor their own king. Is this the way that subjects treat their monarchs? If He is a leader of sedition, He does not seem to have succeeded with His own countrymen, for the heads of the people are seeking His death! There could be upon the face of it no chance of danger whatever from rebellion which was so summarily put down by the Jews, themselves. If they had not been besotted by their rage, they would, themselves, have shrunk from so absurd a position.

But yet I want you to note very carefully that the Lord never denied this charge in the sense in which He chose to understand it. He first explained what He meant by His being a King. And when He had explained it, then He openly confessed that it was even so. First, I say, He explained what He meant by being a King and notice carefully that He did not explain it away. He said, My Kingdom, and, also, when Pilate said, Are You a king, then? He said, You say that I am a king. He was, then and there, a real King and He avowed it without reserve. We are constantly told that the Kingdom of Christ is a spiritual kingdom, and this saying is true. But I would have you take heed that you do not spirit away His Kingdom as if it were only a pious dream. Spiritual or not, the Kingdom of Christ on earth is real and powerful. It is real none the less, but all the more because it may fitly be called spiritual.

Jesus is even now a king. He said, I am a king. Some say that His Kingdom is not yet, but is reserved for the latter days, but I declare that He is a king today and that even now Jehovah has set Him as King upon the holy hill of Zion. I bless God that He has translated us, Into the Kingdom of His dear Son. You are the King of Glory, O Christ. When I say, Your Kingdom come, I do not mean that it may begin to be set up on earth, but that it may continue to be set up in new places, may be extended and grow, for Jesus has, at this very moment, a Kingdom upon the face of the earth and they that know the Truth of God belong to it and recognize Him as the royal Witness by whom the Kingdom of Truth has been founded and maintained.

You remember the remarkable saying which is attributed to Napoleon Bonaparte in his later days at St. Helena? I have founded a kingdom by force and it has passed away; but Jesus founded His empire upon love and, therefore, it will last forever. Verily, Napoleon spoke the truth Jesus, the right royal Jesus, is, today, Master of innumerable hearts! The world knows Him not, but yet He has a Kingdom in it which shall, before long, break in pieces all other kingdoms! True and loyal hearts are to be found among the sons of men and in them His name still wakes enthusiasm, so that for Him they are prepared to live and die. Our Lord is every inch a King! He has His Throne of Grace, has His scepter of truth, His officers who, like Himself, witness to the Truth of God, and His armies of warriors who wrestle not with flesh and blood and use no carnal weapons, but yet go forth conquering and to conquer!

Our Lord has His palace where He dwells, His chariot in which He rides, His revenues, though they are not treasures of gold and silver, and His proclamations, which are Law in His Church. His reigning power affects the destiny of the world at this present moment far more than the counsels of the five great powers! By the preaching of the Truth of God. His servants shape the ages and set up and cast down the thrones of earth! There is no prince so powerful as Jesus, and no empire so mighty as the Kingdom of Heaven. Our Lord also said that His Kingdom came not from this world, for that, I take it, is the more correct translation of the passage, My Kingdom is not of this world. It came not from this world. It is a substantial kingdom, but it did not spring from the same sources as the kingdoms of the world, neither is it supported, maintained, or increased by the same power as that which the kingdoms of the world depend upon.

Christs Kingdom does not depend upon the force of armsHe would have His followers lay these weapons all aside. Christs Kingdom does not depend, as earthly kingdoms too often do, upon craft, policy and duplicity. It used to be said that an ambassador was a gentleman who was sent abroad to lie for the good of his country, and I fear it might still describe full many an ambassador. What is the science of diplomacy but the art of deceit? When statesmen are thoroughly honest and are guided by principle, they are generally suspectedand an outcry is raised that the interests of the country will be sacrificed! But there is no diplomacy in Christs ruleeverything like crooked policy is of the deviland not of Christ. He comes to bear witness to the Truth of God and it is by the Truth, not by force nor by craft, that His Throne is established among the sons of men and, therefore, it is not from this world.

To be a King is, indeed, so little wrong in the sight of Jesus that it is the ultimate purpose of His coming to earth. He came to save men, did He not? Yes, but still He says, For this purpose was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth, which is another way of saying, that I might be a King. This is His ultimatum! Christ is a Teacher that He may be a KingChrist is an Exemplar that He may be a King! Christ is a Savior that He may be a King. This is the great end and objective that He has in His life, His death, His Resurrection, and His Second Comingthat He may set up a Kingdom among the sons of men to the Glory of God! Oh that this great objective of His mission might be furthered in our time and consummated speedily in the long-promised age of gold!

The Master tells us that the main force and power of His Kingdom lies in the Truth of God. He came to be a King, but where is His scepter? The Truth! Where is His sword? It comes out of His mouthHe bears witness to the Truth of God. Where are His soldiers? They are men of Truth. Jesus Christ leads on a band of whom He says, And you are My witnesses. His Kingdom consists in witnessing to the Truth of God and who are they that become His subjects? Why, those that are of the Truthmen who, hearing the Truthknow the joyful sound and accept it and feel its power. Dear Hearers, let each one of us ask himself, Do I belong to His Kingdom? Will I have this Man to reign over me? Do I desire to get rid of everything in myself that is not true? Am I anxious to put down around me everything that is false and wicked?

Do I wish to uphold Gods Laws, because they are Truth? Do I desire to spread the principles of love and kindness, because they are the Truth of God? Am I willing to learn and so become the disciple of the greatest of all Teachers and then, am I willing to bear witness to what I have learned and so spread the sway of the Truth of God? If so, then I am of His Kingdom. I know that I address many who desire in their hearts, today, that Christ and His Truth may triumph, and they little mind what becomes of themselves. Let but His Gospel spread and the principles of righteousness prevail! And as for us, let us live or die, it shall be a matter of small concern! O King, live forever and we shall find our life in Your life and glory in promoting Your Glory, world without end! Such a spirit is of the Truth of God and we may assure ourselves that Jesus is our King.

Our Lord, having explained His meaning, confessed that He was a King. This is that to which Paul refers when he says, The Lord Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession. He did not draw back and say, I am no King. Pilate might have delivered Him, then. But He spoke boldly concerning His blessed, mysterious and wonderful Kingdom and, therefore, it was not possible that He should be set free. This, indeed, was His accusation written over His Cross, This is Jesus, the King of the Jews. Poor Pilate, he did not understand our Lord, even as the men of this world understand not the kingdom of Christ. He said to Him, What is truth? and without waiting for a reply he went out to the Jews.

Ah, Brothers and Sisters, let us never deny that Jesus is a Kingbut we shall deny it if we do not live according to His bidding. Oh you that claim to be Christs but do not live according to Christs Laws, you practically deny that He is King! I dread the men who say, We believe and therefore we are saved, and then do not live in holinessfor these divide our Lords offices setting up His priesthood and denying His kingship! Half a Christ is no Christa Christ who is a priest but never a king is not the Christ of God! Oh Brethren, live as those who feel that every word of Jesus is Law and that you must do what He bids you, as He bids you and because He bids youand so let all men know that unto you Jesus is both Lord and God.

III. I conclude by noticing THE ACQUITTAL which Pilate gave to our Lord Jesus. He had heard the charge of being a malefactor, to which the Prisoner pleaded nothing. He had heard the charge of his being a King, which the Prisoner had most satisfactorily explained. And now Pilate, coming out to the people, said, I find in Him no fault at all. Pilate, you have well spoken! Your verdict is typical of the verdict of all who have ever examined Christ! Some have examined Him with an unfriendly eye, but in proportion as they have been candid in the observation of facts, they have been struck with His life and spirit. It is a very rare thing to hear, even, the infidel rail at the Character of Jesus! In fact, some of the foremost skeptics as to our Lords teaching have been remarkably impressed with admiration of His life.

No character like that of Jesus is to be seen in history, no, not even in romance. If anyone says the four Gospel are forgeries, let him try to write a fifth, which shall be like the other four. Why, you cannot add an incident to the life of Christ! Its details are uniquethe fancy cannot imagine a fresh incident which could be safely joined on to that which is recorded. Every critic would cry out, This is not genuine! The life of Jesus is a roll of cloth of gold, the manufacture of which the art is utterly lost. His spotless Character stands alone and by itselfand all true critics are compelled to say they find no fault at all in Him.

Let me add that this verdict of Pilate is the verdict of all that have ever associated with Christ. One disciple who was with Christ betrayed Him, but he spoke nothing against Him. No, the last witness of Judas before he hanged himself was this, I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood. If there had been a fault in Jesus, the traitor would have spied it outhis unquiet conscience would have been glad enough to find a sedativebut even he was compelled to say, I have betrayed innocent blood. Which of you convicts Me of sin? is the challenge of Jesus, to which there is no reply! Some of us have lived with Christ spiritually. In the course of His Providence, He has brought some of us very low by sickness, or by bereavement, or loss. Everyone saved by our Lord has come under the discipline of His house, for, whom the Lord loves, He chastens and scourges every son whom He receives.

Now, what is the verdict of all here present who know Jesus, our King? For my part, I find no fault at all in Him. He is everything that is lovely. He is all my salvation and all my desire. Do you not think that out of the millions of Christians who have lived hoping in Christ, one would have told us if it is His habit to disappoint His people? Out of so many Believers who dwell with Him, surely some one or other of them, when they came to die, would have told us if He is not all that He professes to be! Would not some one or other have confessed, I trusted in Christ and He has not delivered me! It is all a delusion? Surely, out of the many we have seen depart, we would have found some one or two that would have let out the secret and have said, He is a deceiver! He cannot save, He cannot help, He cannot deliver. But never one dying Believer throughout the ages has spoken evil of Him! All have said, We find no fault at all in Him.

Mark you, that will be the verdict of everyone among you. If any of you reject Christ, when you stand at His Judgment Seat to be condemned because you believe not in Him and when that withering word, Depart, you cursed! shall consign you to your everlasting portion, you shall then be obliged to say, I find no fault at all in Him. There was no failure in His bloodthe failure was in my lack of faith! There was no failure in His Spiritthe failure was in my obstinate will! There was no failure in His promisethe failure was that I would not receive Him! There was no fault at all in Him. He never spurned me. He never refused to hear my prayers. If my Sabbaths were wasted, it was no fault of His! If I defied the Gospel, it was no fault of His. If I have perished, my blood is at my own door. I find no fault at all in Him. From all parts of creation shall go up one general attestation to His perfection. Heaven and earth and Hell shall all join the common verdict, We find no fault at all in Him.

I will send you away when I give you three practical words to think of. The first is thisBeware of an external religion, for the men that called Jesus malefactor and falsely accused Him were very religious people and would not go into Pilates hall for fear of polluting themselves! They were strong in rituals, but weak in morals. None are so inveterate against the principles of the Gospel as those whose religion consists in form and ceremony but does not affect their hearts! I charge you tear your hearts and not your garments! Follow Christ spiritually! Follow Christ in your very souls, or else sacraments will be your ruin and even in trying to keep yourselves from ceremonial defilement you will be defiling yourselves with hypocrisy.

The next thing is to charge you, dear Friends, and to charge myself, also, to shun all proud worldliness like that of Pilate. Pilate treats the whole matter with flippancyhe is a proud and haughty Romanhe hates the people whom he governs and though he has a conscience, and at first he shows a tenderness towards his prisoneryet his chief end and aim was to keep his office and amass money. And therefore innocent blood must be spilt. He must please the Jews, even if he murders the, Just One. This selfish worldliness in which a man makes his gold and himself his god always treats religion with contempt. The man minds the main chance and sneeringly cries, What is truth? He knows what money is and what power is, but what is truth? It is a dream, a folly to him and he despises it.

There are persons around us now, clever time-serving men, with grand notions of their own abilitiesand to them Jesus and His Gospel are matters for old women, servant girls and what they call a Puritan crew. Such topics are not for gentlemen of thought, culture and understanding, like their high and mighty selves. What is truth? they say. They are rather favorably inclined to religion, that is to say, they do not persecute, but they despisewhich in some respects is worse. They say, We are agnostics! We have no particular views. We are large-hearted and let every man think as he chooses, but still there is nothing in itit is all matter of opinion. One man says this is the truth and another says that is the truth and how are we to know? The fact is, there is no such thing as fixed truth at all

*For differing creeds let graceless zealots fight. He cant be wrong whose life is in the right.*

This is this great mans conclusion of the matter and yet it so happens that this gentlemans life is not in the right at all and, therefore, on his own showing he has not much joy of his pretty rhyme. I think I see him as he turns on his heels with, What is truth?

Let him be a warning to you! Come not near to such arrogant trifling. Be always foolish enough to be willing to judge candidly. Be so little clever as to be still willing to learn. Be so little certain of your own infallibility that you will at least hear reason and will enquire whether these things are so. Alas, I fear that through worldly pride many will have it said of them, as it is said of the Roman governor every day in the creed Suffered under Pontius Pilate. Oh, how many times has Christ suffered under just such people as Pontius Pilate?

Last of all, let us all submit ourselves to Jesus our King. Wayworn and weary, emaciated and broken down, with His face more marred than that of any man, yet let us bow before Him and say, All hail You, King of the Jews! You are our King forever and ever! If we are willing to acknowledge Him as our King in His shame and derision, He will, by-and-by, honor us when He comes in the Glory of the Father and all His holy angels with Him. Then shall He cause it to be seen that He has made us, who follow Him, to be kings and priests unto God and we shall reign with Him forever and ever! Amen.

Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #595 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

BARABBAS PREFERRED TO JESUS   
NO. 595

**DELIVERED ON SUNDAY MORNING, OCTOBER 16, 1864, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Then cried they all again, saying, Not this Man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber.   
John 18:40.**

THE custom of delivering a prisoner upon the day of the Passover was intended, no doubt, as an act of grace on the part of the Roman authorities towards the Jews. And by the Jews it may have been accepted as a significant compliment to their Passover. Since on that day they, themselves, were delivered out of the land of Egypt, they may have thought it to be most fitting that some imprisoned person should obtain his liberty. There was no warrant, however, in Scripture for thisit was never commanded by Godand it must have had a very injurious effect upon public justice. The ruling authority would discharge a criminal, quite irrespective of his crimes or of his repentanceletting him loose upon societysimply and only because a certain day must be celebrated in a peculiar manner.

Since some one prisoner must be delivered on the paschal day, Pilate thinks that he has now an opportunity of allowing the Savior to escape without at all compromising his character with the authorities of Rome. He asks the people which of the two they will prefer, a notorious thief then in custody, or the Savior. It is probable that Barabbas had been up, till that moment, obnoxious to the crowd. And yet, notwithstanding his former unpopularity, the multitude, instigated by the priests, forget all his faults and prefer him to the Savior!

Who Barabbas was, we cannot exactly tell. His name, as you, in a moment will understand, even if you have not the slightest acquaintance with Hebrew, signifies his fathers son. Bar signifying son, as when Peter is called Simon Barjona, son of Jonah. The other part of his name, Abbas, signifying fatherAbba being the word which we use in our filial aspirations, Abba Father. Barabbas, then, is the son of his father, and some mystics think that there is an imputation here, that he was particularly and specially a son of Satan. Others conjecture that it was an endearing name and was given him because he was his fathers darling, an indulged child. His fathers boy, as we say.

And these writers add that indulged children often turn out to be imitators of Barabbas and are the most likely persons to become injurious to their country, griefs to their parents and curses to all about them. If it is so, taken in connection with the case of Absalom and especially of Elis sons, it is a warning to parents that they err not in excessive indulgence of their children.

Barabbas appears to have committed at least three crimeshe was imprisoned for murder, for sedition and for felonya sorry combination of offenses, certainly. We may well pity the sire of such a son. This wretch is brought out and set in competition with Christ! The multitude are appealed to. Pilate thinks that from the sense of shame they really cannot

possibly prefer Barabbas. But they are so bloodthirsty against the Savior and are so moved by the priests, that with one consentthere does not appear to have been a single objecting voice, nor one hand held up to the contrarywith a marvelous unanimity of vice, they cry, Not this man, but Barabbas!

Though they must have known, since he was a notable well-known offender, that Barabbas was a murderer, a felon and a traitor, they still preferred him. This fact is very significant. There is more teaching in it than at first sight we might imagine. Have we not here, first of all, in this act of the deliverance of the sinner and the binding of the innocent, a sort of type of that great work which is accomplished by the death of our Savior? You and I may fairly take our stand by the side of Barabbas. We have robbed God of His Glory! We have been seditious traitors against the government of Heavenif he who hates his brother is a murderer, we also have been guilty of that sin.

Here we stand before the Judgment Seat. The Prince of Life is bound for us and we are allowed to go free. The Lord delivers us and acquits us, while the Savior, without spot or blemish, or shadow of a fault, is led forth to Crucifixion. Two birds were taken in the rite of the cleansing of a leper. The one bird was killed and its blood was poured into a basin. The other bird was dipped in this blood and then, with its wings all crimson, it was set free to fly into the open field. The bird slain well pictures the Savior and every soul that has, by faith, been dipped in His blood flies upward towards Heaven singing sweetly in joyous libertyowing its life and its liberty entirely to Him who was slain!

It comes to thisBarabbas must die or Christ must dieyou, the sinner must perish, or Christ Immanuel, the Immaculate, must die. He dies that we may be delivered! Oh, have we all a participation in such a deliverance today? And though we have been robbers, traitors, and murderers, can we rejoice that Christ has delivered us from the curse of the Law, having been made a curse for us?

The transaction has yet another voice. This episode in the Saviors history shows that in the judgment of the people, Jesus Christ was a greater offender than Barabbas. And, for once, I may venture to say that vox populi, (the voice of the people), which in itself was a most infamous injusticeif it is read in the light of the imputation of our sins to Christ was vox Dei, (the voice of God)! Christ, as He stood covered with His peoples sins, had more sin laid upon Him than that which rested upon Barabbas. In Him was no sinHe was altogether incapable of becoming a sinnerholy, harmless and undefiled is Christ Jesus! But He takes the whole load of His peoples guilt upon Himself by imputation and as Jehovah looks upon Him, He sees more guilt lying upon the Savior than even upon this atrocious sinner, Barabbas.

Barabbas goes freeinnocentin comparison with the tremendous weight which rests upon the Savior. Think, Beloved, then, how low your Lord and Master stooped to be thus numbered with the transgressors. Watts has put it strongly, but, I think, none too strongly

*His honor and His breath   
Were taken both away,   
Joined with the wicked in His death,   
And made as vile as they.*

He was so, in the estimation of the people and before the bar of justice for the sins of the whole company of the faithful were made to meet upon Him. The Lord has laid upon Him the iniquity of us all. What that iniquity must have been no heart can conceive, much less can any tongue tell! Measure it by the griefs He bore and then, if you can guess what these were, you can form some idea of what must have been the guilt which sunk Him lower before the bar of justice than even Barabbas himself.

Oh, what condescension is here! The Just One dies for the unjust! He bears the sin of many and makes intercession for the transgressors. Yet, again, there seems to me to be a third lesson before I come to that which I want to enforce from the text. Our Savior knew that His disciples would in all ages be hated by the world far more than outward sinners. Full often the world has been more willing to put up with murderers, thieves, and drunkards, than with Christians. And it has fallen to the lot of some of the best and most holy of men to be so slandered and abused that their names have been cast out as evil, scarcely worthy to be written in the same list with criminals.

Now Christ has sanctified these sufferings of His people from the slander of their enemies by bearing just such sufferings Himself, so that, my Brethren, if you or I should find ourselves charged with crimes which we abhorif our heart should be ready to burst under the accumulation of slanderous venomlet us lift up our head and feel that in all this we have a Comrade who has true fellowship with us, even the Lord Jesus Christ who was rejected when Barabbas was selected! Expect no better treatment than your Master! Remember that the disciple is not above his Lord. If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, much more will they call them of His household. And if they prefer the murderer to Christ, the day may not be distant when they will prefer even a murderer to you.

These things seem to me to lie upon the surfaceI now come to our more immediate subject. First, we shall consider the sin as it stands in evangelical history. Secondly, we shall observe that this is the sin of the whole world. Thirdly, that this sin we ourselves were guilty of before conversion. And fourthly, that this is, we fear, the sin of very many persons who are here this morningwe shall talk with them and expostulate, praying that the Spirit of God may change their hearts and lead them to accept the Savior.

I. A few minutes may be profitably spent in CONSIDERING, THEN, THE SIN AS WE FIND IT IN THIS HISTORY. They preferred Barabbas to Christ. The sin will be more clearly seen if we remember that the Savior had done no ill. No law, either of God or man, had He broken. He might truly have used the words of SamuelBehold, here I am: witness against me before the Lord and before His anointed: whose ox have I taken? Or whose ass have I taken? Or whom have I defrauded? Whom have I oppressed? Or of whose hand have I received any bribe to blind my eyes? And I will restore it to you.

Out of that whole assembled crowd there was not one who would have had the presumption to accuse the Savior of having done him damage. So far from this they could but acknowledge that He had only conferred great temporal blessings upon them! O ravening multitude, has He not fed you when you were hungry? Did He not multiply the loaves and fishes for

you? Did He not heal your lepers with His touch? Did He not cast out devils from your sons and daughters? Raise up you paralytics? Give sight to your blind and open the ears of your deaf? For which of these good works do you conspire to kill Him?

Among that assembled multitude there were, doubtless, some who owed to Him priceless gifts and yet, though all of them His debtors if they had known it, they clamor against Him as though He were the worst trouble of their livesa pest and a pestilence to the place where He dwelt. Was it His teaching that they complained of? Where did His teaching offend against morality? Where against the best interests of man? If you observe the teaching of Christ there was never any like it, even judged of by how far it would subserve human welfare. Here was the sum and substance of His doctrine, You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and your neighbor as yourself.

His precepts were of the mildest form. Did He bid them draw the sword and expel the Roman, or ride on in a ruthless career of carnage and rapine? Did He stimulate them to let loose their unbridled passions? Did He tell them to seek, first of all, their own advantage and not to care for their neighbors needs? No! Every righteous State must own Him to be its best pillar, and the commonwealth of manhood must acknowledge Him to be its conservator. And yet, for all this, there they are, hounded on by their priests, seeking His blood and crying, Let Him be crucified! Let Him be crucified!

His whole intent, evidently, was their good. What did He preach for? No selfish motive could have been urged. Foxes had holes and the birds of the air had nests, but He had not where to lay His head. The charity of a few of His disciples kept Him from absolute starvation! Cold mountains and the midnight air witnessed the fervor of His lonely prayers for the multitudes who now are hating Him. He lived for othersthey could see this. They could not have observed Him during the three years of His ministry without saying, Never lived there such an unselfish soul as this. They must have known, the most of themand the rest might have known, had they enquired ever so littlethat He had no object whatever in being here on earth except that of seeking the good of men.

For which of these things do they clamor that He may be crucified? For which of His good works, for which of His generous words, for which of His holy deeds will they fasten His hands to the wood and His feet to the tree? With unreasonable hatred, with senseless cruelty they only answer to the question of PilateWhy, what evil has He done?with, Let Him be crucified! Let Him be crucified!

The true reason of their hate, no doubt, lay in the natural hatred of all men to perfect goodness. Man feels that the presence of goodness is a silent witness against his own sin and therefore he longs to get rid of it. To be too holy in the judgment of men is a great crime, for it rebukes their sin. If the holy man has not the power of words, his very life is one loud witness-bearing for God against the sins of His creatures. This inconvenient protesting led the wicked to desire the death of the Holy and Just One.

Besides, the priests were at their backs. It is a sad and lamentable thing, but it is often the case that the people are better than their religious teachers. At the present moment the laity of the Church of England, as a whole, have honest consciences and would have their Prayer Book revised tomorrow if their voices could be heard. But their clerics care far too little about the Truth of God and are not very particular how they swear, or with whom they associate. So long as their Church can be kept together, Father Ignatius shall be heard in their assemblies, although Christs call to the Church to purify herself, awakens only resentment and ill-will.

No matter that the throats of certain clergymen were exercised in hissing for a moment at the apparition of the bold Anglican monkhe is one of themselves, a brother of their own orderand their Church is responsible for all that he does. Let them come out and separate themselves and then we shall know that they abhor this modern popery. But so long as they sit in the same assembly and are members of the same Church, the sin is theirs, and we shall not cease to denounce both it and them!

If Evangelical clergymen remain in communion with Papists, now that they come out in their full colors, I will cease to say that they violate their consciences, but I shall doubt whether they have any consciences at all! Brethren, it is still the case that the people are better than their teachers. This people would not have crucified Christ had not the clergy of the day, the priests, the endowed ministers, cried out, Let Him be crucified! He was the Dissenter, the heretic, schismatic, the troubler in Israel. He it was who cried aloud against the faults of their establishment! He it was who could not be put downthe ignorant man from Galilee who would continue to clamor against them! The mischief-maker and therefore, Let Him be crucified! Let Him be crucified! Anything is good enough for the man who talks about reform and advocates changes in established rules.

No doubt bribery also was used in this case. Had not Rabbi Simon paid the multitude? Was there not a hope of some feast, after the Passover was over, to those who would use their throats against the Savior? Beside, there was the multitude going that way. And so if any had compassion they held their tongue. Often they say that, Discretion is the better part of valor, and truly there must be many valorous men, for they have much of valors better part, discretion. If they did not join in the shout, yet at least they would not disturb the others and so there was but one cry, Away with Him! Away with Him! It is not fit that He should live.

What concentrated scorn there is in this fortieth verse! It is not, this Jesus. They would not foul their mouths with His name, but this fellow this devil, if you will. To Barabbas they give the respect of mentioning his name! But thiswhom they hate so muchthey will not even stoop to mention. We have looked, then, at this great sin as it stands in history.

II. But now let us look, in the second place, AT THIS INCIDENT AS SETTING FORTH THE SIN WHICH HAS BEEN THE GUILT OF THE WORLD IN ALL AGES, AND WHICH IS THE WORLDS GUILT NOW. When the Apostles went forth to preach the Gospel and the Truth of God had spread through many countries, there were severe edicts passed by the Roman Emperors. Against whom were these edicts framed? Against the foul offenders of that day?

It is well known that the whole Roman Empire was infested with vices such as the cheek of modesty would blush to hear named. The first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans is a most graphic picture of the state of society throughout the entire Roman dominions. When severe laws were framed, why were they not proclaimed against these atrocious vices? It is

scarcely fit that men should go unpunished who are guilty of crimes such as the Apostle Paul has mentioned, but I find no edicts against these thingsI find that they were borne with and scarcely mentioned with censure.

But burning, dragging at the heels of wild horses, the sword, imprisonment, tortures of every kind were used against whom, do you think? Against the innocent, humble followers of Christ, who, so far from defending themselves, were willing to suffer all these things and presented themselves like sheep at the shambles, willing to endure the butchers knife! The cry of the world, under the persecutions of Imperial Rome, was, Not Christ, but Sodomites and murderers and thieveswe will bear with any of thesebut not with Christ! Away with His followers from the earth!

Then the world changed its tactics. It became nominally Christian and Antichrist came forth in all its blasphemous glory. The Pope of Rome put on the triple crown and called himself the Vicar of Christ. Then came in the abomination of the worship of saints, angels, images and pictures. Then came the mass and I know not what, of detestable error. And what did the world say? Popery forever! Down went every knee and every head bowed before the sovereign representative of Peter at Rome! The Church of Rome was equal in sin to Barabbas.

No! I do but compliment Barabbas when I mention him in the same breath with many of the popes, for their character was foul and black through and through, till even those who superstitiously looked upon them as infallible in their office could not defend their personal characters. The world chose the harlot of Rome and she who was drunk with the wine of her abominations had every eye to gaze upon her with admiration! And Christs Gospel was forgottenburied in a few old books and almost extinguished in darkness.

Since that day the world has changed its tactics yet again. In many parts of the earth Protestantism is openly acknowledged and the Gospel is preached, but what then? Then comes in Satan and another Barabbas, the Barabbas of mere ceremonialism and mere attendance at a place of worship is set up. Yes, we are orthodox, so orthodox, so sound! Yes, we are religious, strictly religious! We attend our meeting house, or go to our Church. We are never absent. We attend every form. But you have no vital godlinessyou have not been born againyou have not passed from death unto life! That is all right! This will do! So long as we are as good as our neighbors and keep the outward rite, the inward does not matter.

This which is a foul robbery of Gods Glory, this which murders mens souls, is the Barabbas of the present age! An outward name to live is set up and is received by those who are dead and many of you now present are quite easy and content though you have never felt the quickening Spirit of Godthough you have never been washed in the atoning blood yet you are satisfied because you take a seat in some place of worship! You give your guinea, your donation to an hospital, or your subscription to a good object, forgetting and not caring to remember that all the making clean of the outside of the cup and the platter will never avail, unless the inward nature is renewed by the Spirit of the living God!

This is the great Barabbas of the present age and men prefer it before the Savior! That this is truethat the world really loves sin better than ChristI think I could prove clearly enough by one simple fact. You have observed sometimes Christian men are inconsistent, have you not? The inconsistency was nothing very great if you had judged them according to ordinary rules of conduct. But you are well aware that a worldly man might commit any sin he likes without much censure. But if the Christian man commits ever so little, then hands are held up and the whole world cries, Shame!

I do NOT want to have that altered! But I do want just to say this There is Mr. So-and-So, who is known to live a fast, wicked, evil life. Well, I do not see that he is universally avoided and reprobated, but on the contrary he is tolerated by most and admired by some. But suppose a Christian man, a well-known professor, to have committed some fault which, compared with this, were not worth mentioningthen what is done? Oh, publish it! Publish it! Have you heard what Mr. So-and-So did? Have you heard of this hypocrites transgression? Well, what was it? You look at it. It is wrong, it is very wrongbut compared with what you say about it, it is nothing at all.

The world, therefore shows by the difference between the way in which it judges the professedly religious man and that with which it judges its own, that it really can tolerate the most abandoned, but cannot tolerate the Christian. Of course, the Christian never will be altogether free from imperfections. The worlds enmity is not against the Christians imperfections evidently, because they will tolerate greater imperfections in others! The objection must therefore be against the managainst the profession which he has taken up and the course which he desires to follow! Watch carefully, Beloved, that you give them no opportunity! When you see that the slightest mistake is laid hold of and exaggerated, in this you see a clear evidence that the world prefers Barabbas to the followers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now the world will change its various modes of dealing, but it will never love the Church better than it does now. We do not expect to see the world lifted up to become more and more absorbed into the Church, The union of the world with the Church was never the object of our religion. The object of Christ is to gather to Himself a people from among men. It is not the lifting up of all, but the calling out of somethe making of men to differ, the manifestation of His special and discriminating Gracethe gathering together of a people whom He has formed for Himself.

In this process morality is promoted and men are civilized and improved. But this is only indirectly Gods object and not His immediate end. The immediate end of the Gospel is the salvation of the people whom He has ordained unto eternal life and who, therefore, in due season are led to believe in Him. The world, to the end of the chapter, will be as much at enmity with true Believers as ever it was. You are not of the world, therefore the world hates you. This will be as true when Christ shall come as at the present moment. Let us expect it! And when we meet with scorn and persecution, let us not be surprised as though some strange thing had happened to us.

III. I come in the third place, and O for some assistance from on high, to observe that THE SIN OF PREFERRING BARABBAS TO CHRIST WAS THE SIN OF EVERY ONE OF US BEFORE OUR CONVERSION. Will you turn over the leaves of your diary, now, dear Friends, or fly upon the wings of memory to the hole of the pit where you were lifted? Did you not,

O you who live close to Christ, did you not once despise Him? What company did you like best? Was it not that of the frivolous, if not that of the profane?

When you sat with Gods people, their talk was very tedious. If they spoke of Divine realities and of experimental subjects, you did not understand them, you felt them to be troublesome. I can look back upon some whom I know now to be most venerable Believers, whom I thought to be a gross nuisance when I heard them talk of the things of God! What were our thoughts about? When we had time for thinking, what were our favorite themes? Not much did we meditate upon eternity. Not much upon Him who came to deliver us from the misery of Hells torments. Brothers and Sisters, His great love with which He loved us was never laid to heart by us as it should have been.

No, if we read the story of the Crucifixion, it had no more effect upon our mind than a common tale. We knew not the beauties of Christ! We thought of any trifle sooner than of Him. And what were our pleasures? When we had what we called a days enjoyment, where did we seek it? At the foot of the Cross? In the service of the Savior? In communion with Him? Far from it! The further we could remove from godly associations the better pleased we were. Some of us have to confess with shame that we were never more in our element than when we were without a consciencewhen conscience ceased to accuse us and we could plunge into sin with riot.

What was our reading then? Any book sooner than the Bibleand if there had lain in our way anything that would have exalted Christ and extolled Him in our understandingswe would have put the book away as much too dry to please us. Any three-volume heap of nonsense, any light literatureno, perhaps, even worsewould have delighted our eyes and our heart. But thoughts of His eternal delight towards usthoughts of His matchless passion and His Glory now in Heaven never came across our minds, nor would we endure those who would have led us to such meditations!

What were our aspirations then? We were looking after business, aiming at growing rich, famous for learning or admired for ability. SELF was what we lived for! If we had some regard for others and some desire to benefit our race, self was at the bottom of it all. We did not live for God we could not honestly say, as we woke in the morning, I hope to live for God today. At night we could not look back upon the day and say, We have this day served God. He was not in our thoughts! Where did we spend our best praise? Did we praise Christ? No! We praised cleverness and when it was in association with sin, we praised it none the less.

We admired those who could most fully minister to our own fleshly delights and felt the greatest love to those who did us the worst injury. Is not this our confession as we review the past? Have I not read the very history of your life? I know I have of my own. Alas, for those dark days in which our besotted soul went after any evil, but would not follow after Christ! It would have been the same today with us if almighty Grace had not made the difference. We may as well expect the river to cease to run to the sea as expect the natural man to turn from the current of his sins! As well might we expect fire to become water, or water to become fire as for the unrenewed heart ever to love Christ!

It was mighty Grace which made us seek the Savior. And as we look back upon our past lives, it must be with mingled feelings of gratitude for the change and of sorrow that we should have been so grossly foolish as to have chosen Barabbas and have said of the Savior, Let Him be crucified!

IV. And now I shall come to the closing part of the sermon which is THAT THERE ARE DOUBTLESS MANY HERE WHO THIS DAY PREFER BARABBAS TO OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. Let me first state your case, dear Friends. I would describe it honestly, but at the same time so describe it that you will see your sin in it. And while I am doing so, my object will be to reason with you, and pray the Lord may change your will.

There are many here, I fear, who prefer sin to Christ. I may say, without making a guess I know that there are those here who would long ago have been followers of Christ, but that they preferred drunkenness. It is not often, it is not every day, it is not even every weekbut there are occasions when they feel as if they must go into companyand as a sure result they return home intoxicated. They are ashamed of themselvesthey have expressed as much as that. They have even gone so far as to pray to God for Divine Grace to overcome their habit. But after being the subject of convictions for years, they have up to now made no advance.

It did seem once as if they had conquered it. For a long time there was an abstinence from the fault, but they have gone back to their folly. They have preferred the bestial degrading vicedid I say bestial? I insult the beasts!for beasts are not guilty of such a vice as this! The drunk prefers this degrading vice to Christ Jesus. There stands drunkenness, I see it mirrored before me with all its folly, its witlessness, its greed and filth. But the man chooses all that, and though he has known by head knowledge something concerning the beauty and excellency of Christ, he virtually says of Jesus, Not this man, but drunkenness!

Then there are other cases where a favorite lust reigns supreme in their hearts. The men know the evil of the sin and they have good cause to know it. They know also something of the sweetness of religion, for they are never happier than when they come up with Gods people. And they go home sometimes from a solemn sermon, especially if it touches their vice, and they feel, God has spoken to my soul today and I am brought to a standstill. But for all that, the temptation comes again and they fall as they have fallen before. I am afraid there are some of you whom no arguments will ever move. You have become so set on this mischief that it will be your eternal ruin.

But oh, think! How will this look when you are in HellI preferred that foul Barabbas of lust to the beauties and perfections of the Savior who came into the world to seek and to save that which was lost! And yet this is the case, not of some, but of a great multitude who listen to the Gospel and yet prefer sin to its saving power. There may be some here, too, of another class, who prefer gain. It has come to thisif they become truly the Lords people, they cannot do in trade what they now think their trade requires them to do. If they become really and genuinely Believers, they must, of course, become honest! But their trade would not pay, they say, if it were conducted upon honest principles! Or it is such a trade and there are some few such, as ought not to be conducted at all, much less

by Christians.   
Here comes the turning pointshall I take the gold, or shall I take   
Christ? True, it is cankered gold, and gold on which a curse must come. It   
is the fools penceit may be it is gain that is extorted from the miseries   
of the poormoney that would not ever stand the light because it is not  
fairly come by. Perhaps it is money that will burn its way right through   
your souls when you get upon your deathbeds. But yet men who love the  
world, say, No, not Christ, give me a full purse and away with Christ. Others, less base or less honest, cry, We know His excellence! We wish  
we could have Him, but we cannot have Him on terms which involve the   
renunciation of our dearly-beloved gain. Not this Man, but Barabbas.  
Others say, I would gladly be a Christian, but then I should lose so many  
of my acquaintances and friends. For the matter of what it comes to, my  
friends are not much good to methey are such friends as are fondest   
when I have most money to spend with them. They are friends who praise   
me most when I am often at the ale-housewhen I am seen plunging   
deepest into their vices. I know they do me mischief, but, says the man,  
I could not venture to oppose them. One of them has such a glib tongue   
and he can make such telling jokes! I could not bear to have him down  
upon me. And there is another, I have heard him give Christians such  
stinging names and point at their faults in such a sarcastic mannerI   
could not run the gauntlet of his tongue! And therefore, though I gladly  
would be a Christian, yet I will not.   
That is the way you prefer to be a serf, a slave, to the tongue of the  
scorner sooner than be a free man and take up the Cross and follow   
Christ! You prefer, I say, not merely by way of allegory, but as matter of   
factyou prefer Barabbas to the Lord Jesus Christ! I might thus multiply   
instances but the same principle runs through them all. If anything whatever keeps you back from giving your heart to the Lord Jesus Christ, you   
are guilty of setting up an opposition candidate to Christ in your soul and   
you are choosing, not this Man, but Barabbas.   
Let me occupy a few minutes with pleading Christs cause with you.   
Why is it that you reject Christ? Are you not conscious of the many good   
things which you receive from Him? You would have been dead if it had   
not been for Him! No, worse than that, you would have been in Hell! God   
has sharpened the great axe. Justice, like a stern woodman, stood with  
the axe uplifted, ready to cut you down as a cumberer of the ground. A   
hand was seen stopping the arm of the Avenger and a voice was heard   
saying, Let it alone, till I dig about it and feed it.   
Who was it that appeared just then in your moment of extremity? It  
was no other than that Christ, of whom you think so little, that you prefer  
drunkenness or vice to Him! You are this day in the House of God listening to a discourse which I hope is sent from Him. You might have been in  
Hellthink one moment of thatshut out from hope, enduring in body   
and soul unutterable pangs. That you are not there should make you love   
and bless Him who has said, Deliver him from going down into the pit.   
Why will you prefer your own gain and self-indulgence to that blessed One   
to whom you owe so much?   
Common gratitude should make you deny yourself something for Him   
who denied Himself so much that He might bless you. Do I hear you say that you cannot follow Christ because His precepts are too severe? In what respect are they too severe? If you, yourself, were set to judge them, what is the point with which you would find fault? They deny you your sins? They deny you your miseries! They do not permit you, in fact, to ruin yourself. There is no precept of Christ which is not for your good and there is nothing which He forbids you which He does not forbid on the   
principle that it would harm you to indulge in it.   
But suppose Christs precepts to be ever so sternis it not better that   
you should put up with them than be ruined? The soldier submits implicitly to the captains command because he knows that without discipline   
there can be no victory and the whole army may be cut in pieces if there is  
a want of order. When the sailor has risked his life to penetrate through   
the thick ice of the north, we find him consenting to all the orders and   
regulations of authority and bearing all the hardships of the adventure   
because he is prompted by the desire of assisting in a great discovery, or   
stimulated by a large reward.   
And surely the little self-denials which Christ calls us to will be abundantly recompensed by the reward He offers! And when the soul and its   
eternal interests are at stake, we may well put up with these temporary

inconveniences if we may inherit eternal life! I think I hear you say that   
you would be a Christian, but there is no happiness in it. I would not tell  
you a falsehood on this point. I would speak the truth if it were so, but I   
do solemnly declare that there is more joy in the Christian life than there   
is in any other form of life! If I had to die like a dog and there were no   
hereafter, I would prefer to be a Christian! You shall appeal to the very  
poorest among usto those who are most sick and most despised and   
they will tell you the same.   
There is not an old country woman shivering in her old ragged red   
cloak over a handful of fire, full of rheumatism, with an empty cupboard  
and an aged body who would change with the very highest and greatest of   
you if she had to give up her religion! No, she would tell you that her Redeemer was a greater comfort to her than all the luxuries which could be   
heaped upon the table of Dives. You make a mistake when you dream that   
my Master does not make His disciples blessed. They are a blessed people   
who put their trust in Christ!   
Still, I think I hear you say, Yes, this is all very well, but still I prefer   
present pleasure. Do you not, in this, talk like a child? No! Like a fool!  
For what is present pleasure? How long does that word present last? If  
you could have ten thousand years of merriment I might agree with you in  
a measure, but even there I should have but short patience with you, for  
what would be ten thousand years of sins merriment compared with millions upon millions of years of sins penalty? Why, at the longest, your life   
will be but very short. Are you not conscious that time flies more hurriedly   
every day? As you grow older, do you not seem as if you had lived a   
shorter time instead of longer? Perhaps if you could live to be as old as   
Jacob, you would say, Few and evil have my days been, for they appear  
fewer as they grow more numerous.   
You know that this life is but a span and is soon over. Look at the   
graveyards! See how they are crowded with green mounds. Remember   
your own companionshow one by one they have passed away. They were   
as firm and strong as you, but they have gone like a shadow that declines. Is it worthwhile to have this little space of pleasure and then to lie down in eternal pain? I pray you answer this question! Is it worth while to choose Barabbas for the sake of the temporary gain he may give you and give up Christ and so renounce the eternal treasures of joy and happiness   
which are at His right hand forevermore?   
I wish that I could put these questions before you as they ought to be   
put. It needs the earnest seraphic voice of Whitfield, or the pleading  
tongue of Richard Baxter to plead with you! But yet I think I talk to rational men. And if it is a matter of arithmetic, it shall need no words of  
mine. I will not ask you to take your life at the longest that you expect it   
to beat eighty, saycrowd it full of all the pleasures you can imagine.  
Suppose yourself in good health! Dream yourself to be without business  
cares, with all that heart can wish! Go and sit upon the throne of Solomon  
if you will, and yet what will you have to say when it is all over? Looking  
back upon it, can you make more of it than Solomon did, when he said,   
Vanity of vanities, all is vanity. All is vanity and vexation of spirit? When you have cast up that sum, may I ask you to calculate how much  
you will have gained, if, in order to possess this vanity, you have renounced eternal happiness and have incurred everlasting woe? Do you believe the Bible? You say, Yes. Well, then, it must be so. Many men profess to be Believers in Scripture and yet, when you come to the point as to   
whether they believe in eternal woe and eternal joy, there is a kind of   
something inside which whispers, That is in the Bookbut still it is not  
real, it is not true to us. Make it true to yourselves and when you have   
done it and have clearly proved that you must be in happiness or woe  
and that you must here either have Barabbas for your master, or have   
Christ for your Lordthen, I say, like sane men, judge which is the better   
choice and may Gods mighty Grace give you spiritual sanity to make the   
right choice!   
But this I know, you will never make the right choice unless that  
mighty Spirit who alone leads us to choose the right and reject the wrong,  
shall come upon you and lead you to fly to a Saviors wounds! I need not, I   
think, prolong the service now, but I hope you will prolong it at your own   
houses by thinking of the matter. And may I put the question personally  
to all of you separatewhose are you? On whose side are you? There are   
no neuters. There are no betweenitesyou either serve Christ or Belial!  
You are either with the Lord or with His enemies! Who is on the Lords   
side this day? Who? Who is for Christ and for His Cross? For His blood   
and for His Throne?   
Who, on the other hand, are His foes? As many as are not for Christ are   
numbered with His enemies. Be not so numbered any longer, for the Gospel comes to you with an inviting voiceBelieve in the Lord Jesus Christ   
and you shall be saved. God help you to believe and cast yourself upon   
Him now. And if you trust Him, you are saved now and you shall be saved  
forever! Amen.

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**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, MAY 6, 1877, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**He said unto the Jews, Behold your King.   
John 19:14.**

PILATE said much more than he meant and, therefore, we shall not restrict our consideration of his words to what he intended. John tells us considering Caiaphas, and this spoke he not of himself, and we may say the same of Pilate. Everything said or done in connection with the Savior during the day of His Crucifixion was full of meaning, far fuller of meaning than the speakers or actors were aware. Transformed by the Cross, even the commonplace becomes solemn and weighty!

When Caiaphas said that it was expedient that one man should die for the people, that the whole nation perish not, he little thought that he was enunciating the great Gospel principle of Substitution! When the Jewish people cried out before Pilate, His blood be on us and on our children, they little knew the judgment which they were bringing upon themselves which would commence to be fulfilled at the siege of Jerusalem and follow them, hanging like a heavy cloud over their race, for centuries! When the soldier with a spear pierced His side he had no idea that he was bringing forth before all eyes that blood and water which are, to the whole Church, the emblems of the double cleansing which we find in Jesus, cleansing by atoning blood and sanctifying Grace.

The fullness of time had come and all things were full. Each movement on that awful day was brimming with mystery. Neither could the Master or those around Him stir or speak without teaching some Gospel, or enforcing some lesson. Whereas on certain days frivolity seems to rule the hour and little is to be gathered from much that is spokenon the day of the Passion even the most careless spoke as men inspired! Pilate, the undecided spirit, with no mind of his own, uttered language as weighty as if he, too, had been among the Prophets. His acquittal of our Lord, his mention of Barabbas, his writing of the inscription to be fixed over the head of Jesus and many other matters were all fraught with instruction.

It was to the Jews that Pilate brought forth Jesus, arrayed in garments of derision, and to them He said, Ecce RexBehold your King! It was by the seed of Abraham that He was rejected as their King. But we shall not think of them in order to blame that unhappy nation, but to remind ourselves that we, also, may fall into the same sin. As a nation favored with the Gospel, we stand, in many respects, in the same privileged condition as the Jews did. To us is the Word of God made known! To our keeping, the oracles of God are committed in these last days and we, though by Nature, shoots of the wild olive, are engrafted into that favored stock from which Israel has, for a while, been cut off. Shall we prove equally

unworthy? Shall any of us be found guilty of the blood of Jesus?

We hear of Jesus this dayare we rejecting Him? The suffering Messiah will be brought forth, again, this morning, not by Pilate, but by one who longs to do Him honor. And when He stands before you and is proclaimed, again, in the words, Behold your King! will you, also, cry, Away with Him! Away with Him!? Let us hope that there will not be found, here, hearts so evil as to imitate the rebellious nation and cry, We will not have this Man to reign over us. Oh that each one of us may acknowledge the Lord Jesus to be his King, for beneath His scepter there is rest and joy! He is worthy to be crowned by every heart! Let us all unite in beholding Him with reverence and receiving Him with delight!

Give me your ears and hearts while Jesus is evidently set forth as standing among you. And for the next few minutes let it be your only business to, Behold your King.

I. Come with me, then, to the place which is called The Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha, and there, behold your King. I shall first ask you to BEHOLD YOUR KING PREPARING HIS THRONE, yes, and making Himself ready to sit upon it. When you look, in answer to the summons, Behold your King, what do you see? You see the Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief wearing a crown of thorns and covered with an old purple cloak which had been thrown about Him in mockery. You can see, if you look closely, the traces of His streaming blood, for He has just been scourged and you may, also, discover that His face is blackened with bruises and stained with shameful spit from the soldiers mouths

*Thus trimmed forth they bring Him to the rout, Who, Crucify Him, cry with one strong shout, God holds His peace at man, and man cries out.*

It is a terrible spectacle, but I ask you to gaze upon it steadily and see the establishment of the Redeemers Throne. See how He becomes your mediatorial King. He was setting up a new Throne on Gabbatha, where He would reign as the King of pardoned sinners and the Prince of Peace! He was King before all worlds as Lord of all by right of His eternal power and Godhead. He had a Throne when worlds were made, as King of all kings by creation. He had, also, always filled the Throne of Providence, upholding all things by the Word of His power. On His head were many crowns and to Pilates question, Are You a king, then? He did fitly answer, You say that I am a king.

But here before Pilate and the Jews, in His condition of shame and misery, He was about to ascend and, first of all, to prepare the Throne of the heavenly Grace which now is set up among the sons of men that they may flee to it and find eternal salvation! Mark how He is preparing this Throne of Graceit is by pain and shame endured in our place. Sin was in the way of mans happinessand a broken Law and justice required a penaltyand all this must be arranged before a Throne of Grace could be erected among men.

If you look at our suffering Lord you see at once the ensigns of His pain, for He wears a crown of thorns which pierce His brow. Pain was a great part of the penalty due for sin and the great Substitute was, therefore, sorely pained. When Pilate brought forth our martyr Prince, He was the very mirror of agony. He was majesty in miserymisery worked up to its full height and stature. The cruel furrows of the scourge and the trickling rivulets of His blood down His face were but the tokens that He was about to die in cruel pangs upon the Cross! And these, together, were incumbent upon Him because there could be no Throne of Grace till first there had been a substitutionary sacrifice. It behooved Him to suffer that He might be a Prince and a Savior. Behold your King in His pains! He is laying the deep foundations of His Kingdom of mercy!

Many a crown has been secured by blood and so is thisbut it is His own blood! Many a throne has been established by suffering and so is thisbut He Himself bears the pain! By His great sacrificial griefs our Lord has prepared a Throne upon which He shall sit till all the chosen race have been made kings and priests to reign with Him. It is by His agony that He obtains the royal power to pardonby His stripes and bruises He wins the right to absolve poor sinners! We shall have no cause to wonder at the greatness of His mediatorial power if we consider the depth of His sacrificial sufferings! As His misery is the source of His majesty, so the greatness of His pains has secured to Him the fullness of power to save. Had He not gone to the end of the Law and honored Justice to the highest degree, He had not, now, been so gloriously able to dispense mercy from His glorious high Throne of mediatorial Grace. Behold your King, then, as He lays deep in His own pain and death the basis of His Throne of Grace.

Nor is it only pain, for He wears, also, the tokens of scorn. That crown of thorns meant mainly mockerythe soldiers made Him a mimic monarch, a carnival kingand that scarlet robe, too, was cast upon His shoulders in bitter scornand thus did this world deride its God! The Evangelists give you the description in brief sentences, as if they stopped between each line to cover their faces with their hands and weep. So there He stands before the crowd, helpless, friendless, with none to declare His generation or give Him a good word. He is deserted by all who formerly called Him, Master, and He has become the center of a scene of rioting and ridicule. The soldiers have done their worst and now the chief men of the nation look at Him with contempt and are only kept back from the most ribald scorn by a hate too furiously eager for death to afford them leisure for their scoffs.

His enemies had done everything in their power to clothe Him with scorn and they were asking for permission to do more, for they cried, Let Him be crucified. Behold how He has left all the honor of His Fathers house and His own Glory among the angelsand here He stands with a mock robe, a mimic scepter and a thorny crownthe butt of ridicule, scoffed at by all! Yet this must be, because sin is a shameful thing and a part of the penalty of sin is shame, as they will know who shall wake up in the Day of Judgment to everlasting contempt! Shame fell on Adam when he sinned and then and there he knew that he was naked. And now shame has come down in a tremendous hail upon the head of the Second

Adam, the Substitute for shameful man, and He is covered with contempt. All they that see Me laugh Me to scorn. It is hard to say whether cru  
elty or mockery had most to do with the Person of our Lord at Gabbatha,  
but by enduring these two things together He laid on an immovable Foundation the cornerstone of His dominion of love and Grace. How could He  
have been the King of a redeemed people if He had not thus redeemed   
them? He might have been Lord over a people doomed to diethe stern  
Ruler of a people who continued in sin and would so continue till they  
perished forever from His Presence. But He not seek such a kingdom. He   
sought a kingdom over hearts that should eternally be under obligation to  
Him. Hearts that, being redeemed from the lowest Hell by His atoning  
death, would forever love Him with the utmost fervency. His sorrow secured His power to save! His shame endowed Him with the right to bless!  
Behold your King.   
Look at Him with steady eyes and see what a King He now is by right of   
benefit conferred. Behold, He has put away sin, forever, by the sacrifice of  
Himself and, therefore, all the ransomed ones agree that He should be  
king who smote the great dragon which devoured the nations. Behold, by  
His stooping to shame, He has dethroned Satan who was the prince of   
this world! And who should occupy the Throne but He who has won it and   
cast out the strong one who ruled before? Christ has done more for men  
than the Prince of Darkness could or would, for He has died for them and   
so He has earned a just supremacy over all grateful hearts.   
As for death, Jesus, by yielding to death, has conquered it. Let Him be   
crowned with the victors wreath who has destroyed the worlds destroyer!   
In His shame you also see the Lord Jesus Christ fulfilling the Law and   
making it honorable. He who could honor that Law which otherwise would   
have cursed us, deserves to have all honor and homage paid to Him by   
the sons of men whom He has rescued from the curse! You see, then, our  
Lord, when He put on the old red cloak and submitted His brow to be  
pierced with thorns, was really establishing for Himself an empirethe   
foundations of which shall never be shaken! He was performing that saving work which has made Him King among sinners whom He saves and   
Lord of the Kingdom of Grace which through His death is bestowed upon   
men!   
Note this, too, that men are kings among their fellows when they can  
show deep sympathy and give substantial succor. He who can sympathize   
wins power of the best sort, not coarse force, but refined spiritual influence. For this cause our Lord was afflicted, as you see Him afflicted, that   
He might have sympathy with you in your direst grief and in your most   
grievous dishonor. As the children were partakers of flesh and blood, He,   
Himself, also took part of the same. And as they must suffer, so the Captain of their salvation was made perfect by suffering. This gives Him His   
glorious power over us. He is a faithful High Priest, for He can be touched   
with the feeling of our infirmities. And this ability to enter into our infirmities and sorrows makes Him supreme over our hearts. Look at your King   
in pain and mockeryand see how royal He is to your heart! How sovereignly He commands your heart to rejoice! With what regal power He   
commands your fears to lie still and how obediently your despondency  
yields to His Word!   
Now, as it is with you, so is it on a larger scale in the world. The suffering nations will yet see their true Deliverer in their suffering Lord. That   
scepter of a reed will secure Him power far greater than a rod of iron. His   
love to man is proved by His suffering to the death on their behalf and   
this, when the Holy Spirit has made men wise, shall be to the myriads of  
our race the reason for proclaiming Him Lord of all! The kings and princes   
who rule mankind by reason of their descent or by the force of arms, have  
but the names of kings. The true kings are the great benefactors. The heroes are our kings, after all. We look upon those as royal who can risk   
their lives for their fellow men to win them liberty, or to teach them truth.   
The race forgets its masters but it remembers its friends.   
Earth, but for Jesus, had been a vast prison and men a race of condemned criminals. But He who stands before us in Gabbatha, in all His   
shame and grief, has delivered us from our lost estate and, therefore, He   
must be King! Who shall say no to Him? If love must ultimately triumph  
if disinterested self-sacrifice must obtain homagethen Jesus is and shall  
be King! If eventually, when the morning breaks and mans heart is   
purged from the prejudice and injustice occasioned by sin, the might shall   
be with the right and truth must prevail! Then Jesus must reign! The   
eternal fitness of things demands that the best should be highest, that he  
who does men most service should be most honored among them! In a   
word, that He who was made nothing of for mans sake should become   
everything to him. See, then, how the crown of thorns is mother to the   
crown which Jesus wears in His Church! The scarlet robe is the purchase   
price of the vesture of universal sovereignty and the mock scepter of reed  
is the precursor of the rod of nations with which the whole earth will yet   
be ruled! Behold your King, and see the sources of His mediatorial  
power!   
II. O you who see in your bleeding and rejected Lord, the King in His

beauty, come here, yet again, and BEHOLD HIM CLAIMING YOUR HOMAGE. See in what way He comes to win your hearts. What is His right to  
be King over you? There are many rights, for on His head are many  
crownsbut the most commanding right which Jesus has over any of us  
is signified by that crown of thornsit is the right of supreme love! He   
loved us as none other could have loved us. If we put all the loves of parents and of wives and children all together, we can never rival, even for a   
moment, the love of Christ to us! And whenever that love touches us, so   
that we feel its power, we crown Him King at once.   
Who can resist His charms? One look of His eyes overpowers us! See   
with your heart those eyes when they are full of tears for perishing sinners   
and you are a willing subject. One look at His blessed Person subjected to  
scourging and spitting for our sakes will give us more idea of His crown   
rights than anything besides. Look into His pierced heart as it pours out  
its life flood for us and all disputes about His Sovereignty are ended in our  
hearts. We acknowledge Him Lord because we see how He loved! How could we do otherwise? Love in action, or rather love in suffering, carries an Omnipotence about it! Behold what His love endured and so, Behold   
your King.   
Jesus, in the garb of mockery, marred with traces of His pain, also reminds us of His complete purchase of us by His deeds and death. You   
are not your own, you are bought with a price. Behold your King and see   
the price! It is the price of immense suffering, of most cruel shame! It is an  
incalculable price, for the Lord of All is set at nothing! It is an awful price,  
for He who only has immortality yields Himself to die! It is the price of   
blood. It is the scourging and bleeding and woe of Jesusno, it is Himself!  
If you would see the price of your redemption, Behold your King. Tis He   
that has redeemed us unto God by His blood! It is He that made Himself  
of no reputation and took upon Him the form of a Servant; and being   
found in fashion as a Man, humbled Himself; and became obedient unto   
death, even the death of the Cross.   
You acknowledge that claimthe love of Christ demands ityou feel  
that from now on you live for Him, alone, and count it joy that in all respects He should reign over you with unlimited sway. Jesus, because He  
suffered, has acquired a power over us which is far superior to any which   
could be urged in courts of law, or enforced by mere power, for our hearts  
have voluntarily surrendered to Him and given Him the right of our free   
submission, charmed to give allegiance to such imperial love! Is it possible   
for a Believer to look at the Lord Jesus Christ without feeling that he longs   
to be more and more His servant and disciple? Do you not thirst to serve   
Him? Can yon behold Him in the depth of shame without pining to lift  
Him up to the heights of glory? Can you see Him stooping thus for you   
without pleading with God that a glorious high Throne may be His and   
that He may sit upon it and rule all the hearts of men?   
There is no need to argue out the right of King Jesus, for you feel it  
His love has carried you by storm and it holds fast its capture. You cannot  
have a Savior without His being your King. And seeing such a Savior in   
such a condition, you cannot even think of Him without delighting to ascribe to Him all power and dominion! Could we escape His sway it would   
be bondage to usand when we, at any time fail to admit it, it is our   
worst affliction! Behold your King, then, for He Himself is His own claim   
to your obedience! See what He suffered for you, my Brothers and Sisters,   
and from now on never draw back from any labor, shame, or suffering for   
His dear sake.   
Behold your King, and reckon to be treated like He. Do you expect to  
be crowned with gold when He was crowned with thorns? Shall lilies grow   
for you and briars for Him? Never again be ashamed to carry His glorious   
name, unless, indeed, you can be so vile as to prove a traitor to such a   
Lord! See to what shame He was put and learn from Him to despise all   
shame for His Truths sake! Shall the disciple be above his Master, or the   
servant above his Lord? If they have thus maltreated the Master of the   
house, what shall they do to the household? Let us reckon upon our  
share of this treatment and, by accepting it, prove to all men that the despised and rejected of men is really the King over us and that the subjects blush not to be like their Monarch!   
Even though the cost is all the shame the world can possibly pour upon  
us, or all the suffering that flesh and blood can, in any condition, endure,  
let us be faithful in our loyalty and cry, Who shall separate us? Shall   
persecution, or distress, or tribulation divide us from our King? No! In all  
these things we are more than conquerors! King of Griefs, you are King of  
my soul! O King of Shame, you are absolute Monarch of my heart! You are   
King by Divine right and King by my own voluntary choice! Other lords   
have had dominion over us, but now, since You have revealed Yourself after this fashion, Your name, only, shall govern our spirit! Do you not see,  
then, that Jesus, before Pilate, reveals His claim in the appearance which  
He wears? Behold your King.   
III. Behold your King, for a third time, that you may see Him SUBDUING HIS DOMINIONS. Dressed in robes of scorn and with a visage marred   
with pain, He comes forth conquering and to conquer! This is not very apparent at a superficial glance, for He is not arrayed like a man of war. You   
see no sword upon His thigh, nor bow in His hand. No fiery threats fall   
from His lips, nor does He speak with eloquent persuasion. He is unarmed, yet victorious! He is silent, but yet conquering!   
In this garb He goes forth to war. His shame is His armor and His sufferings are His battle-axe. What do you think? How can it be so? I speak   
no fiction, but sober factand it shall be proven. Missionaries have gone   
forth to win the heathen for Christ and they have commenced with the   
uncivilized sons of sin by telling them that there is a God and that He is   
great and just. The people have listened unmoved, or have only answered,  
Do you think we dont know this? Then they have spoken of sin and its   
punishment and have foretold the coming of the Lord to judgment, but  
still the people stirred not, but coolly said, Tis true, and then went on   
their way to live in sin as before.   
At last these earnest men have let fall the blessed secret and spoken of   
the love of God in giving His only-begotten Son and they have begun to tell  
the story of the matchless griefs of Immanuel! Then have the dry bones   
stirred! Then have the deaf begun to hear! They tell us that they had not  
long told the story before they noticed that eyes were fastened on them   
and that countenances were beaming with interest which had been listless before. And they have said to themselves, Why did we not begin with   
this? Yes, why, indeed? For this it is that touches mens heartsChrist   
Crucified is the Conqueror!   
Not in His robes of Glory does He subdue the heart, but in His vestments of shame! Not as sitting upon the Throne does He, at first, gain the   
faith and the affections of sinners, but as bleeding, suffering and dying in  
their place! God forbid that I should glory, said the Apostle, save in the   
Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. And though every theme that is connected with the Savior ought to play its part in our ministry, yet this is the   
master theme. The atoning work of Jesus is the great gun of our battery!   
The Cross is the mighty battering-ram to break in pieces the bronze gates   
of human prejudices and the iron bars of obstinacy! Christ coming to be our Judge alarms, but Christ, the Man of Sorrows, subdues! The crown of thorns has a royal power in it to compel a willing allegiance! The scepter of reed breaks hearts better than a rod of iron and the robe of mockery commands more love than Caesars imperial purple! There is nothing like   
it under Heaven!   
Victories 10,000 times 10,000 have been achieved by Him whom Pilate  
led forth to the multitude victories distinctly to be ascribed to the crown   
of thorns and vesture of mockery! Are they not written in the book of the   
wars of the Lord? There will be more such as He is more frequently set   
forth in His own fashion and men are bid, in the Man of Sorrows to behold   
their King. Has it not been so at home as well as among the far-off heathen? What wins mens hearts to Christ today? What but Christ in shame   
and Christ in suffering? I appeal to you who have been newly converted  
what has bound you as captives to Jesus chariot? What has made you,  
from now on, vow to be His followers, rejoicing in His name? What but  
thisthat He bowed His head to the death for your sake and has redeemed you unto God by His blood? You know it is so!   
And oh, dear children of God, if ever you feel the power of Christ upon  
you to the fullesttill it utterly overcomes youis it not the memory of  
redeeming grief which does it? When you become like harps and Jesus is   
the minstrel and lays His finger among your heartstrings and brings out  
nothing but praise for His dear namewhat is it that charms you into the   
music of grateful love but the fact of His condescension on your behalf? Is   
not this your song, that He was slain and has redeemed you unto God by   
His blood? I confess I could sit down at the foot of His Cross and do nothing else but weep until I wept myself away, for His suffering makes my  
soul to melt within me. Then, if the call of duty is heard, I feel intensely  
eager to plead with others. At that time I am ready to make any sacrifice   
to bring others under my Lords dominion! Then, by His Grace, I am full of   
a holy passion that even death could not quenchall this, I say, if I have   
but just come from gazing on the Redeemers passion and drinking of His   
cup and being baptized with His Baptism!   
The scepter of reed rules as nothing else ever did, for it awakens enthusiasm. The crown of thorns commands homage as no other diadem ever

did, for it braces men into heroes and martyrs. No royalty is so allcommanding as that which has for its insignia the crown of thorns, the  
reed, the red cloak and the five wounds! Other sovereignties are forced   
and feigned. They are hollow compared with the Sovereignty of the despised of men! Fear, or custom, or self-interest make men courtiers elsewhere, but fervent love crowds the courts of King Jesus! We do not merely   
say that the marred Countenance is the most majestic ever seen, but we   
have felt it to be so on many an occasions. Yes, and feel it to be so now. Do you want to make our hard hearts soft? Tell us of Jesus grief!   
Would you make us, strong men, into children? Set the Man of Sorrows in  
our midst! There is no resisting Him. Look, also, at backsliders if you   
would see the power of the despised Nazarene. If they have gone away  
from Christ. If they have become lukewarm. If their hearts have become  
obdurate to Him who once could charm themwhat can bring them back? I know but one magnet which, in the hands of the Holy Spirit, will attract these sadly fallen onesit is Jesus in His shame and pains! We tell them that they crucified the Son of God afresh and put Him to an open shameand they look on Him whom they have pierced and mourn for  
Him!   
O you, who, after having sipped of the communion cup, have gone to   
drink at the table of Bacchus! You, who, after having talked of love to  
Christ, have followed after the lusts of the flesh! You, who, after singing  
His praises, have blasphemed the sacred name with which you are   
namedmay His Omnipotence of love be proven in you, also! What can  
ever bring you back but this sad reflection, that you, also, have twisted for  
Him a crown of thorns and caused Him to be blasphemed among His enemies? Still the merit of His death is available for you! The power and efficacy of His precious blood have not ceased, even for you! And if you come   
back to Himand oh, may a sight of Him draw youHe will receive you   
graciously as at the first. I say to you, Behold your King, and may the   
Sovereignty of His humiliation and suffering be proven, this morning, in   
some of you as you shall come bending at His feet, conquered by His great  
love and restored to repentance and faith by His marvelous compassion! A   
sight of His wounds and bruises heals us, so that we grieve at our rebellions and long to be brought home to God, never to wander more. Ah, dear Brothers and Sisters, we shall always find, as long as the   
world stands, that among saints, sinners, backsliders and all classes of  
men, Jesus Christs power is most surely felt when His humiliation is  
most faithfully declared and most believingly known! It is by this that He  
will subdue all things to Himself. If we will but preach Jesus Christ to the   
Hindu, it will not be necessary to answer all his metaphysical subtleties  
the sorrows of Jesus are as a sharp sword to cut the Gordian knot. If we   
will go down among the degraded inhabitants of Africa, we shall not need,   
first, to civilize themthe Cross is the great lever which lifts up fallen   
menit conquers evil and establishes truth and righteousness. The most depraved and hardened learn of His great love and hearts of  
stone begin to beatthey see Jesus suffering to the death out of nothing   
else but love to themand they are touched by it! And they eagerly enquire what they must do to be saved by such a Savior. The Holy Spirit   
works in the minds of many by setting forth the great love and grief of Jesus. May we who are His ministers have great faith in His Cross and from   
now on say, as we preach the suffering Jesus, Behold your King. IV. In the fourth place I beg you to Behold your King SETTING   
FORTH THE PATTERN OF HIS KINGDOM. When you look at Him, you are   
struck, at once, with the thought that if He is a king He is like no other   
monarch, for other kings are covered with rich apparel and surrounded   
with pomp, but He has none of these. Their glories usually consist in wars   
by which they have made others suffer. But His Glory is His own suffering! No blood but His own has flowed to make Him illustrious! He is a King but He cannot be put in the list of sovereigns such as the   
nations of the earth are compelled to serve. When Antoninus Pius set up   
the statue of Jesus in the Pantheon as one of a circle of gods and heroes, it must have seemed strangely out of place to those who gazed upon its visage if the sculptor was at all true to life. It must have stood apart as one that could not be numbered with the rest! Neither can you set Him among the masters of the human race who have crushed mankind beneath their iron heels! He was no Caesaryou cannot make Him appear like one! Call Him not autocrat, emperor, or czarHe has an authority greater than all theseyet not after their kind. His purple is different from theirs and His crown, also. But His face differs more and His heart most   
of all. My kingdom, He says, is not of this world.   
For troops, He has a host of sorrows. For pomp, a surrounding of   
scorn. For lofty bearing, humility. For adulation, mockery. For homage,   
spit. For glory, shame. For a Throne, a Cross. Yet there was never a truer  
King! Indeed, all kings are but a name, save this King, who is a real Ruler  
in Himself and of Himselfand not by extraneous force. Right royal, indeed, is the Nazarene! But He cannot be likened unto the princes of earth,   
nor can His Kingdom be reckoned with theirs. I pray that the day may  
soon come when none may dream of looking upon the Church as a  
worldly organization capable of alliance with temporal sovereignties so as   
to be patronized, directed, or reformed by them. Christs Kingdom shines   
as a lone star with a brightness all its own! It stands apart like a hill of  
light, sacred and sublimethe high hills may leap with envy because of   
itbut it is not of them nor like unto them. Is not this manifest even in   
the appearance of our Lord as Pilate brings Him forth and cries, Behold   
your King!?   
Now, as He sets before us in His own Person, the pattern of His Kingdom, we may expect that we shall see some likeness to Him in His subjects. And if you will gaze upon the Church, which is His Kingdom, from   
the first day of her history until now, you will see that it, too, is wearing  
its purple robe. The martyrs blood is the purple vesture of the Church of  
Christ. The trials and persecutions of Believers are her crown of thorns.   
Think of the rage of persecution under Pagan Romeand the equally inhuman proceedings of Papal Romeand you will see how the ensign of   
Christs Kingdom is a crown of thornsa crown and yet thornsthorns  
but still a crown! The bush is burning, but it is not consumed! If you, Beloved, are truly followers of Jesus, you must expect to take   
your measure of shame and dishonor. And you may reckon upon your allotment of griefs and sorrows. The Man of Sorrows attracts a sorrowful  
following. The Lamb of Gods Passover is still eaten with bitter herbs. The   
child of God cannot escape the rod, for the elder Brother did not and to   
Him we are to be conformed. We must fill up that which is behind of the   
afflictions of Christ for His bodys sake, which is the Church (Col. 1:24). Remember, however, that Christs sufferings, as a pattern, were not for   
His own sins, nor brought upon Him as a chastisement for His own faults.  
The sufferings which belong to His Kingdom are those which are endured   
for His name and for His Glorys sake, and for the good of others. If men   
lie in prison for their own crimes, that has nothing to do with His Kingdom. If we suffer for our sins, that is no part of His Kingdom. But when a   
man loses of his substance for Christs cause, lays out himself to toil even unto death, bears contempt and suffers hardness as a Christianthis is after the type of Christs Kingdom. When the missionary goes forth with his life in his hand among the heathen, or when a Believer in any way divests himself of comfort for the good of others, it is then that he truly cop  
ies the pattern set him in Pilates Hall by our great King.   
I say to you Christians who court ease, to you who are hoarding up   
your gold, to you who will do nothing that would bring you under the  
criticism of your fellow men, to you who live unto yourselveswould it not  
be irony of the severest kind if I were to point to Jesus before Pilate and   
say, Behold your King? Living in undue luxury, amassing wealth, rolling  
in ease, living to enjoy yourselves! Is that your King? Poor subjects, you  
and very unlike your Lord! But if there are among us those who, for His   
sake, can make sacrifices, we may look upon our King without fear. You   
who are undaunted by contempt and who would give all that you have,  
yes, and give yourselves to know Jesusand are doing soto such I say,   
Behold your King, for you are of His Kingdom and you shall reign with   
Him! In your conquest of yourselves you have already become kings! In  
reigning over your own desires and carnal inclinations for the sake of His   
dear love, you are already kings and priests unto God and you shall reign   
forever and ever!   
He who is ruled by his passions in any degree is still a slave. But he   
who lives for God and his fellow men has a royal soul. The insignia of a   
prince unto God are still shame and sufferingwhich adornments are   
readily worn when the Lord calls him to do so. In Christs Kingdom those   
are peers of the highest rank who are most like their Lord and are the   
lowest and humblest in mindand most truly the servants of all. The secondary princes of His Kingdom approximate less closely to Him and the   
lower you descend in the scale the less you are like He is in those respects. The Christian surrounded with every comfort who never endured   
hardness for Christ, who never knew what it was to be sneered at for Jesus sake, who never made a sacrifice which went so far as to pinch him   
in the leastif, indeed, he is a Christianis least in the kingdom of  
Heaven.   
Proud, rich men who give but trifles to Christs cause are pariahs in His

Kingdom! They who are who are willing to be least of all, are the chief  
they are princes who make themselves the offscouring of all things for His   
names sake, such as were the Apostles and first martyrs and others   
whom His love has greatly constrained.   
V. Our concluding remark shall be, Behold your KingPROVING THE  
CERTAINTY OF HIS EMPIREfor if, Beloved, Christ was King when He   
was in Pilates hands, after being scourged and spit upon, and while He  
was wearing the robe and crown of mockery, when will He not be King? If  
He were King at His worst, when is it that His Throne can ever be shaken?  
They have brought Him very low. They have brought Him lower than the   
sons of men, for they have made Him a worm and not a man, despised of  
the people, and yet He is King!   
Marks of royalty were present on the day of His death. He dispensed   
crowns when He was on the CrossHe gave the dying thief a promise of an entrance into Paradise. In His death He shook the earth, He opened graves, He split the rocks, He darkened the sun and He made men smite on their breasts in dismay! One voice after another, even from the ranks of His foes, proclaimed Him to be King, even when dying like a malefactor! Was He a King then? When will He not be King? And who is there that  
can, in any way, shake His Throne?   
In the days of His flesh, the kings of the earth stood up and the rulers  
took counsel together, saying, Let us break His bonds asunder, and cast  
His cords from us, but He that sat in the heavens did laughthe Lord  
did have them in derision and Christ on the Cross was acknowledged, in  
Hebrew, Greek and Latin, to be, still, the King of the Jews. When will He   
not be King? If He was King before He died and was laid in the grave, what   
is He, now, that He has risen from the dead? What is He, now, now that  
He has vanquished the destroyer of our race and lives no more to die?  
What is He now?   
You angels, tell what glories surround Him now! If He were King when   
He stood at Pilates bar, what will He be when Pilate shall stand at His   
bar, when He shall come on the Great White Throne and summon all  
mankind before Him to judgment? What will be His acknowledged sovereignty and His dreaded majesty in the day of the Lord? Come, let us adore  
Him! Let us pay our humble homage in the courts of the Lords house this   
day! And then let us go forth to our daily service in His name and make   
this our strong resolve, His Spirit helping us, that we will live to crown   
Him in our hearts and in our livesin every place where our lot may be   
casttill the day breaks and the shadows flee away and we behold the   
King in His beauty and the land that is very far off.   
None can overturn a kingdom which is founded on the death of its  
King! None can abolish a dominion whose deep foundations are laid in the   
tears and blood of the Prince, Himself. Napoleon said that he founded his   
empire by force and, therefore, it had passed away. But, he said, Jesus   
founded His Kingdom upon love and it will last forever. So it must be, for   
whatever may or may not be, it is writtenHe must reign. As for us, if   
we wish to extend the Redeemers Kingdom we must be prepared to deny  
ourselves for Christ. We must be prepared for weariness, slander and selfdenial.   
In this sign we conquer! The Cross will have to be borne by us as well   
as by Him if we are to reign with Jesus. We must both teach the Cross   
and bear the Cross. We must participate in the shame if we would participate in the Glory! No thorn, no Throne! When again shall be heard the   
voice, Behold your King, and Jew and Gentile shall see Him enthroned   
and surrounded with all His Fathers angelswith the whole earth subdued to His power happy shall he be who shall then, in the exalted Savior,   
behold his King! The Lord grant us this day to be loyal subjects of the  
Crucified that we may be favored to share His glory.

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THE PROCESSION OF SORROW   
NO. 497

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON SUNDAY MORNING, MARCH 1, 1863, BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**And they took Jesus, and led Him away.   
John 19:16.**

NEXT Saturday all eyes will be fixed on a great Prince who shall ride through our streets with his Royal Bride. Today I invite your attention to another Prince, marching in another fashion through His metropolis. London shall see the glory of the oneJerusalem beheld the shame of the other. Come here, you lovers of Immanuel and I will show you this great sightthe King of Sorrow marching to His Throne of grief, the Cross. I claim for the procession of my Lord an interest superior to the pageant you are now so anxiously expecting.

Will your Prince be sumptuously arrayed? Mine is adorned with garments crimsoned with His own blood. Will your Prince be decorated with honors? Behold, my King is not without His crownalas, a crown of thorns set with ruby drops of blood! Will your thoroughfares be thronged? So were the streets of Jerusalemfor great multitudes followed Him. Will you raise a clamor of tumultuous shouting? Such a greeting had the Lord of Glory, but alas, it was not the shout of welcome, but the yell of, Away with Him! Away with Him.

High in the air you bid your banners wave about the heir of Englands throne, but how shall you rival the banner of the sacred Cross, that day for the first time borne among the sons of men? For the thousands of eyes which shall gaze upon the youthful Prince, I offer the gaze of men and angels. All nations gathered about my Lord, both great and mean men clustered around His Person. From the sky the angels viewed Him with wonder and amazement. The spirits of the just looked from the windows of Heaven upon the scene, yes, the great God and Father watched each movement of His suffering Son.

But you ask me, Where is the spouse, the kings daughter, fair and beautiful? My Lord is not altogether without His espoused one. The Church, the bride of Christ, was there, conformed to the image of her Lord. She was there, I say, in Simon, bearing the Cross, and in the women weeping and lamenting. Say not that the comparison is strained, for in a moment I will withdraw it and present the contrast. Grant me only this much of likenesswe have here a Prince with his bride. He is bearing his banner, and wearing his royal robes, traversing the streets of his own city. He is surrounded by a throng who shout aloud, and a multitude who gaze with profound interest.   
But how vast was the disparity! The most careless eye discerns it. Yonder young Prince is ruddy with the bloom of early youth and health. My Masters visage is more marred than that of any man. Look, it has been blackened with bruises, and stained with the shameful spittle of them that derided Him. Your heir of royalty is magnificently drawn along the streets in his stately chariot, sitting at his easemy princely Sufferer walks with weary feet, marking the road with crimson dropsnot borne, but bearing. He is not carried, but carrying His Cross. Your Prince is surrounded by a multitude of friendshark how they joyously welcome him!

And well they may. The son of such noble parents deserves a nations love. But my Prince is hated without a cause. Hark how their loud voices demand that He should be hastened to execution! How harshly grate the cruel syllables, Crucify Him! Crucify Him! Your noble Prince is preparing for his marriagemine is hastening to His doom. Oh, shame that men should find so much applause for Princes, and none for the King of kings! Yet, dear Friends, to some eyes there will be more attraction in the procession of sorrow, of shame and of blood, than in your display of grandeur and joy.

Oh, I pray you, lend your ears to such faint words as I can utter on a subject all too high for methe march of the worlds Maker along the way of His great sorrow. Your Redeemer traversing the rugged path of sufferingalong which He went with heaving heart and heavy footstepsthat He might pave a royal road of mercy for His ENEMIES!

I. After our Lord Jesus Christ had been formally condemned by Pilate, our text tells us He was led away. I invite your attention to CHRIST AS LED FORTH.

Pilate, as we reminded you, scourged our Savior according to the common custom of Roman courts. The lictors executed their cruel office upon His shoulders with their rods and scourges, until the stripes had reached the full number. Jesus is formally condemned to crucifixion, but before He is led away He is given over to the Praetorian guards, that those rough legionaries may insult Him. It is said that a German regiment was at that time stationed in Judea, and I should not wonder if they were the lineal ancestors of those German theologians of modern times who have mocked the Savior, tampered with Revelation, and cast the vile spittle of their philosophy into the face of the Truth of God.

The soldiery mocked and insulted Him in every way that cruelty and scorn could devise. The platted crown of thorns, the purple robe, the reed with which they smote Him, and the spittle with which they disfigured Himall these marked the contempt in which they held the King of the Jews. The reed was no mere rush from the brook, it was of a stouter kind, of which those of the east often make walking sticksthe blows were cruel as well as insulting. And the crown was not of straw, but of thorns, therefore it produced pain as well as pictured scorn.

When they had mocked Him, they pulled off the purple garment He had wornthis rough operation would cause much pain. His wounds, unstaunched and raw, freshly bleeding from beneath the lash, would make this scarlet robe adhere to Him. And when it was dragged off, His gashes would bleed anew. We do not read that they removed the crown of thorns, and therefore it is most probable, though not absolutely certain, that our Savior wore it along the Via Dolorosa, and also bore it upon His head when He was fastened to the Cross.

Those pictures which represent our Lord as wearing the crown of thorns upon the tree, have, therefore, at least

some Scriptural warrant. They put His own clothes upon Him, because they were the reward of the executioner. As modern hangmen take the garments of those whom they execute, so did the four soldiers claim a right to His raiment. They put on Him His own clothes that the multitudes might discern Him to be the same Man, the very Man who had professed to be the Messiah. We all know that a different dress will often raise a doubt about the identity of an individual.

But lo, the people saw Him in the street, not arrayed in the purple robe, but wearing His garment without seam, woven from the top throughout, the common smock frock, in fact, of the countrymen of Palestine, and they said at once, Yes, it is He, the Man who healed the sick and raised the dead. The mighty teacher who was custom to sit upon the mountaintop, or stand in the Temple courts and preach with authority and not as the Scribes. There can be no shadow of doubt but that our Lord was really crucified, and no one substituted for Him.

How they led him forth, we do not know. Roman expositors, who draw upon their prolific fancy for their facts, tell us that He had a rope about His neck with which they roughly dragged Him to the tree this is one of the most probable of their surmises, since it was not unusual for the Romans thus to conduct criminals to the gallows. We care, however, far more for the fact that He went forth carrying His Cross upon His shoulders. This was intended at once to proclaim His guilt and intimate His doom. Usually the crier went before with an announcement such as this, This is Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews, who for making Himself a King, and stirring up the people, has been condemned to die.

This Cross was a ponderous machinenot so heavy, perhaps, as some pictures would represent itbut still no light burden to a man whose shoulders were raw with the lashes of the Roman scourge. He had been all night in agony. He had spent the early morning at the hall of Caiaphas. He had been hurried, as I described to you last Sunday, from Caiaphas to Pilate, from Pilate to Herod, and from Herod back again to Pilate. He had, therefore, but little strength left, and you will not wonder that by-and-by we find Him staggering beneath His load, and that another is called to bear it with Him. He goes forth, then, bearing His Cross.

What do we learn here, as we see Christ led forth? Do we not see here the Truth of God which was set forth in shadow by the scapegoat? Did not the high priest bring the scapegoat and put both his hands upon its head, confessing the sins of the people, that thus those sins might be laid upon the goat? Then the goat was led away by a fit man into the wilderness, and it carried away the sins of the people, so that if they were sought for, they could not be found. Now we see Jesus brought before the priests

and rulers, who pronounce Him guilty. God Himself imputes our sins to Him. He was made sin for us.

And, as the Substitute for our guilt, bearing our sin upon His shouldersfor that Cross was a sort of representation in wood of our guilt and doomwe see the great Scapegoat led away by the appointed officers of justice. Bearing upon His back the sin of all His people, the Offering goes without the camp. Beloved, can you say He carried your sins? As you look at the Cross upon His shoulders, does it represent your sins? Oh I raise the question, and be not satisfied unless you can answer it most positively in the affirmative. There is one way by which you can tell whether He carried your sin or nothave you laid your hands upon His head, confessed your sins, and trusted in Him?

Then your sin lies not on younot one single ounce of it lies on youit has all been transferred by blessed imputation to Christ, and He bears it on His shoulders in the form of yonder heavy Cross. What joy, what satisfaction this will give if we can sing

*My soul looks back to see   
The burden You did bear,   
When hastening to the accursed tree,   
And knows her guilt was there!*

Do not let the picture vanish till you have satisfied yourselves once and for all that Christ was here the Substitute for you.

Let us muse upon the fact that Jesus was conducted without the gates of the city. It was the common place of death. That little rising ground, which perhaps was called Golgotha, the place of a skull, from its somewhat resembling the crown of a mans skull, was the common place of execution. It was one of Deaths castles. Here he stored his gloomiest trophieshe was the grim lord of that stronghold. Our great Hero, the destroyer of Death, bearded the lion in his den, slew the monster in his own castle, and dragged the dragon captive from his own den. Methinks Death thought it a splendid triumph when he saw the Master impaled and bleeding in the dominions of destruction.

Little did he know that the grave was to be rifled, and himself destroyed, by that crucified Son of Man. Was not the Redeemer led there to aggravate His shame? Calvary was like our Old Baileyit was the usual place of execution for the district. Christ must die a felons death, and it must be upon the felons gallows, in the place where horrid crimes had met their due reward. This added to His shame. But, methinks, in this, too, He draws the nearer to us, He was numbered with the transgressors, and bore the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

But further, my Brothers and Sistersthis, I think, is the great lesson from Christs being slaughtered without the gate of the citylet us go forth, therefore, without the camp, bearing His reproach. You see there the multitude are leading Him forth from the Temple. He is not allowed to worship with them. The ceremonial system of the Jewish religion denies Him any participation in its pomp. The priests condemn him never again to tread the hallowed floors, never again to look upon the consecrated altars in the place of His peoples worship.

He is exiled from their friendship, too. No man dare call Him friend now, or whisper a word of comfort to Him. No more. He is banished from their society, as if He were a leper whose breath would be infectious, whose presence would scatter the plague. They force Him without the walls, and are not satisfied till they have rid themselves of His obnoxious Presence. For Him they have no tolerance. Barabbas may go free. The thief and the murderer may be spared. But for Christ there is no word but, Away with such a fellow from the earth! It is not fit that He should live.

Jesus is therefore hunted out of the city, beyond the gate, with the will and force of His own nation. But He journeys not against His own will. Even as the lamb goes as willingly to the shambles as to the meadow, so does Christ cheerfully take up His Cross, and go without the camp. Look, Brothers and Sisters, here is a picture of what we may expect from men if we are faithful to our Master. It is not likely that we shall be able to worship with their worship. They prefer pompous and gaudy ceremonies. The swell of music, the glitter of costly garments, the parade of learningall these must minister grandeur to the worlds religionand thus shut out the simple followers of the Lamb.

The high places of earths worship and honor are not for us. If we are true to our Master, we shall soon lose the friendship of the world. The sinful find our conversation distasteful. In our pursuits, the carnal have no interest. Things dear to us are dross to worldlings, while things precious to them are contemptible to us. There have been times, and the days may come again, when faithfulness to Christ has entailed exclusion from what is called, society. Even now, to a large extent, the true Christian is like a Pariah, lower than the lowest caste, in the judgment of some.

The world has in former days counted it Gods service to kill the saints. We are to reckon upon all this, and should the worst befall us, it is to be no strange thing to us. These are silken days, and religion fights not so stern a battle. I will not say it is because we are unfaithful to our Master that the world is more kind to us, but I half suspect it is, and it is very possible that if we were more thoroughly Christians, the world would more heartily detest us. And if we would cleave more closely to Christ, we might expect to receive more slander, more abuse, less tolerance, and less favor from men.

You young Believers, who have lately followed Christshould father and mother forsake youremember you were bid to reckon upon it. Should brothers and sisters deride you, you must put this down as part of the cost of being a Christian. Godly working men, should your employers or your fellow workers frown upon youwives, should your husbands threaten to cast you outremember, without the camp was Jesus place and without the camp is yours. Oh, you Christian men who dream of trimming your sails to the wind, who seek to win the worlds favorI do beseech you, cease from a course so perilous. We are in the world, but we must never be of it.

We are not to be secluded, like monks in the cloister, but we are to be separated like Jews among Gentilesmen, but not of men. Helping, aiding, befriending, teaching, comforting, instructingbut not sinning either to escape a frown, or to win a smile. The more manifestly there shall be a great gulf between the Church and the world, the better shall it be for boththe better for the world, for it shall be thereby warned. The better for the Church, for it shall be thereby preserved. Go, then, like the Master, expecting to be abused, to wear an ill name, and to earn reproach. Go, like He did, without the camp.

II. Let us now gaze for awhile upon CHRIST CARRYING HIS CROSS. I have shown you, Believer, your position. Let me now show you your service. Christ comes forth from Pilates hall with the cumbrous wood upon His shoulder. Through weariness He travels slowly, and His enemies, urgent for His death, and half afraid, from His emaciated appearance, that He may die before He reaches the place of execution, allow another to carry His burden. The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel, they cannot spare Him the agonies of dying on the Crossthey will therefore remit the labor of carrying it. They place the Cross upon Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country.

Simon was an African, he came from Cyrene. Alas, poor African, you have been compelled to carry the Cross even until now. Hail, you despised children of the sun, you follow first after the King in the march of woe. We are not sure that Simon was a disciple of Christ. He may have been a friendly spectator, yet one would think the Jews would naturally select a disciple if they could. Coming fresh from the country, not knowing what was going on, he joined with the mob, and they made him carry the Cross.

Whether a disciple, then, or not, we have every reason to believe that he became so afterwards. He was the father, we read, of Alexander and Rufus, two persons who appear to have been well known in the early Church. Let us hope that salvation came to his house when he was compelled to bear the Saviors Cross.

Dear Friends, we must remember that although no one died on the Cross with Christ, for atonement must be executed by a solitary Savior, yet another person did carry the Cross for Christ. For this worldwhile redeemed by price of Christ, and by Christ aloneis to be redeemed by Divine power manifested in the sufferings and labors of the saints, as well as those of Christ. Mark you, the ransom of men was all paid by Christ that was redemption by price. But power is wanted to dash down those idols, to overcome the hosts of errorwhere is it to be found? In the Lord of Hosts, who shows His power in the sufferings of Christ, and of His Church.

The Church must suffer, that the Gospel may be spread by her means. This is what the Apostle meant when he said, I fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His bodys sake, which is the Church. There was nothing behind in the price, but there is something behind in the manifested power, and we must continue to fill up that measure of revealed power, carrying, each one of us, the Cross with Christ, till the last shame shall have been poured upon His cause, and He shall reign forever and ever.

We see in Simons carrying the Cross a picture of what the Church is to do throughout all generations. Mark then, Christian, Jesus does not suffer so as to exclude your suffering. He bears a Cross, not that you may escape it, but that you may endure it. Christ does exempt you from sin, but not from sorrow. He does take the curse of the Cross, but He does not take the Cross of the curse away from you. Remember that, and expect to suffer.

Beloved, let us comfort ourselves with this thought, that in our case, as in Simons, it is not our cross, but Christs Cross which we carry. When you are molested for your piety. When your religion brings the trial of cruel mockery upon you. Then remember, it is not your cross, it is Christs Cross. And how delightful is it to carry the Cross of our Lord Jesus? You carry the Cross after Him. You have blessed company! Your path is marked with footprints of your Lord. If you will look, there is the mark of His blood-red shoulder upon that heavy Cross. It is His Cross, and He goes before you as a shepherd goes before his sheep. Take up your cross daily and follow Him.

Do not forget, also, that you bear this Cross in partnership. It is the opinion of some commentators that Simon only carried one end of the Cross and not the whole of it. That is very possible. Christ may have carried the heavier end, against the transverse beam, and Simon may have borne the lighter end. Certainly it is so with youyou do but carry the light end of the CrossChrist bares the heavier end

*His way was much rougher and darker than mine;*

*Did Christ, my Lord, suffer and shall I repine?* Rutherford says, Whenever Christ gives us a cross, He cries, Halves, My Love.

Others think that Simon carried the whole of the Cross. If he carried all the Cross, yet he only carried the wood of ithe did not bear the sin which made it such a load. Christ did but transfer to Simon the outward frame, the mere tree. But the curse of the tree, which was our sin and its punishment, rested on Jesus shoulders still. Dear Friend, if you think that you suffer all that a Christian can suffer. If all Gods billows roll over you, remember there is not one drop of wrath in all your sea of sorrow. Jesus took the wrath. Jesus carried the sin. And now all that you endure is but for His sake, that you may be conformed unto His image, and may aid in gathering His people into His family.

Although Simon carried Christs Cross, he did not volunteer to do it, but they compelled him. I fear, Beloved, I fear that the most of us, if we ever do carry it, carry it by compulsion. At least when it first comes onto our shoulders we do not like it, and would rather run from it. But the world compels us to bear Christs Cross. Cheerfully accept this burden, you servants of the Lord. I do not think we should seek after needless persecution. That man is a fool and deserves no pity, who purposely excites the disgust of other people. No, no! We must not make a cross of our own. Let there be nothing but your religion to object to, and then if that offends

them, let them be offendedit is a cross which you must carry joyfully.

Though Simon had to bear the Cross for a very little while, it gave him lasting honor. I do not know how far it was from Pilates house to the Mount of Doom. Romanists pretend to knowin fact they know the very spot where Veronica wiped the blessed face with her handkerchief, and found His likeness impressed upon it. We know very well where that was not done! But, of course, Romanists know the very spot where Jesus fainted, and if you go to Jerusalem you can see all these different places if you are only fool enough to believe it all!

But the fact is, the city has been so razed and burned and plowed, that there is little chance of distinguishing any of these positions, with the exception, it may be, of Mount Calvarywhich being outside the wallsmay possibly still remain. The Via Dolorosa, as the Romanists call it, is a long street at the present time, but it may have been but a few yards. Simon had to carry the Cross but for a very little time, yet his name is in this Book forever, and we may envy him his honor.

Well, Beloved, the cross we have to carry is only for a little while at most. A few times the sun will go up and down the hill. A few more moons will wax and wane, and then we shall receive the Glory. I reckon that these light afflictions, which are but for a moment, are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. We should love the cross, and count it very dear, because it works out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Christians, will you refuse to be cross-bearers for Christ? I am ashamed of some professed Christians, heartily ashamed of them! Some of them have no objection to worship with a poor congregation till they grow rich, and then, indeed, they must go with the worlds Church, to mingle with fashion and gentility.

There are some who in company hold their tongues, and never say a good word for Christ. They take matters very gently. They think it unnecessary to be soldiers of the Cross. He that takes not up his cross and follows not after Me, says Christ, is not worthy of Me. Some of you will not be baptized because you think people will say, He is a Christian! How holy he ought to be. I am glad the world expects much from us and watches us carefully. All this is a blessed clog upon us, and a means of keeping us more near to the Lord.

Oh, you that are ashamed of Christ, how can you read that text, He that is ashamed of Me, and of My words, of him will I be ashamed when I come in the glory of My Father, and all My holy angels with Me? Conceal your religion? Cover it with a cloak? God forbid! Our religion is our glory! The Cross of Christ is our honor and, while not ostentatiously parading it, as the Pharisees do, we ought never to be so cowardly as to conceal it. Come you out from among them, and be you separate, and touch not the unclean thing. Take up your cross and go without the camp, following your Lord, even until death.

III. I have now a third picture to present to youCHRIST AND HIS MOURNERS:

As Christ went through the streets, a great multitude looked on. In the multitude there was a sparse sprinkling of tender-hearted women, probably those who had been healed, or whose children had been blessed by Him. Some of these were persons of considerable rankmany of them had ministered to Him of their substance. Amidst the din and howling of the crowd, and the noise of the soldiery, they raised an exceedingly loud and bitter cry, like Rachel weeping for her children, who would not be comforted, because they were not.

The voice of sympathy prevailed over the voice of scorn. Jesus paused and said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for Me. But weep for yourselves, and for your children. The sorrow of these good women was a very proper sorrow. Jesus did not, by any means, forbid it. He only recommended another sorrow as being betternot finding fault with this, but still commending that. Let me show you what I think He meant. Last Sunday the remark was made to meIf the story of the sufferings of Christ had been told of any other man, all the congregation would have been in tears.

Some of us, indeed, confess that if we had read this narrative of suffering in a romance, we should have wept copiously. But the story of Christs sufferings does not cause the excitement and emotion one would expect. Now, I am not sure that we ought to blame ourselves for this. If we weep for the sufferings of Christ in the same way as we lament the sufferings of another man, our emotions will be only natural, and may work no good. They would be very proper, very properGod forbid that we should stop them, except with the gentle words of Christ, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for Me.

The most Scriptural way to describe the sufferings of Christ is not by laboring to excite sympathy through highly-colored descriptions of His blood and wounds. Romanists of all ages have worked upon the feelings of the people in this manner, and to a degree, the attempt is commendable. But if it shall all end in tears of pity, no good is done. I have heard sermons and studied works by Romanist writers upon the passion and agony, which have moved me to copious tears. But I am not clear that all the emotion was profitable. Let me show you a more excellent way.

What, then, dear Friends, should be the sorrows excited by a view of Christs sufferings? They are theseWeep not because the Savior bled, but because your sins made Him bleed

*It were my sins, my cruel sins,   
His chief tormentors were.   
Each of my crimes became a nail,   
And unbelief the spear.*

When a Brother makes confession of his transgressionswhen on his knees before God he humbles himself with many tearsI am sure the Lord thinks far more of the tears of repentance than He would do of the mere drops of human sympathy. Weep for yourselves, says Christ, rather than for Me.

The sufferings of Christ should make us weep over those who have brought that blood upon their heads. We ought not to forget the Jews. Those once highly favored people of God who cursed themselves with, His blood be upon us, and upon our children, ought to make us mourn when we think of their present degradation. There are no passages in all the public ministry of Jesus so tender as those which have regard to Jerusalem. It is not sorrow over Rome, but Jerusalem. I believe there was a tenderness in Christs heart to the Jew of a special character. He loved the Gentile, but still Jerusalem was the city of the Great King.

It was, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, but you would not! He saw its streets flowing like bloody rivers. He saw the Temple flaming up to Heaven. He marked the walls loaded with Jewish captives crucified by command of Titus. He saw the city razed to the ground, and sown with salt. And He said, Weep not for Me, but for yourselves, and for your children, for the day shall come when you shall say to the rocks, Hide us, and to the mountains, Fall upon us.

Let me add, that when we look at the sufferings of Christ, we ought to sorrow deeply for the souls of all unregenerate men and women. Remember, dear Friends, that what Christ suffered for us, these unregenerate ones must suffer for themselves, unless they put their trust in Christ. The woes which broke the Saviors heart must crush theirs. Either Christ must die for me, or else I must die for myself the second death. If He did not carry the curse for me, then on me must it rest forever and ever.

Think, dear Friends, there are some in this congregation who as yet have no interest in Jesus blood, some sitting next to you, your nearest friends who, if they were now to close their eyes in death, would open them in Hell! Think of that! Weep not for Him, but for these. Perhaps they are your children, the objects of your fondest love, with no interest in Christ. They are without God, and without hope in the world! Save your tears for them! Christ asks them not in sympathy for Himself. Think of the millions in this dark world! It is calculated that one soul passes from time into eternity every time the clock ticks!

So numerous has the family of man now become, that there is a death every second. And when we know how very small a proportion of the human race have even nominally received Christand there is none other name given under Heaven among men whereby we must be savedoh, what a black thought crosses our mind! What a waterfall of immortal souls dashes downwards to the pit every hour! Well might the Master say, Weep not for Me, but for yourselves.

You have, then, no true sympathy for Christ if you have not an earnest sympathy with those who would win souls for Christ. You may sit under a sermon and feel a great deal, but your feeling is worthless unless it leads you to weep for yourselves and for your children. How has it been with you? Have you repented of sin? Have you prayed for your fellow men? If not, may that picture of Christ fainting in the streets lead you to do so this morning.

IV. In the fourth place, one or two words upon CHRISTS FELLOW SUFFERERS. There were two other cross-bearers in the throng. They were malefactors. Their crosses were just as heavy as the Lords. At least one of them had no sympathy with Him and his bearing the cross only led to his death, and not to his salvation. I have sometimes met with persons who have suffered much. They have lost money, they have worked hard all their lives, or they have laid for years upon a bed of sickness. They, therefore, suppose that because they have suffered so much in this life, they shall thus escape the punishment of sin hereafter.

I tell you, Sirs, that yonder malefactor carried his cross and died on it. And you will carry your sorrows and be damned with them, except you repent. That impenitent thief went from the cross of his great agonyand it was agony, indeed, to die on a crosshe went from that place, to the flames of Hell. And you, too, may go from the bed of sickness, and from the abode of poverty, to perdition, quite as readily as from the home of ease and the house of plenty. No sufferings of ours have anything to do with the atonement of sin. No blood but that which He has spilt, no groans but those which came from His heart, no suffering but that which was endured by Him, can ever make a recompense for sin.

Shake off the thought, any of you who suppose that God will have pity on you because you have endured affliction. You must consider Jesus, and not yourself. Turn your eyes to Christ, the great Substitute for sinners, but never dream of trusting in yourselves. You may think that this remark is not needed, but I have met with one or two cases where it was required. And I have often said I would preach a sermon for even one person, and therefore, I make this remark, even though it should rebuke but one.

V. I close with THE SAVIORS WARNING QUESTIONIf they do these things in the green tree, what will they do in the dry? Among other things, methinks He meant thisIf I, the innocent Substitute for sinners, suffer thus, what will be done when the sinner, himselfthe dry treewhose sins are his own, and not merely imputed to him, shall fall into the hands of an angry God? Oh, you unregenerate men and womenand there are not a few such here nowremember that when God saw Christ in the sinners place, He did not spare Him. And when He finds you without Christ, He will not spare you.

You have seen Jesus led away by His enemies. So shall you be dragged away by fiends to the place appointed for you. Deliver him to the tormentors, was the word of the king in the parableit shall be fulfilled in you Depart, you cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. Jesus was deserted of God. And if He, who was only imputedly a sinner, was deserted, how much more shall you be? Eloi, Eloi, lama Sabachthaniwhat an awful shriek! But what shall be your cry when you shall say, Good God! Good God! Why have You forsaken me?and the answer shall come back:

Because I have called, and you refused. I have stretched out My hand and no man regarded. But you have set at nothing all My counsel and would none of My reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity. I will mock

when your fear comes. These are awful words, but they are not mine. They are the very words of God in Scripture. Oh, Sinner, if God hides His face from Christ, how much less will He spare you! He did not spare His Son the stripes. Did I not describe last Sunday the knotted scourges which fell upon the Saviors back?

What whips of steel for you, what knots of burning wire for you, when conscience shall smite you, when the Law shall scourge you with its tenthronged whip! Oh, who will stand in your place, you richest, you merriest, you most self-righteous sinnerswho will stand in your place when God shall say, Awake O sword against the rebel, against the man that rejected Me. Smite him and let him feel the smart forever! Christ was spit upon with shame. Sinner, what shame will be yours! The whole universe shall hiss you! Angels shall be ashamed of youyour own friends, yes, your sainted mothershall say, Amen to your condemnation.

And those who loved you best shall sit as assessors with Christ to judge you, and condemn you! I cannot roll up into one word all the mass of sorrows which met upon the head of Christ, who died for us. Therefore it is impossible for me to tell you what streams, what oceans of grief must roll over your spirit if you die as you now are. You may die so, you may die now. There are more unlikely things than that you will be dead before next Sunday. Some of you will! It does not often happen that five or six thousand people meet together twiceit never does, I suppose.

The scythe of death must cut some of you down before my voice shall warn you again! Oh, Souls, I do beseech you, by the agonies of Christ, by His wounds and by His blood. Do not bring upon yourselves the curse. Do not bear in your own persons the awful wrath to come! May God deliver you! Trust in the Son of God and you shall never die. The Lord bless you, for Jesus own sake. Amen. Amen. Amen.

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THE KING OF THE JEWS   
NO. 3123

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY DECEMBER 17, 1908.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, DECEMBER 6, 1874.

**And Pilate wrote a title, and put in on the Cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. John 19:19.**

IT was the usual custom of the Romans, when a man was put to death by crucifixion to affix to the cross, somewhere where it might be read, an account of his crime. His name and title would be given and the accusation that had been brought against him so that all who passed by might read the reason why he had been put to such an ignominious death. Our Savior, therefore, being numbered with the transgressors, must be treated in all respects as they were. If their accusations were published, so must He have His accusation published among the sons of men. How wondrous was the condescension that He, whom all Heaven adored as the ever-blessed Son of the Highest, should be hanged upon a tree and that He should have His accusation written up over His head just as if He had been a common malefactor!

I wish we could realize both the dignity of His Person and the shame to which He was exposed. If we could realize this we would be filled with grief for Him and with thankfulness to Him that He condescended to die the death of the Cross. I wish it were possible for us to now stand at the foot of the Cross with Mary and John and the other disciples, and to hear the ribaldry and scorn for a momentand then to look up and see that sorrowful face and that tortured bodyand to read in Hebrew, Greek and Latin, Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews. It was a very remarkable thing that Pilate should have written, as Matthew and Luke say that he did, This is the King of the Jews, and we do not at all wonder that the chief priests said to Pilate, Write not, the King of the Jews, but that He said, I am King of the Jews. But Pilate answered, What I have written, I have written. Divine Providence always has its way! It matters not who may be the persons concerned, God knows how to work His own will with them. It was His purpose that His Son should not die upon the Cross without a public proclamation of His innocence and an official recognition that He was what He had said He was, namely, the King of the Jews! Who was to put up such a notice over His head as He hung there? Peter might have been bold enough to attempt to do it, but he would certainly not have succeeded, for the Roman legionaries jealously guarded every place of execution. Even John, daring as he might have been in such a crisis, could not have achieved the task! It was best that it should be done by authority, done by the Roman governor, done with an official pen and so secured that no envious chief priest dared to pluck it down and no hand of a scoffer could be lifted up to blot out its testimony. It was privileged writing because it was written by the pen of a Roman officialand there it must stay, under the authority of the Roman Law as long as the body of Jesus hung upon the Cross. See what God can do! He can make the vacillating Pilate to become stubborn and He can make him resolve to do what one would have thought would have been the last thing he would have done! Though his motive probably was to ridicule the Savior, yet the thing was done as God would have itand Jesus on the Cross hung there proclaimed by Roman authority as the King of the Jews.

It may appear to you, at first sight, that there is not much importance in this fact, but I think I shall be able to show you that there is if you will sit down now, at the foot of the Cross, and look up to your Crucified Lord and read this writing again. I shall ask you to read it in two lights. First, in reference to man. And, secondly, in reference to Jesus Christ Himself.

I. First, read Pilates proclamation IN REFERENCE TO MAN. This is a picture of how the world rejects the Savior. The Savior had truly come into the world. That He might be known to be a Savior, He had taken the name of Jesus, that is, Savior. That He might be known as One who was very humble and lowly, He had condescended to dwell among men of the very humblest kind and, therefore, He had chosen to dwell at Nazareth and to be called the Nazarene. Thus He was known as Jesus, the Saviorand as Jesus of Nazareth, an approachable and lowly Savior. Jesus had come into the world to save men and He had commenced His mission by saving many from diseases which had been regarded as incurable. He had opened blind eyes, unstopped deaf ears, given speech to the dumb, cleansing to lepers and He had even raised the dead to life! There were also many whom He had healed of spiritual infirmities, for He had given faith to the faithless and holiness and excellence of character to those who, until then, had lived in sin.   
He was indeed Jesus the Savior, but how did men receive Him? Did they come and fall at His feet and kiss the very dust He trod upon? One might not have been surprised if they had done so, but they did not. Did they gather around Him with joyful clamor, all sick ones eager to touch the hem of His garment that they might be made whole? There were a few who did soa remnant according to the election of Grace who received Himand to them, He gave power to become the sons of God, even to them that believed on His name. But it was not so with the mass of mankind! Discerning in Him something strange and singular, seeing in Him no enmity, no sinful anger, no pride, no bitternessseeing in Him only superlative love, yet they must treat Him most foully, for His life was spent in poverty and reproachand at last He was condemned to die on the accursed tree! The world hung Him up upon the felons gallows and, in doing so, men said, This is the Savior, the Nazarene, and this is how we treat Him. We do not want to be saved from sin, for we love it. We do not want to be saved from rebellion and to be brought into peace with God through Jesus Christ, so this is what we do with Gods Ambassador! This is how we serve Him who comes with words of reconciliation and Grace upon His lipswe hang Him up to die, for we do not want Him. This is only a specimen of what all sinful hearts do till they are changed by Gracethey will not have the Savior to rule over them!   
Oh, says someone, you bring too harsh a charge against me! Is it so? Have you received Jesus? Do you believe in Him? Has He become your Savior? If not, why not? Can you give any justifiable reason for your unbelief and rejection of Him? It seems to me, and I leave your conscience to decide whether it is so, that by remaining in unbelief, you do practically say, I prefer to be damned forever rather than believe in Jesus Christ! At any rate, that is your choice at this present moment. And if a man will show his objection to Christ to so great an extent that he would be cast into Hell sooner than let Jesus save him, you may depend upon it that there dwells in his heart sufficient enmity to Christ to hang Him up again upon the Cross if He were here once more! Christ would be hanged tomorrow if He came here among unregenerate hearts yes, by the very people that hang their ivory crosses about their necks and put them on their prayer books and fix them on their walls! They would cry, as their predecessor did of old, Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him! To this day, when Substitution is preached, and the blood of Atonement, and salvation by simple faith in Jesusnot by sacraments and priests and good worksmen foam at the mouth with rage, for they still hate the Christ, the only Savior of the sons of men!   
Next I see here that man slays the Incarnate GodJesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews. Whether Pilate intended to indicate that He was the Messiah, at any rate the Jews saw that this would be the meaning attached to His inscription over Christs head. It would be said that their Messiah was crucified, consequently they desired that the writing might be altered, but Pilate would not alter it. Now, the Messiah of the Jews was none other than God in human flesh. Did not Isaiah speak of Him as Immanuel, God with us? He was that promised Seed of the woman who was to bruise the old serpents head. This was He of whom David said, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit You at My right hand until I make Your enemies Your footstool. He was Davids Son, yet He was also Davids Lord, and there He isHe has come among men and as God, He came to tabernacle in human flesh and dwell among men! It is a wonderful story that tells us how He was found as a Babe in Bethlehems manger, where the shepherds came to adore Him and how He grew up among men as a Man like other men, working at the carpenters bench in the shop of His reputed father, yet all the while He was God veiled beneath the humble form of the Son of Mary! Even when the time came for His manifestation unto Israel, He was still veiled, though His Godhead every now and then flashed through the veil of His Humanity. He bade the sea be still when its wild uproar threatened to engulf the vessel in which He and His disciples were. He worked such wonders that it was clear that all things obeyed Him. The fish came in swarms from the deep to the net which He had bidden His disciples cast into the sea. And the loaves and fishes were multiplied in His hands and theirs, through His miraculous power. Men could not help seeing that He was more than man and that He was, indeed, the Son of God, as He claimed to be. Yet the husbandmen, to whom He was sent by His Father, to ask for the rent of the vineyard that had been let to them, said, This is the heir; come, let us kill Him and let us seize on His inheritance. In other words, they said, This is the GodMan; let us do with Him what we would do with God if we could. So they hanged Him up like a felon, and put a label above His head, as much as to say to God, Himself, This is what we have done to One who was more like You than any man we have ever heard of before, and One who says that He and You are One. O Sirs, this wicked world never went so far in wickedness as it displayed on that occasion! The essence of every sin is enmity against God and when any sin is analyzed, it is always found that its essence is this, No God. Sin is a stab at the heart of God. Every time we sin, we practically say, We do not want Gods government. We do not want Gods Lawswe do not want God. I once heard an eloquent divine who had been accusing men of great sin, finish his indictment by using this remarkable expression, this deicidal world. There he reached the climax of the Truth of God, for this is a deicidal world! It cannot actually put God to death, but it would do so if it could! And in putting Christ to death it showed the enmity towards God that was really in its heart. The world would not put its own god to death, the god that men imagine, the god that their own intellects fabricate, the god like themselves, of whom I

spoke this morning, [See Sermon #1206, Volume 20HEART-KNOWLEDGE OF GOD Read/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] but as for

the God of the Bible, there are millions of men who would be glad to put that God out of His own universe if they could! Yet He is Jehovah, the one living and true God.

Thirdly, I see here that mans chief objection to Christ is His authority, for the pith of that inscription was, Jesus the King. Pilate did not write, This is Jesus the Teacher, or many might have said, Let Him teach what He pleases, it is no concern of ours. We do not care what the Seers see, or what they say. Pilate did not put up, This is Jesus the Priest. Many would be quite content to let Him be the great High Priest if they also might be priests. But Pilate wrote, This is Jesus the King, and that is the target at which they shoot all their arrows! You remember that the writer of the Second Psalm says, The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against His Anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. The resolve of human nature until it is renewed is always this, We will not have this Man to reign over us. Men might be willing for Christ to save them, but not for Him to reign over them. Such laws as theseYou shall love your neighbor as yourself, You shall forgive till seventy times seven, the law of love, the law of gentleness, the law of kindnessman says that he admires them, but when these laws come home to him, and lay hold of the reins of his ambition, cramp his covetousness and condemn his self-righteousness, straightway he is offended! And when Christ says, Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away. When He begins so teach the necessity of absolute purity and to say that even a lascivious glance of the eye is a sin, then men reply, His rule will never do for us! And they hang Him up to die because they will not submit to His authority.

Once more, we learn from this narrative that man ridicules Christs Kingdom. Pilate did not hate Christ. He probably did not think enough of Him to expend any of His hatred upon Him. I have no doubt that he thought that Jesus was a poor enthusiast who had been living alone so long that He had addled His brains. He was well meaning and perhaps clever, but at the same time, not the sort of man for a Roman governor to dispute with. He was very sorry to have to put Him to death, for there were so many good points about the poor Creature that he did not wish to let His enemies destroy Him. When the question of Christs Kingdom came up, I can imagine how scornfully Pilate asked Him, Are You the King of the Jews? How contemptuously he must have looked down upon such a poor emaciated Creature who seemed to be despised by everybody, as Christ said, My Kingdom is not of this world, and Pilate asked, Are You a king, then? half laughing as he spoke. He must have felt as if he could fairly laugh Him to scorn and I have no doubt that it was in that spirit that he wrote, This is Jesus, the King of the Jews, doing it in a vein of grim sardonic humor, first, towards the Jews and secondly, towards Christ Himself, as much as to say, This is the great King that the Jews have been looking for. They are going to fight Caesar and get freeand this is the ringleader who is to help them to defeat all the legions of haughty Rome. Among the ungodly, at the present day, the idea of a spiritual kingdom is quite beyond their comprehension they cannot make out what it is. The relation between Church and State will not be settled by the statesmen of any political party. There is a very singular relation between the two, though they are as dissimilar as materialism is from spirit. The realms of the two often overlap one anotheryou cannot draw a line and say, So far is the State, and so far is the Church. The fact is the true Church of God is never subordinate to the Stateit moves in another sphere altogether and rules after another fashion! A spiritual kingdom, according to some people, means certain laws and regulations that are drawn up by the bishops and synods and councils, but that kind of kingdom is no more spiritual than an Act passed by the House of Commons and the House of Lords! It is only another kingdom of the flesh, an ecclesiastical State of a similar kind to the secular State, but as for the spiritual Kingdom of Jesus Christ, it is not a thing that you can see with your eyes or understand after the manner of men. You must be born-again in order to get into it,

or even to see it! [See Sermon #3121, Volume 54THE NECESSITY OF REGENERATION Read/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] It is too

ethereal to be checked by human legislation. It is a mighty power which Christ has set up in this worlda power mightier than all secular states combineda Kingdom like the stone cut out of the mountain without hands which will break in pieces every other power and fill the whole earth in Gods appointed time! Oh, that we saw its power more manifest nowadays in the hearts of menthe power of that Kingdom of which Christ is the King, this blessed Book is the Law, the Holy Spirit is the great Executive and each of us is a servant in the courts of the great King living and acting according to His will!

Oh, you say, this is ridiculous! Yes, I thought you would say that. That is what the world always says of the Kingdom of Christthat it is ridiculous. They can understand a kingdom in which there is a head like the Pope, and in which there are cardinals, bishops and priests. They can understand the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Archbishop of York, and all that appertains to Episcopalians, but to know that we are one with Christ, that He has made us kings and priests unto God and His Father, that His saints are to reign with Him forever and that the weapons of our warfare, though not eternal, are mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholdsthey do not understand it, nor do they want to understand it! This is why they still hang up Christ the King and say, If this is His Kingdom, we do not want to belong to it and we do not believe in it. Away with it! It is not worthy of our consideration, it is only a few low-minded fellows who will always be the subjects of such a Kingdom as that. This is as it was in the beginning and is nowbut not as it ever shall be, world without end, for the King is coming, a second time, in all the splendor of His Glory and He will let the world know that although His Kingdom is not like others, and is not to be kept up by gold, pomp, rank, dignity and physical force, yet it is a Kingdom which shall last when earthly princes and thrones shall all have passed away! And everyone who belongs to that Kingdom shall possess a crown and a glory before which all the pomp of this world shall pale forever!

II. Now, secondly, I have to ask your attention to the subject in quite another way, IN REFERENCE TO CHRIST. What did that inscription over His head mean?

It meant, first, that Christs honor was clear. Look at the inscription over the head of that thief who is hanging on the next cross. Put to death for robbery in the mountains where he was taken red-handed, having stabbed one of the guards who attempted to arrest him. You quite understand that inscription and you pass on to Jesus. You want to know about the crime of which He has been guiltyyou are quite sure that they will put over His head an account of the worst thing He has ever done. There are the chief priests and scribes and a multitude of the Jews watching to see what is writtenand there is Pilate wanting to excuse his own conscience. If he can write anything that will exonerate him from the guilt of putting Christ to death, he will be sure to write it. So he takes his pen in his hand and he writes, This is Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews. Well, you say, is that all that can be brought against Him, that He is Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews? Yes, that is His only offensethey cannot sum up His guilt in any other words. His crime is that He is what He is, that He was a Savior, that He dwelt at Nazareth and that He was the King of the Jews. Now, no exoneration of His Character could be better than that of this official accusation against Him! And if this accusation brings nothing against Him, think how much may be said in His favor by His friends. When a man is brought before the judge, his accuser is quite sure to say all he can against him. And when Christ was about to be put to death, those who were responsible for that colossal crime had to make out as grave a charge against Him as they could. But this was all they could dothey could not bring anything else against Him except that He was Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews. See, then, how absolutely without blemish and without spot was the Lamb of our Passover! See how He knew no sin, though He was made a Sin-Offering for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. Exult, Christians, in this public and official testimony to the spotless purity of His whole life and Character!

Next, as far as Christ is concerned, we may view this inscription as the explanation of His death as well as the clearing of His Character. Keep that superscription clearly in your minds eye, Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews. That is the reason why He died. Jesus died first because He was Jesus, because He was the Savior. That is the meaning of itnot that He might merely be made an examplenot only that He might bear witness to the Truth. But that cruel death means Atonement and salvation by Atonement. Let us all look up to Him upon the Cross. If we have done so before, let us look up to Him, again, and say, Yes, blessed Lord, we see that You did die and that You did die to save us. And we magnify You because this was the cause of Your death, that You were the Savior. The whole title that Pilate wrote signified that Christ was the Messiahand He died because He was the Messiah. Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself. This was the wonderful language of the Prophet Daniel, cut off, but not for Himself. Cut off because He was the Sent One of God, the Anointed of the Most High! The Prophet Zachariah had also recorded the Words of Jehovah, Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, and against the Man that is My Fellow, says the Lord of Hosts. There, Beloved, you have the whole reason for Christs death condensed into a sentence! Jesus dies because He is the Savior, the anointed and prophesied Messiah, sent of God to be the King of the Jews and of the Gentles, too!

But, thirdly, as far as Christ was concerned, this inscription over His head was a claim which was there and then announced. He is hanging on the Cross and there is no trumpeter to make a proclamation of His kingship, but He does not need any such herald, for the same soldiers who fasten His hands to the wood, fasten up an inscription which is the best proclamation possible, for it is in three different languages that all mankind may read it, This is Jesus, the King of the Jews. He claims to be King, so stand at the foot of the Cross, I pray you, and acknowledge His claim! If you would have Jesus to be your Savior, you must have Him as your Kingyou must submit to His government, for He claims the right to rule over all who acknowledge Him to be Jesus! More than that, He claims to rule all mankind, for all power is given unto Him in Heaven and in earth, and we are bidden to proclaim His Kingdom throughout the whole world and to say to all men, Jesus of Nazareth is your King, bow down before Him. You kings, bow before Him, for He is King of kings! You lords and nobles, bow before Him, for He is Lord of lords! And all you sons and daughters of men, bow at His feet, for He must reign! And even if you are His enemies, He must reign over you! In spite of all your enmity and opposition, you must be brought to lie at His feet. The claims of Christ, therefore, were published even from the tree on which He died, so do not resist them, but willingly yield yourselves up to Jesus, now, and let Him be King to you henceforth and forever!

And then, not only was a claim of His Sovereignty made by the affixing of this title, but His reign was then and there proclaimed. In an earthly monarchy, as soon as one king is gone, it is usual to proclaim His successor. And by that accusation written up over the head of Christ, a proclamation was made throughout all the earth that Jesus had assumed the Throne and He has never ceased to reign! He went back to His Father and returned again to the earth and dwelt here for forty days. And then His feet left Mount Olive and He ascended to His Throne, and there He sits expecting till His enemies are made His footstool. His Kingdom is establisheddo you all belong to it? It is a Kingdom that, in a certain sense, was recognized on the Cross by Pilates proclamation, though it had existed long before, for His Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom! Do you belong to it, or are you outside of it, opposed to it, or indifferent to it? Remember that he that is not with Christ is against Him! Those who are not on His side, He reckons to be on the other side! Are you, my Brothers and Sisters, in the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ? If so, I know that you look with delight upon that inscription and as you trust to the blood of Christ to cleanse you, you cast your eyes up to that dear head that was crowned with thorns and rejoice to think that Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews, is also your King and Lord and Savior!

I want to make just this other remark about this inscription. Inasmuch as Pilate would not alter it, it seems to me that God set forth to mankind that He would never have it altered. Pilate could have sent for that inscription and, with a few strokes of his pen, could have inserted the words that the chief priests wanted, He said, I am King of the Jews. But Pilate would not do it and the High Priest could not do itand the devil could not do it and all the devils in Hell and all the wicked men upon earth, with all their ragecannot do it now! God has said it as well as Pilate What I have written, I have written. Yet have I set My King upon My holy hill of Zion. He must reign and no power can ever take away His Kingdom from Him! His Church still prays, Your Kingdom come, and that Kingdom is yet to come in all its fullness when the whole of Israel shall be gathered together and shall accept Him as their Lord and King! Yes, more than that, for He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before Him and His enemies shall lick the dust. Yes, all kings shall fall down before Him: all nations shall serve Him.

Dearly beloved Friends, this is the conclusion of the whole matter, let us cheerfully accept Him as our King. Have we done so? Then let us try to push His conquests on yet further and seek to extend the boundaries of His Kingdom. Are you doing this? Then, do it yet mare earnestly and do it with the right instrument, for the great weapon of conquest is the Cross. It was on the Cross that the proclamation was first lifted up and it is by the Cross that it must be carried to the ends of the earthnot by human learning or eloquence, not by bribery, or the help of the State and I know not what besides, but by the setting forth of Christ evidently crucified among the sons of men. The Cross is its own battle-axe and weapon of war. In this sign shall you conquer. Let the whole Church preach Christ more, live Christ more and then the proclamation of His Kingdom, which was first fastened up on that Cross, shall be emblazoned throughout the whole world and the power of His Kingdom shall be felt to the very ends of the earth!

I looked into the darkness and I thought I saw a Cross before me. And I saw Him who did once hang upon it. But, as I looked at it, that Cross seemed to grow. It seemed to become a tree and I saw it strike its roots down deep until the lowest depths of human misery had been touched and blessed by them. Then I saw that tree tower on high, piercing the clouds, passing through the very firmament up above the stars, lifting Believers up upon it and bearing them to the very Throne of God by its majestic power! Then I saw that tree stretch forth its mighty branches on every side. Their shadow fell across this highly-favored land of ours and also fell across the land on the other side of the sea. As I watched, the blessed branches stretched out to Europe, to Asia, to Africa, to America and to Australia, also. I watched it grow till it became so vast a tree that its shadow seemed to cover the whole earth! And I blessed and adored the God of Heaven that He had instituted so mighty a power for the blessing of the sons of men! O Jesus, once crucified but now exalted, so let it be! And let us be Your humble instruments in promoting the extension of Your blessed reign! And we will always adore You, as we do now, not only as Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews, but as the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 19:1-37.**

Verse 1. Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged Him. This was one of the most terrible punishments to which a man could be sentenced. The Roman scourge was no trifle. It tore off the quivering flesh of the agonized sufferer for it was constructed on purpose to do so. It was generally made of the sinews of oxen, intertwisted with the knuckle bones of sheep and small slivers of bone. This torture our blessed Savior endured. These are the stripes with which we are healed.

2. And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on His head, and they put on Him a purple robe. Mockery was blended with cruelty. They might have made Him a crown, yet surely it need not have been one of thorns unless they intended to put Him to the utmost torment that they could conceive. By this crown of thorns our blessed Lord was crowned King of the curse, for the earth was cursed through Adams sinand part of the sentence pronounced by God in the Garden of Eden was, Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to you. So Christ wore the mark of the curse which mans sin had brought upon the world.

3. And said, Hail, King of the Jews! And they smote Him with their hands. This was the homage which the Son of God received from men! Harmless and gentle, He came here with no purpose but that of doing goodand this is how mankind treated Him.

4, 5. Pilate therefore went forth again, and said unto them, Behold, I bring Him forth to you, that you may know that I find no fault in Him. Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate said unto them, Behold the Man! Was there ever such a sight of majesty in misery before or since? Yet He needed not to endure all that ignominyHe was no vanquished monarch unable to maintain His own rights. He was still over all, God blessed forever, and He could have smitten everyone there to death if He had pleased to do so. But He was the Lamb of Gods Passover, so He meekly suffered.

6, 7. When the chief priests therefore and officers saw Him, they cried out, saying, Crucify Him, crucify Him! Pilate said unto them, You take Him and crucify Him: for I find no fault in Him. The Jews answered Him. We have a Law, and by our Law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God. They no doubt understood that He claimed to be Divine and so He did. I have heard some say that He was a good man, but not God. If He was not God, He was certainly not a good man, for no good man, who was only a man, would claim to be God, or lead others to believe that He was Divine! If He was not actually Divine, He was a rank impostor! But He was Divine and, therefore, we worship and adore Him equally with the Father and the Spirit.

8-10. When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid; and went again into the judgment hall, and said unto Jesus, Where are You from? But Jesus gave him no answer. Then said Pilate unto Him, Speak You not unto me? Know You not that I have power to crucify You, and have power to release You? Pilate talks like some great one, yet how contemptibly little he was! Vacillating, cowardly, unable to do what he knew was right. His poor Victim who stood before Him was infinitely greater in character than he was.

11. Jesus answered, You could have no power at all against Me, except it were given you from above: therefore he that delivered Me unto you has the greater sin. Christ referred to Judas and through him to the Jews who had conspired to put Him to death. But what tenderness it was on the part of Jesus to make an excuse as it were, even for Pilate! He was notable for making excuses for the guilty. That was a remarkable excuse that He pleaded for His murderers, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. There was never another such a tender heart as His. He was so gentle and so kind that all their cruelty only moved Him to pity them and pray for them.

12-14. And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release Him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If you let this Man go, you are not Caesars friend: whoever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar. When Pilate therefore heard that crying, he brought Jesus forth and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha. And it was the preparation of the Passover, and about the sixth hour: and he said unto the Jews, Behold your King! [See Sermon #1353, Volume

23ECC REXRead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.]

What mockery there was in Pilates use of this title, and yet how true it was! They asked to have Christ put to death, yet He was their King. Their accusation was transparently false and Pilate made them see that it was so.

15-17. But they cried out, Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him! Pilate said unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar. Then he delivered Him to them to be crucified. And they took Jesus and led Him away. And He bearing His cross went forth into a place called the Place of a Skull, which is called in the Hebrew, Golgotha. The Inspired writers seem to delight to give us the Hebrew names of these notable places that are linked with Christs last agonies. And they are still very precious to Christians, Gethsemane, Gabbatha, Golgothathree names never to be forgotten by those who were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ!

18. Where they crucified Him, and two others with Him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst. As if to show that they thought Him the worst of the three and, therefore, gave Himshall I call it the place of chief dishonor?

19, 20. And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the Cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was near to the city and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin. So that all who gathered around the Cross might read it.

21, 22. Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews, but that He said, I am king of the Jews. Pilate answered, What I have written, I have written. He could be stubborn about some things which shows that he had strength of mind if he had chosen to use it. Yet He was beaten to and fro like a shuttlecock by these wicked men and seemed to have no power to resist them.

23. Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments. For they had stripped Him. He must be naked because sin makes us naked and His garments must be a covering for us. They took His garments

23, 24. And made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also His coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the Scripture might be fulfilled. They knew nothing about that ancient prophecy, yet God ordained that they should act thus, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.

24. Which says, They parted My raiment among them, and for My vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did. Doubtless, on the dice there fell the blood of Christ, yet they still gambled there. There is, perhaps, no sin which so effectually hardens the heart as that of gamblingit is a sin with which Christians should not have even the remotest connection!

25-30. Now there stood by the Cross of Jesus His mother, and His mothers sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple standing by, whom He loved, He said unto His mother, Woman, behold your son! Then said He to the disciple, Behold your mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home. After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, I thirst. Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to His mouth. When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, He said, It is finished! [See Sermons #421, Volume 7IT IS

FINISHED! and #2344, Volume 40CHRISTS DYING WORD FOR HIS CHURCHRead/download the entire sermons, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] Consummatum est. The   
work is done, Redemption is accomplished. The salvation of My people is forever secured.

30-37. And He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost. The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the Cross on the Sabbath, (for that Sabbath was an high day), besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. Then came the soldiers, and broke the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with Him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that He was dead already, they broke not His legs: but one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side and forthwith came out blood and water. And he that saw it bares record and his record is true: and he knows that what he says is true, that you might believe. For these things were done, that the Scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of Him shall not be broken. And again another scripture says, They shall look upon Him whom they pierced.

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THE SHORTEST OF THE SEVEN CRIES   
NO. 1409

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, APRIL 14, 1878, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, I thirst. John 19:28.**

IT was most fitting that every word of our Lord upon the Cross should be gathered up and preserved. As not a bone of His shall be broken, so not a word shall be lost. The Holy Spirit took special care that each of the sacred utterances should be fittingly recorded. There were, as you know, seven of those last words and seven is the number of perfection and fullness, the number which blends the three of the infinite God with the four of complete creation. Our Lord, in His death-cries, as in all else, was perfection itself. There is a fullness of meaning in each utterance which no man shall be able fully to bring forth and, when combined, they make up a vast deep of thought which no human line can fathom.

Here, as everywhere else, we are constrained to say of our Lord, Never man spoke like this Man. In all the anguish of His spirit, His last words prove Him to have remained fully self-possessed, true to His forgiving Nature, true to His kingly office, true to His filial relationship, true to His God, true to His love of the written Word, true to His glorious work and true to His faith in His Father. As these seven sayings were so faithfully recorded, we do not wonder that they have frequently been the subject of devout meditation. Fathers and confessors, preachers and Divines have delighted to dwell upon every syllable of these matchless cries. These solemn sentences have shone like the seven golden candlesticks or the seven stars of the Apocalypse and have lighted multitudes of men to Him who spoke them.

Thoughtful men have drawn a wealth of meaning from them and in so doing have arranged them into different groups and placed them under several heads. I cannot give you more than a mere taste of this rich subject, but I have been most struck with two ways of regarding our Lords last words. First, they teach and confirm many of the doctrines of our holy faith. Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do is the first. Here is the forgiveness of sinfree forgiveness in answer to the Saviors plea. Today shall you be with Me in Paradise. Here is the safety of the Believer in the hour of his departure and his instant admission into the Presence of his Lord. It is a blow at the fable of purgatory which strikes it to the heart.

Woman, behold your son! This very plainly sets forth the true and proper humanity of Christ, who, to the end, recognized His human relationship to Mary, of whom He was born. Yet His language teaches us not to worship her, for He calls her, woman, but to honor Him, who in His direst agony thought of her needs and griefs, as He also thinks of all His

people, for these are His mother and sister and brother. Eloi, Eloi, lama Sabachthani? is the fourth cry, and it illustrates the penalty endured by our Substitute when He bore our sins and was forsaken of His God. The sharpness of that sentence no exposition can fully disclose to usit is keen as the very edge and point of the sword which pierced His heart.

I thirst, is the fifth cry, and its utterance teaches us the truth of Scripture, for all things were accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled and, therefore, our Lord said, I thirst. Holy Scripture remains the basis of our faith, established by every Word and act of our Redeemer. The last word but one is, It is finished. There is the complete justification of the Believer, since the work by which he is accepted is fully accomplished. The last of His last words is also taken from the Scriptures and shows where His mind was feeding. He cried, before He bowed the head which He had held erect amid all His conflict, as one who never yielded, Father, into Your hands I commend My spirit. In that cry there is reconciliation to God. He who stood in our place has finished all His work and now His spirit comes back to the Father and He brings us with Him! Every word, therefore, teaches us some grand fundamental doctrine of our blessed faith. He that has ears to hear, let him hear.

A second mode of treating these seven cries is to view them as setting forth the Person and offices of our Lord who uttered them. Father, forgive them; for they know not what they dohere we see the Mediator intercedingJesus standing before the Father pleading for the guilty. Verily I say unto you, today shall you be with Me in Paradisethis is the Lord Jesus in kingly power, opening, with the key of David, a door which none can shut, admitting into the gates of Heaven the poor soul who had confessed Him on the tree. Hail, everlasting King in Heaven, You admit to Your Paradise whomever You will! Nor do You set a time for waiting, but instantly You set wide the gate of pearl! You have all power in Heaven as well as upon earth.

Then came, Woman, behold your son! Here we see the Son of Man in the gentleness of a son caring for His bereaved mother. In the former cry, as He opened Paradise, you saw the Son of Godnow you see Him who was verily and truly born of a woman, made under the Lawand under the Law you see Him still, for He honors His mother and cares for her in the last article of death. Then comes the, My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Here we behold His human soul in anguish, His inmost heart overwhelmed by the withdrawing of Jehovahs face and made to cry out as if in perplexity and amazement.

I thirst, is His human body tormented by grievous pain. Here you see how the mortal flesh had to share in the agony of the inward spirit. It is finished is the last word but one and there you see the perfected Savior, the Captain of our salvation, who has completed the undertaking upon which He had enteredfinished transgression, made an end of sinand brought in everlasting righteousness. The last expiring word, in which He commended His spirit to His Father, is the note of acceptance for Himself and for us all. As He commends His spirit into the Fathers hand, so does He bring all Believers near to God and from then on we are in the hands of the Father, who is greater than all and none shall pluck us from His hands. Is not this a fertile field of thought? May the Holy Spirit often lead us to glean here!

There are many other ways in which these words might be read and they would be found to be all full of instruction. Like the steps of a ladder or the links of a golden chain, there is a mutual dependence and interlinking of each of the cries, so that one leads to another and that to a third. Separately or in connection, our Masters words overflow with instruction to thoughtful minds. But of all, save one, I must say, Of which we cannot now speak particularly. Our text is the shortest of all the words of Calvary. It stands as two words in our languageI thirstbut in the Greek it is only one.

I cannot say that it is short and sweet, for, alas, it was bitterness, itself, to our Lord Jesus! And yet out of its bitterness I trust there will come great sweetness to us. Though bitter to Him in the speaking, it will be sweet to us in the hearingso sweet that all the bitterness of our trials shall be forgotten as we remember the vinegar and gall of which He drank. We shall, by the assistance of the Holy Spirit, try to regard these words of our Savior in a five-fold light. First, we shall look upon them as THE ENSIGN OF HIS TRUE HUMANITY.

I. Jesus said, I thirst, and this is the complaint of a man. Our Lord is the Maker of the ocean and the waters that are above the firmamentit is His hand that stays or opens the bottles of Heaven and sends rain upon the evil and upon the good. The sea is His and He made it, and all fountains and springs are of His digging. He pours out the streams that run among the hills, the torrents which rush down the mountains and the flowing rivers which enrich the plains. One could have said, If He were thirsty He would not tell us, for all the clouds and rains would be glad to refresh His brow and the brooks and streams would joyously flow at His feet. And yet, though He was Lord of all, He had so fully taken upon Himself the form of a Servant and was so perfectly made in the likeness of sinful flesh that He cried with fainting voice, I thirst.

How truly Man He is! He is, indeed, bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, for He bears our infirmities. I invite you to meditate upon the true humanity of our Lord very reverently and very lovingly. Jesus was proven to be really Man because He suffered the pains which belong to manhood. Angels cannot suffer thirst. A phantom, as some have called Him, could not suffer in this fashion. Jesus really suffered, not only the more refined pains of delicate and sensitive minds, but the rougher and common pangs of flesh and blood. Thirst is a common-place misery, such as may happen to peasants or beggars. It is a real pain and not a thing of a fancy or a nightmare of dreamland. Thirst is no royal grief, but an evil of universal manhoodJesus is Brother to the poorest and most humble of our race.

Our Lord, however, endured thirst to an extreme degree, for it was the thirst of death and more which was upon Himit was the thirst of one whose death was not a common one, for, He tasted death for every man. That thirst was caused, perhaps, in part by the loss of blood and by the fever created by the irritation caused by His four grievous wounds. The

nails were fastened in the most sensitive parts of the body and the wounds were widened as the weight of His body dragged the nails through His blessed flesh and tore His tender nerves. The extreme tension produced a burning feverishness. It was pain that dried His mouth and made it like an oventill He declared, in the language of the 22nd Psalm, My tongue cleaves to My jaws. It was a thirst such as none of us have ever known, for not yet has the death dew condensed upon our brows. We shall, perhaps, know it in our measure in our dying hour, but not yet, nor ever so terribly as He did.

Our Lord felt that grievous drought of dissolution by which all moisture seems dried up and the flesh returns to the dust of death. This those know who have commenced to tread the valley of the shadow of death. Jesus, being a Man, escaped none of the ills which are allotted to man in death. He is, indeed, Immanuel, God With Us everywhere. Believing this, let us tenderly feel how very near akin to us our Lord Jesus has become. You have been ill and you have been parched with fever as He was. And then you, too, have gasped out, I thirst. Your path runs hard by that of your Master. He said, I thirst, in order that someone might bring Him drink, even as you have wished to have a cooling draught handed to you when you could not help yourself.

Can you help feeling how very near Jesus is to us when His lips must be moistened with a sponge and He must be so dependent upon others as to ask for a drink from their hands? Next time your fevered lips murmur, I am very thirsty, you may say to yourself, Those are sacred words, for my Lord spoke in that fashion. The words, I thirst, are a common voice in death chambers. We can never forget the painful scenes of which we have been witness, when we have watched the dissolving of the human frame. Some of those whom we loved very dearly, we have seen quite unable to help themselves. The death sweat has been upon them and this has been one of the marks of their approaching dissolution, that they have been parched with thirst and could only mutter between their halfclosed lips, Give me a drink.

Ah, beloved, our Lord was so truly Man that all our griefs remind us of Him! The next time we are thirsty we may gaze upon Him! And whenever we see a friend faint and thirsting while dying we may behold our Lord dimly, but truly, mirrored in his members. How near akin the thirsty Savior is to us! Let us love Him more and more! How great the love which led Him to such a condescension as this! Do not let us forget the infinite distance between the Lord of Glory on His Throne and the Crucified dried up with thirst! A river of the Water of Life, pure as crystal, proceeds today out of the Throne of God and of the Lamb, and yet once He condescended to say, I thirst.

He is Lord of fountains and all deeps, but not a cup of cold water was placed to His lips. Oh, if He had at any time said, I thirst, before His angelic guards, they would surely have emulated the courage of the men of David when they cut their way to the well of Bethlehem that was within the gate and drew water in jeopardy of their lives! Who among us would not willingly pour out his soul unto death if he might but give refreshment to the Lord? And yet He placed Himself, for our sakes, into a position of shame and suffering where none would wait upon Him! And when He cried, I thirst, they gave Him vinegar to drink! Glorious stoop of our exalted Head! O Lord Jesus, we love You and we worship You! We would gladly lift Your name on high in grateful remembrance of the depths to which You did descend!

While thus we admire His condescension, let our thoughts also turn with delight to His sure sympathy, for if Jesus said, I thirst, then He knows all our frailties and woes! The next time we are in pain or are suffering depression of spirit we will remember that our Lord understands it all, for He has had practical, personal experience of it. Neither in torture of body nor in sadness of heart are we deserted by our Lord! His line is parallel with ours. The arrow which has lately pierced you, my Brother, was first stained with His blood! The cup of which you are made to drink, though it is very bitter, bears the marks of His lips about its brim! He has traversed the mournful way before you and every footprint you leave in the soil is stamped side by side with His footprints. Let the sympathy of Christ, then, be fully believed in and deeply appreciated, since He said, I thirst.

From now on, also, let us cultivate the spirit of resignation, for we may well rejoice to carry a Cross which His shoulders have borne before us! Beloved, if our Master said, I thirst, do we expect to drink every day of streams from Lebanon? He was innocent and yet He thirstedshall we marvel if guilty ones are now and then chastened? If He were so poor that His garments were stripped from Him and He was hung up upon the tree, penniless and friendless, hungering and thirsting, will you groan and murmur because you bear the yoke of poverty and need? There is bread upon your table, today, and there will be at least a cup of cold water to refresh you. You are not, therefore, so poor as He.

Complain not, then. Shall the servant be above his Master, or the disciple above his Lord? Let patience have her perfect work. You suffer. Perhaps, dear Sister, you carry about with you a gnawing disease which eats at your heart, but Jesus took our sicknesses and His cup was more bitter than yours. In your chamber let the gasp of your Lord as He said, I thirst, go through your ears and as you hear it, let it touch your heart and cause you to gird up yourself and say, Does He say, I thirst? Then I will thirst with Him and not complain! I will suffer with Him and not murmur. The Redeemers cry of, I thirst, is a solemn lesson of patience to His afflicted.

Once again, as we think of this, I thirst, which proves our Lords humanity, let us resolve to shun no denials, but rather court them that we may be conformed to His image. May we not be half ashamed of our pleasures when He says, I thirst? May we not despise our loaded table while He is so neglected? Shall it ever be a hardship to be denied the satisfying draught when He said, I thirst? Shall carnal appetites be indulged and bodies pampered when Jesus cried, I thirst? What if the bread is dry? What if the medicine is nauseous? For His thirst there was

no relief but gall and vinegardare we complain?

For His sake we may rejoice in self-denials and accept Him and a crust as all we desire between here and Heaven. A Christian living to indulge us would not willingly pour out his soul unto death if he might but give refreshment to us. And yet Jesus placed Himself, for our sakes, into a position of shame and suffering where none would wait upon Himwhen He cried, I thirst, they gave Him vinegar to drink! A Christian living to indulge the base appetites of a brute beast, to eat and to drink almost to gluttony and drunkenness, is utterly unworthy of the name. The conquest of the appetites, the entire subjugation of the flesh must be achieved, for before our great Exemplar said, It is finished, wherein I think He reached the greatest height of all, He stood as only upon the next lower step to that elevation and said, I thirst. The power to suffer for another, the capacity to be self-denying even to an extreme to accomplish some great work for Godthis is a thing to be sought after and must be gained before our work is done. And in this Jesus is before us as our example and our strength.

Thus have I tried to spy out a measure of teaching, by using that one glass for the souls eyes through which we look upon, I thirst, as the ensign of His true humanity.

II. Secondly, we shall regard these words, I thirst, as THE TOKEN OF HIS SUFFERING SUBSTITUTION. The great Surety says, I thirst, because He is placed in the sinners place and He must, therefore, undergo the penalty of sin for the ungodly. My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? points to the anguish of His soul. I thirst expresses, in part, the torture of His bodythey were both necessary because it is written of the God of Justice that He is able to destroy both soul and body in Hell. And the pangs that are due to Law are of both kinds, touching both heart and flesh.

See, Brothers and Sisters, where sin begins, and mark that there it ends. It began with the mouth of appetite, when it was sinfully gratified, and it ends when a kindred appetite is graciously denied. Our first parents plucked forbidden fruit and, by eating, slew the race. Appetite was the door of sin and, therefore, in that point our Lord was put to pain. With, I thirst, the evil is destroyed and receives its expiation. I saw the other day the emblem of a serpent with its tail in its mouth and if I carry it a little beyond the artists intention, the symbol may set forth appetite swallowing up itself. A carnal appetite of the bodythe satisfaction of the desire for foodfirst brought us down under the first Adam. And now the pang of thirstthe denial of what the body cravedrestores us to our place.

Nor is this all. We know from experience that the present effect of sin in every man who indulges in it, is thirst of soul. The mind of man is like the daughters of the horseleech, which cry forever, Give, give. Metaphorically understood, thirst is dissatisfactionthe craving of the mind for something which it has not, but which it pines for. Our Lord says, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drinkthat thirst being the result of sin in every ungodly man at this moment. Now Christ, standing in the place of the ungodly, suffers thirst as a type of His enduring the result of sin.

More solemn, still, is the reflection that according to our Lords own teaching, thirst will also be the eternal result of sin, for He says concerning the rich glutton, In Hell he lifts up his eyes, being in torment, and his prayer, which was denied him, was, Father Abraham, send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame.

Now remember, if Jesus had not thirsted, every one of us would have thirsted forever afar off from God, with an impassable gulf between us and Heaven! Our sinful tongues, blistered by the fever of passion, must have burned forever had not His tongue been tormented with thirst in our place. I suppose that the, I thirst, was uttered softly, so that perhaps only one and another who stood near the Cross heard it at all, in contrast with the louder cry of, Lama Sabachthani and the triumphant shout of, It is finished! But that soft, expiring sigh, I thirst, has ended for us the thirst which otherwise, insatiably fierce, had preyed upon us throughout eternity.

Oh, wondrous substitution of the Just for the unjust, of God for man, of the perfect Christ for guilty us, Hell-deserving rebels! Let us magnify and bless our Redeemers name! It seems to me very wonderful that this, I thirst, should be, as it were, the clearance of it all. He had no sooner said, I thirst, and sipped the vinegar, than He shouted, It is finished! And all was overthe battle was fought and the victory won foreverand our great Deliverers thirst was the sign of His having smitten the last foe! The flood of His grief had passed the high-water mark and began to be relieved. The, I thirst, was the bearing of the last pangwhat if I say it was the expression of the fact that His pangs had, at last, begun to cease and their fury had spent themselves and left Him able to note His lesser pains?

The excitement of a great struggle makes men forget thirst and faintness. It is only when all is over that they come back to themselves and note the spending of their strength. The great agony of being forsaken by God was over and He felt faint when the strain was withdrawn. I like to think of our Lords saying, It is finished, directly after He had exclaimed, I thirst because these two voices come so naturally together. Our glorious Samson had been fighting our foes. Heaps upon heaps, He had slain His thousands, and now like Samson He was terribly thirsty. He sipped of the vinegar and He was refreshedand no sooner has He thrown off the thirst than He shouted like a conqueror, It is finished, and quit the field, covered with renown!

Let us exult as we see our Substitute going through with His work even to the bitter end and then with a, Consummatum est, returning to His Father! O Souls, burdened with sin, rest here, and resting, live!

III. We will now take the text in a third way and may the Spirit of God instruct us once again. The utterance of, I thirst, brought out A TYPE OF MANS TREATMENT OF HIS LORD. It was a confirmation of the Scripture testimony with regard to mans natural enmity to God. According to

modern thought man is a very fine and noble creature, struggling to become better. He is greatly to be commended and admired, for his sin is said to be a seeking after God and his superstition is a struggling after light. Great and worshipful being that he is, the Truth of God is to be altered for him! The Gospel is to be modulated to suit the tone of his various generations and all the arrangements of the universe are to be rendered subservient to his interests.

Justice must fly the field lest it be severe to so deserving a being! As for punishment, it must not be whispered to his polite ears. In fact, the tendency is to exalt man above God and give him the highest place! But such is not the truthful estimate of man according to the Scripturesthere, man is a fallen creature with a carnal mind which cannot be reconciled to God! He is a worse than brutish creature, rendering evil for good and treating his God with vile ingratitude. Alas, man is the slave and the dupe of Satan and a black-hearted traitor to his God! Did not the prophecies say that man would give to his Incarnate God gall to eat and vinegar to drink? It is done! He came to save and man denied Him hospitality!

At first there was no room for Him at the inn and at the last there was not one cool cup of water for Him to drinkwhen He thirsted they gave Him vinegar to drink! This is mans treatment of His Savior! Universal manhood, left to itself, rejects, crucifies and mocks the Christ of God! This was the act, too, of man at his best, when he is moved to pity, for it seems clear that he who lifted up the wet sponge to the Redeemers lips did it in compassion. I think that Roman soldier meant well, at least well for a rough warrior with his little light and knowledge. He ran and filled a sponge with vinegarit was the best way he knew of putting a few drops of moisture to the lips of One who was suffering so much! But though he felt a degree of pity, it was such as one might show to a doghe felt no reverencebut mocked as he relieved.

We read, The soldiers also mocked Him, offering Him vinegar. When our Lord cried, Eloi, Eloi, and afterwards said, I thirst, the persons around the Cross said, Let Him be, let us see whether Elijah will come to save Him, mocking Him and, according to Mark, he who gave the vinegar uttered much the same words. He pitied the Sufferer, but he thought so little of Him that he joined in the voices of scorn. Even when man pities the sufferings of Christand man would have ceased to be human if he did notstill he scorns Him! The very cup which man gives to Jesus is at once scorn and pity, for, the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel. See how man at his best mingles admiration of the Saviors Person with scorn of His claimswriting books to hold Him up as an example and at the same moment rejecting His Deity! Admitting that He was a wonderful Man, but denying His most sacred mission! Extolling His ethical teaching and then trampling on His bloodthus giving Him drink, but that drink, vinegar!

O my Hearers, beware of praising Jesus and denying His atoning Sacrifice! Beware of rendering Him homage and dishonoring His name at the same time! Alas, my Brothers and Sisters, I cannot say much on the score of mans cruelty to our Lord without touching myself and you. Have we not often given Him vinegar to drink? Did we not do so years ago before we knew Him? We used to melt when we heard about His sufferings, but we did not turn from our sins. We gave Him our tears and then grieved Him with our sins! We thought, sometimes, that we loved Him, as we heard the story of His death, but we did not change our lives for His sake, nor put our trust in Himand so we gave Him vinegar to drink.

Nor does the grief end here, for have not the best works we have ever done, the best feelings we have ever felt and the best prayers we have ever offered been tart and sour with sin? Can they be compared to generous wine? Are they not more like sharp vinegar? I wonder He has ever received them, as one marvels why He received this vinegarand yet He has received them and smiled upon us for presenting them. He knew once how to turn water into wine and in matchless love He has often turned our sour drink offerings into something sweet to Himself, though in themselves, I think, they have been the juice of sour grapes, sharp enough to set His teeth on edge. We may, therefore, come before Him, with all the rest of our race, when God subdues them to repentance by His love and look on Him whom we have pierced and mourn for Him as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.

We may well remember our faults this day   
*We, whose proneness to forget   
Your dear love, on Olivet   
Bathed Your brow with bloody sweat.   
We, whose sins, with awful power,   
Like a cloud did over You lower,   
In that God-excluding hour.   
We, who still, in thought and deed,   
Often hold the bitter reed   
To You, in Your time of need.*

I have touched this point very lightly because I want a little more time to dwell upon a fourth view of this scene. May the Holy Spirit help us to hear a fourth tuning of the dolorous music, I thirst.

IV. I think, beloved Friends, that the cry of, I thirst, was THE MYSTICAL EXPRESSION OF THE DESIRE OF HIS HEARTI thirst. I cannot think that natural thirst was all He felt. He doubtless thirsted for water, but His soul was thirsty in a higher sense. Indeed, He seems only to have spoken that the Scriptures might be fulfilled as to the offering Him vinegar. Always was He in harmony with Himself and His body was always expressive of His souls cravings as well as of its own longings. I thirst meant that His heart was thirsting to save men. This thirst had been on Him from the earliest of His earthly days. Know you not, He said, while yet a boy, that I must be about My Fathers business?

Did He not tell His disciples, I have a baptism to be baptized with and how am I straitened till it is accomplished? He thirsted to pluck us from between the jaws of Hell, to pay our redemption price and set us free from the eternal condemnation which hung over us. And when on the Cross the work was almost done, His thirst was not relieved and could not be till He could say, It is finished.   
It is almost done, Christ of God! You have almost saved Your people!

There remains but one thing more, that You should actually die and, therefore, Your strong desire to come to the end and complete Your labor. You were still straitened till the last pang was felt and the last word spoken to complete the full redemption and, therefore, Your cry, I thirst. Beloved, there is now upon our Master and there always has been, a thirst after the love of His people. Do you not remember how that thirst of His was strong in the old days of the Prophet? Call to mind His complaint in the 5th chapter of Isaiah, Now will I sing to my Well-beloved a song of my Beloved touching His vineyard. My Well-beloved has a vineyard in a very fruitful hill: and He fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein.

What was He looking for from His vineyard and its winepress? What but for the juice of the vine that He might be refreshed? And He looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes vinegar, not winesourness not sweetness. So He was thirsting then. According to the sacred canticle of love, in the 5th chapter of the Song of Songs, we learn that when He drank in those olden times it was in the garden of His Church that He was refreshed. What does He say? I am come into My garden, My sister, My spouse: I have gathered My myrrh with My spice; I have eaten My honeycomb with My honey; I have drunk My wine with My milk; eat, O Friends; drink, yes, drink abundantly, O Beloved.

In the same song He speaks of His Church, and says, The roof of your mouth is as the best wine for My Beloved, that goes down sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak. And yet again in the 8th chapter the bride says, I would cause You to drink of spiced wine of the juice of my pomegranate. Yes, He loves to be with His people! They are the garden where He walks for refreshment. And their love, their graces, are the milk and wine of which He delights to drink. Christ was always thirsty to save men and to be loved of men. And we see a type of His life-long desire when, being weary, He sat thus on the well and said to the woman of Samaria, Give Me a drink. There was a deeper meaning in His words than she dreamed of, as a verse further down fully proves, when He said to His disciples, I have meat to eat that you know not of. He derived spiritual refreshment from the winning of that womans heart to Himself.

And now, Brothers and Sisters, our blessed Lord has, at this time, a thirst for communion with each one of you who are His people, not because you can do Him good, but because He can do you good. He thirsts to bless you and to receive your grateful love in return. He thirsts to see you looking with believing eyes to His fullness and holding out your emptiness that He may supply it. He says, Behold, I stand at the door and knock. For what does He? It is that He may eat and drink with you, for He promises that if we open to Him, He will enter in and sup with us and we with Him. He is still thirsty, you see, for our poor love, and surely we cannot deny it to Him.

Come, let us pour out full flagons until His joy is fulfilled in us! And what makes Him love us so? Ah, that I cannot tell, except His own great love. He must loveit is His Nature. He must love His chosen whom He has once begun to love, for He is the same yesterday, today and forever. His great love makes Him thirst to have us much nearer than we are. He will never be satisfied till all His redeemed are beyond gunshot of the enemy. I will give you one of His thirsty prayersFather, I will that they, also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, that they may behold My Glory. He wants you, Brother, He wants you, dear Sister, He longs to have you wholly to Himself!

Come to Him in prayer! Come to Him in fellowship! Come to Him by perfect consecration! Come to Him by surrendering your whole being to the sweet mysterious influences of His Spirit! Sit at His feet with Mary. Lean on His breast with John. Yes, come with the spouse in the song and say, Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth, for His love is better than wine. He calls for thatwill you not give it to Him? Is your heart so frozen that not a cup of cold water can be melted for Jesus? Are you lukewarm? O Brothers and Sisters, if He says, I thirst, and you bring Him a lukewarm heartthat is worse than vinegarfor He has said, I will spit you out of My mouth.

He can receive vinegar, but not lukewarm love! Come, bring Him your warm heart and let Him drink from that purified chalice as much as He wills. Let all your love be His. I know He loves to receive from you because He delights even in a cup of cold water that you give to one of His disciples! How much more will He delight in the giving of your whole self to Him? Therefore, while He thirsts give Him a drink this very day!

V. Lastly, the cry of, I thirst, is to us THE PATTERN OF OUR DEATH WITH HIM. Know you not, Belovedfor I speak to those who know the Lordthat you are crucified together with Christ? Well, then, what does this cry mean, I thirst, but thisthat we should thirst, too? We do not thirst after the old manner wherein we were bitterly afflicted, for He has said, He that drinks of this water shall never thirst. But now we covet a new thirst, a refined and heavenly appetite, a craving for our Lord! O blessed Master, if we are, indeed, nailed up to the tree with You, give us to thirst after You with a thirst which only the cup of the new Covenant in Your blood can ever satisfy!

Certain philosophers have said that they love the pursuit of truth even better than the knowledge of truth. I differ from them greatly, but I will say this, that next to the actual enjoyment of my Lords Presence, I love to hunger and to thirst after Him. Rutherford used words somewhat to this effect, I thirst for my Lord and this is joya joy which no man takes from me. Even if I may not come to Him, yet shall I be full of consolation, for it is Heaven to thirst after Him, and surely He will never deny a poor soul liberty to admire Him, and adore Him, and thirst after Him. As for myself, I would grow more and more greedy after my Divine Lord and when I have much of Him I would still cry for moreand then for more and still more! My heart shall not be content till He is All in All to me and I am altogether lost in Him. O to be enlarged in soul so as to take deeper draughts of His

sweet love, for our heart cannot have enough!

One would wish to be as the spouse, who, when she had already been feasting in the banqueting house and had found His fruit sweet to her taste, so that she was overjoyed, yet cried out, Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples, for I am sick of love. She craved full flagons of love though she was already overpowered by it! This is a kind of sweet whereof if a man has much he must have moreand when he has more he is under a still greater necessity to receive more! His appetite is forever growing by that which it feeds upon, till he is filled with all the fullness of God. I thirstyes, this is my souls word with her Lord. Borrowed from His lips it well suits my mouth

*I thirst, but not as once I did,   
The vain delights of earth to share.   
Your wounds, Emmanuel, all forbid   
That I should seek my pleasures there.   
Dear fountain of delight unknown!   
No longer sink below the brim   
But overflow, and pour me down   
A living and life-giving stream.*

Jesus thirsted, then let us thirst in this dry and thirsty land where there is no water. Even as the hart pants after the water brooks, our souls would thirst after You, O God.

Beloved, let us thirst for the souls of our fellow men! I have already told you that such was our Lords mystical desire. Let it be ours, also. Brother, thirst to have your children saved! Brother, thirst I pray, to have your workpeople saved. Sister, thirst for the salvation of your class, thirst for the redemption of your family, thirst for the conversion of your husband! We ought all to have a longing for conversions. Is it so with each one of you? If not, bestir yourselves at once. Fix your hearts upon some unsaved one and thirst until he is saved. It is the way whereby many shall be brought to Christ, when this blessed soul-thirst of true Christian charity shall be upon those who are, themselves, saved!

Remember how Paul said, I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh. He would have sacrificed himself to save his countrymen, so heartily did he desire their eternal welfare! Let this mind be in you, also.

As for yourselves, thirst after perfection! Hunger and thirst after righteousness, for you shall be filled. Hate sin and heartily loathe it. Thirst to be holy as God is holy! Thirst to be like Christ! Thirst to bring glory to His sacred name by complete conformity to His will! May the Holy Spirit work in you the complete pattern of Christ Crucified and to Him shall be praise forever and ever. Amen.

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THE SAVIORS THIRST   
NO. 3385

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18, 1913. DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, I thirst. John 19:28.**

THE early Christians were known to think and talk far more of our Savior than we do. Some of them were, perhaps, not quite so clear upon justification by faith as they ought to have been, but they were very clear about the merits of the precious blood. And if they did not always speak very clearly about the Doctrines of Grace, they spoke with wonderful power and savor about the five woundsabout the nail marks and the spear wound. I could wish that our religion would go back somewhat more to that personal apprehension of Christ than it does. By all means let us have dogmatic teaching, setting forth those most precious Truths of God that are our consolation, but better than all is the Person of Christ Himselfthe Way, the Truth, and the Life. We should do well if we more often stood in meditation at the foot of the Cross and viewed His wounds, counted the precious drops as they fall and sought fellowship with Him in His sufferings. Some of those early saints wrote long treatises on the solitary wounds of Jesusmany of them passed whole days in contemplation of some minute part of His passion. We cannot imitate them in this respectwe have not the leisure. I am afraid we have not the mental application they possessed. Nevertheless, let us explore the sacred mystery as best we can. At this time would we get away to Calvary and there stand and hear our Redeemer crying, I thirst, as He bears for us the guilt of sin.

Very briefly we shall regard the text, first, as our Saviors cry, and as only such. Secondly, we shall consider its relationship to ourselves. And thirdly, and sorrowfully, its relation to ungodly man. First, then, we will

I. CONSIDER THIS CRY OF OUR SAVIORI thirst.   
Is it not clear proof that He was certainly Man? Certain heretics sprang up in the early Church who asserted that the body of our Lord was only a phantomthat as God, He was here, but as Man He only exhibited Himself to the outward sense and did not actually exist in flesh and blood. But He thirsted. Now, a spirit has not thirst! A spirit neither eats nor drinksit is immaterial and knows not the needs that belong to this poor flesh and blood! We may, therefore, rest quite sure that, the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father, full of Grace and truth   
No better proof could we have of the substantiality of His Manhood than the cry, I thirst. Herein, at all events, we can sympathize with Him. From the moment when He rose from the Communion Supper, saying, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in My Fathers Kingdomfrom that moment He had had no further refreshment, either of meat or of drink. Yet well He needed drink, for all through that long night in Gethsemane He sweatedwe know what kind of sweatas it were great drops of blood falling to the ground! Such toil as His might well have needed refreshment. Then He was hurried away to Caiaphas and afterwards to Pilate. He had to encounter the accusations of His enemies and a strong bridle He had to put upon Himself, that, like a sheep before her shearers, He might be dumb. There was a strain upon His system such as none of us ever have had to endure, or ever shall havea strain such as we can never imagineand yet not one morsel of bread, nor one drop of water crossed those blessed and parched lips! Well might He cry, I thirst, when, after so many hours of wrestling with the powers of darkness, He was now about to die!   
You remember, also, the peculiar way in which our Lord was put to death. The piercing of the hands and the feet was sure to bring on fever. Those members, though far remote from the vital parts, are yet full of the most delicate and tender nervesand pain soon travels along them till the whole frame becomes hot with burning fever! Our Lords own words in the 22nd Psalm will occur to youMy strength is dried up like a potsherd, and My tongue cleaves to My jaws; and You have brought Me into the dust of death. Those of you who have been afflicted with fever far less serious than this, will recollect how it parched you like a potsherd and dried up all the juices of your system and all the moisture of your body like the parched fields of summer! You had, then, a thirst, indeed! But your Savior had a double cause for thirstlong fasting without food or drink and then the bitter pangs of death! Sympathize with Him then, Beloved, and remember that all this was for youand for you as His enemiesfor you as if there were no others in the world! Though He suffered for all His elect, yet especially for each one of His people were the nails driven, for each one did He thirst and for each one did He take a draught of the vinegar and the gall. Come, then, and kiss those blessed lips and bow before your Savior in reverent praise!   
Further, my Brothers and Sisters, we are quite certain that our Lord, in saying, I thirst, must have felt the extreme bitterness of thirst. He was no complainer. You never heard a word come from His lips when it might have been withheld. He must have been driven to dire extremity, indeed, when He thus proclaimed to friends and foes that He was thirsting for a drop of water. Some have said that this cry, I thirst, coming, as it does, after the far more bitter and awful cry, My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? was an evidence of a turn in the Saviors conflictthat during all the first part of our Saviors suffering He was taken up with such anxious thought and with such internal anguish that He could not think of the thirst, which, grievous as it was, was but a minor pain in comparison with what He felt when His Father in justice turned away His face from Himand that now He begins to collect His thoughts for awhile and is able to fight with His own personal bodily pains. It may be so. Possibly that cry was an indication that the battle had turned and that victory was coming to the suffering Hero. But, ah, Brothers and Sisters, however there may have come a gleam of sunshine in this cry compared to the blacker darkness, you can never dream what a thirst that was that parched the Saviors mouth and lips! You will never feel such a thirst as He felt to its direst extent. Cold, hunger, nakedness and thirst may fall to your lot, but there was more of grief in His thirst than you can ever know! There was a bitterness here which my language cannot possibly bring out!   
Another thought rises up to my mindI will not mislead you here. I feel thankful to our Lord for saying, I thirst! Ah, Brothers and Sisters, sometimes when we are sorely afflicted, or have some little infirmity, perhaps not anything vital or mortal, though it pains us much, we complain, or at least we say, I thirst. Now, are we wrong in so doing? Ought we to play the stoic? Ought we to be like the Indian at the stake who sings while he is roasting? Ought we to be like St. Lawrence on the gridiron? Is stoicism a part of Christianity? Oh, no! Jesus said, I thirst, and herein He gave permission to all of you who are bowed down with your griefs and your sorrows to whisper them into the ears of those who watch by the bed, and to say, I thirst. I daresay you have often felt ashamed of yourselves for this. You have said, Now, if I had some huge trouble, or if the pangs I suffered were absolutely mortal, I could lean upon the Beloveds arm. But as for this ache, or this pain, it darts through my body and causes me much anguish, though it does not kill me. Well, but just as Jesus wept that He might let you weep on account of your sorrows and your griefs, so He says, I thirst, that you might have permission patiently, as He did, to express your little complaintsthat you might not think He sneers at you, or looks down upon you as though you were an alienthat you might know He sympathizes with you in it all!   
He does not use language like that of Cassius when he laughed at Caesar because he was sick and said

*And when the fit was on him I did mark How he did shaketis true this god did shake His coward lips did from their color fly!   
And that same eye whose head does awe the world Did lose its lusterI did hear him groan! Yes, and that tongue of his that bade the Romans Mark him, and write his speeches in their books, Alas, it cried, Give me some drink, Titinius, As a sick girl.*

And why should it not? He was but a man. He was but as a sick girl, and what is there in a sick girl to despise, after all? Jesus Christ said, I thirst, and in this He says to every sick girl, and every sick child, and every sick one throughout the world, The Master, who is now in Heaven, but who once suffered on earth, despises not the tears of the sufferers, but has pity on them on their beds of sickness.

Jesus said, I thirst. As our Lord used these words, may I ask you for a minute to contemplate it with wonder? Who was this that said, I thirst? Know you not that it was He who balanced the clouds and who filled the channels of the mighty deep? He said, I thirst, and yet in Him was a well of water springing up unto everlasting life! Yes, He who guided every river in its course and watered all the fields with grateful showers He it was, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, before whom Hell trembles and the earth is filled with dismay! He whom Heaven adores and all eternity worshipsHe it was who said, I thirst! Matchless condescensionfrom the Infinity of God to the weakness of a thirsting, dying Man! And this, again I must remind you, was for you. He that suffered for you was no common mortal, no ordinary man, such as you are, but the perfect and ever blessed God, high above all principalities and powers and every name that is named! He it was who, with this condescending lowness of estate, stooped and cried, as you have done, I thirst!

Once more, in this cry of our Lord, I thirst, I think I see a trace of the Atonement which He was then offering. The pangs of Christ upon the Cross are to be regarded as a substitution for the sins and sorrows of ungodly men

*He bore that we might never bear  
His Fathers righteous ire.*

Now, Brothers and Sisters, a part of the punishment of the wicked in Hell is the deprivation of every form of comfort. Man refused to obey His Creatorthe time will come when the Creator will refuse to succor man! Man refused to minister to Godthe time will come when Gods creatures will not minister to man! Remember those solemn words of the Master when He said that the rich man was without a drop of water to cool his tongue and was tormented in the flame? And yet the water was withheld from coming near the sinner who had died in willful rebellion against God! Oh, my dear Friends, if we had our due, we should have none of the comforts of life! The very air would refuse to yield us breath and bread, the staff of life, to yield us nourishment! Yes, we would find the whole Creation in arms against us because we are up in arms against God! The time shall come when those who stand up against the Most High shall find no comfort left themand no hope of comforteverything that can make existence tolerable shall be withdrawn and everything that can make it intolerable shall be poured upon them! For upon the wicked, God shall rain fire and brimstone, and a horrid tempestthis shall be the portion of their cup!   
Behold, then, when Emmanuel stood for us and suffered in our place,

He, too, must thirst! He must be deprived of every comfort, stripped naked to the last rag and hung up on the Cross as though earth rejected Him and Heaven would not receive Him! Midway between the two worlds He dies in the most abject poverty! And because of our sin, He cries, I thirst! Beloved, never seek for companionship with any who would ignore the miseries of the Lord, for, depend upon it, in that proportion they lessen the glory of the Atonement. If it is but a light thing for the sinner to rebel against God, it was not a light thing for Christ to redeem him! It covered Christ with the greatest luster, for, after all, it stands out as one of His most resplendent works that He has redeemed us from going down into the Pit, having found a ransom for us! By so much the greater the love, by so much the greater is the salvation. Think not lightly of sin and its punishment, lest you come to think lightly of Christ and what He suffered to redeem you from your guilt! The cry, I thirst, is part of the substitutionary work which Christ performed when He thirsted, because, otherwise, sinners would have thirsted forever and have been denied all the pleasure, joy and peace of Heaven.

The meditation upon this cry as proceeding from our Lord invites one more remark. Will it be straining the text too far if we say that underlying those words, I thirst, there is something more them a mere thirst for drink? Once, when He sat upon the well of Samaria, He said to the poor harlot who met Him there, Give Me a drink, and He got a drink from hera drink that the world knew nothing about when she gave her heart to Him, obedient to His Gospel. Christ is always thirsting after the salvation of precious souls and that cry on the Cross that thrilled all who listened to it was the outburst of the great heart of Jesus Christ as He saw the multitude, and He cried unto His God, I thirst. He thirsted to redeem mankind! He thirsted to accomplish the work of our salvation! This very day He still thirsts in that respect, as He is still willing to receive those who come to Him, still resolved that such as come shall never be cast out and still desirous that they may come! Oh, poor Souls, you do not thirst for Christ, but you little know how He thirsts for you! There is love in His heart towards those who have no love to Him! Christ would not have you die. Christ would not have you cast into Hell! Give yourselves up, then, to the gentle sway of Him who for your souls good, said, I thirst. Oh, I wish that all we who love Christ knew more of this hungering and thirsting after the redemption of our follow men. The Lord teach us to sympathize with them! If He wept for sinners, may our cheeks never be dry! He was in anguish for their souls, and we will not restrain our anguish because they will not be saved, but ignorantly, carelessly, or resolutely despise the Gospel of Christ!

Thus much upon this point, so far as it concerns our Lord, Himself. Turn not away your eyes, but look and listen as He cries, I thirst. Very briefly, now let us notice   
II. OUR RELATIONSHIP AND OUR BEARING TOWARDS THIS CRY. I shall address myself on this head to the people of God. And the first

remark is thisBrothers and Sisters, because Jesus Christ said, I thirst, you and I are delivered from that terrible thirst which once devoured us. We were awakened by the Holy Spirit, some of us, years ago, to perceive our danger. We had not known before what sin waswhat a destroying fever it was. We had cherished it in our bosom, but when we began to discover our desperate position, we were compelled to thirst and cry for mercy. With some of us, our thirst was very greatwe could scarcely sleepand as for our meals, we left them untouched often in the agony of our despair. I do remember how my soul chose strangling rather than life! It seemed so hard to live under the frown of God, awakened to a sense of sin, but unable to get rid of the sin! Now at this moment that thirst has gone, for we have received the adoption, the salvation, the forgiveness! You came to Jesus as you were with all your thirst and you stooped down and drank of the crystal stream. And now you rejoice with unspeakable joy because your thirst is gone! Oh, clap your hands for very joy at the remembrance of it! Be humble that you should need His thirst to save you from thirst, but oh, be glad to think that the work is done and that you shall never thirst again as you did then, for, he that drinks, says Christ, of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, for it shall be in him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life. Your insatiable desires are stayed! The horseleech within you that cried, Give, give, at last is satisfied! The cravings of conscience that had been awakened by the love of God are satisfied! Now, oh, joy, your sorrow is over! Your peace, like a river has come, and your righteousness is like the waves of the sea! Live happily, live joyously! Tell others what Christ has done for you. Eat not your morsel alone, but publish to the world that through the thirst of a dying Savior you have ceased to thirst!

And as you have done with that first thirst of bitter agony, now seek to be filled with another thirsta thirst after more of Christ! Oh, that sweet wine of His love is very thirst-creatingthose who have once tasted it need more of it! Thirst after a closer walk with Him! Thirst to know more of Him! Thirst to be more like He! Thirst to understand more the mystery of His sufferings and to be more full of anticipation of His blessed Advent

*Nearer, my God, to Thee; nearer to Thee.* Be this your cry. Open your mouth wide, for He will fill it. Enlarge your desires, for He will satisfy them all. Be eager after more of Christ! Hunger and thirst after more of righteousness. All your desires shall be supplied you. Do not, therefore, stint yourself by narrowing them. Oh, that you could ask more at His hands, for

*All your capacious powers can ask,   
In Christ do richly meet.*

Were your imagination to stretch her wings and soar ever so far beyond the narrow bounds of space, she would weary long before she reached the fullness of God which dwells bodily in our Lord Jesus Christ!

Let me also invite you to cultivate another thirsta thirst like that which we read our Lord thirsted withfor the conversion of our souls. Give us but a score of men that hunger and thirst for the conversion of others and we shall see good work done! But oh, we are so cold, callous and sleeping, though men are perishing every day! Behold the mass of people gathered in this Tabernacle! We can never all meet again. Some of us will probably be in eternity before another Sabbath shall have dawnedand of those who shall have departed this life, some will, perhaps, have gone down to the Pit. And yet we have no tears for them! Oh, God, strike our hearts with a rod more powerful than that of Moses and fill our eyes with sympathetic tears! Think what it is that your own child could be lost, that your own relative could perish! Oh, wake yourselves up to passionate prayer, to longing desire and to constant effortand never, from this moment on, cease to thirst with a passionate desire, which, like that of your Lord, shall fill you and compel you practically to say, in the industrious application of a spiritual life, I thirst!

My last point is a very heavy one. I could wish it has not to be delivered. It is addressed   
III. TO UNGODLY MEN AND WOMEN.   
If the Lord Jesus Christ thirsted when He only carried the sins of others, what thirst will be upon you when God shall punish you for your own sins? Either Christ must thirst for you, or you mush thirst forever, and ever, and ever! There is but one alternativeJustice must be vindicated through a Substitute, or it must be glorified in your everlasting destruction! Think what it will be to have your sweet cup and your flowing bowl all put away from you, and not a drop of water to cool your tongueto have your dainty meat and your gay festivals forever abolishedno light for your eyes, no joy for any one of the senses of your body and your souls made to suffer unutterable woe!   
I shall not stay to picture, even in Christs own words, the agony of lost spirits. But I bid you keep this on your minds. If Christ, who was Gods Son, suffered so bitterly for sins that were not His own, how bitterly must you, who are not Gods sons, but Gods enemies, suffer for sins that are your own? And you must so suffer unless Christ, the Substitute, stands for you! He was no Substitute for all, but only for His own people. You say to me, Did He stand for me? I can tell you if you can answer this question, Do you trust Jesus Christ? Will you now trust Him? If so, a simple child-like faith in Jesus will bring you salvation! Now, remember, if you believe, all your sins are laid upon Christ and, therefore, they can never be laid upon you! If you believe, Christ was punished in your place and you can never be punished, because he was punished for you! Substitutionthis is the groundwork of our confidence! Because He was accursed, we cannot be accursed, for, if we believe in Him, all that He suffered was for usand we stand absolved before the Judgment Seat of Christ. The Lord give you this simple faith in the Redeemer this very night! And then He will see in you of the travail of His soul and the thirst of His great heart will be satisfied! The Lord bless you. Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **PSALMS 51; 32; MATTHEW 26:59-68; LUKE 23.**

Let us read two Psalms of penitence. Repentance and faith go hand in hand all the way to Heaven. Repenting and believing make up a large measure of the Christian life. First, let us read the 51st Psalm, penned by David after his great sin with Bathsheba, when, by the instrumentality of Nathan, he had been led to repentance. What if we have not fallen into any gross open sin? Yet, perhaps if we could see our hearts as God sees them, we should be as much ashamed as the Psalmist was when to the music of his sighs and groans, he poured out this Psalm.

Verse 1. Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your loving kindness. According unto the multitude of Your tender mercies blot out my transgressions. What delicious words those are! Your loving kindness. I have sometimes felt glad to be a Saxon, that I should speak a language that had such delightful words in it. Loving kindness, tender mercy. Now, the eye that is quickest to see the tenderness of God is the eye of repentance, for the sinner who feels condemnation in his own heart looks so keenly after everything that may make for his comfort, and his eyes light on the tender mercies and loving kindness of God. The prayer is for pardonno, it is for purification, as well as pardon!

2. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. Take out this plague spot. I cannot bear it any longer. Oh, cleanse me from every trace of it, my God, I beseech You!

3. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is always before me. I tell it to You because it haunts me. It is always present to my mind. It seems painted on my eyeballs. I cannot but see it, turn whichever way I may.

4. Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight: that You might be justified when You speak, and be clear when You judge. He had sinned against his people, setting them an evil example sinned against Bathsheba and Uriahbut he sees the whole evil concentrating itself, as it were, upon his God. He felt that the virus of the whole thing was that he had done dishonor to the name of the Most High, whose servant he was.

5-7. Behold, I was shaped in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part You shall make me to know wisdom. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Behold, he says, as if to go to the bottom of it, and to show that sin was not an accident with him, but that he, himself, was sinful. It was a grand faithit was an Abrahamic faiththat when a man had such a sense of sin as David had, he at the same time could believe in the cleansing power of the blood! For you who do not know what sin is, and who have never groaned beneath the burden, to talk about the pardoning bloodoh, it is easy enough and there is nothing in it! But for a soul that knows the guilt and feels it and is burdened by it, still to believe in the power of the atoning Sacrificethis is faith indeed! David had seen the priest take the bunch of hyssop and dip it in the warm blood of the goat or the bullock, and then sprinkle itand he says, Lord, do the same with mewith that richer blood of Divine Atonement! That blood which, in Davids day, was yet to be shed! Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

8-10. Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which You have broken may rejoice. Hide Your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Lord, the mischief lies deep! Strike at the root of it. I would not have You to wash out only a spot, but go to my heart and renew that, that I may sin no more.

11-14. Cast me not away from Your Presence and take not Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of Your salvation; and uphold me with Your free Spirit. Then will I teach transgressors Your ways: and sinners shall be converted unto You. Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness. In that verse there is one of the surest marks of Davids sincere repentance, namely, that he calls his sin by its right name bloodguiltiness. I have no doubt that he had said to himself that Uriah died by accident, and pleaded very much to excuse and extenuate his guilt. But now he outs with it. That is the wordbloodguiltiness. It is no use trying to apologize and excuse yourselves before God. As long as that is done, no pardon will ever be applied to the conscience. But when the sin is seen in its true colors, then shall those colors be washed away and we shall be whiter than snow. Then will I teach transgressors Your ways. He felt that if God would pardon him, he would be the man to tell of Gods way of mercy to others. And I trust, dear Friends, if we have tasted that the Lord is gracious, our witness will never be silent about the goodness and the mercy of the Lord. If you have never spoken to others, begin tonight! Teach others the ways of God to you!

15-19. O Lord open You my lips; and my mouth shall show forth Your praise. For You desire not sacrifice, otherwise would I give it. You delight not in burnt offerings. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise. Do good in Your good pleasure unto Zion: build the walls of Jerusalem. Then shall You be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon Your altar. Sure to be good times when men are under a sense of pardoned sin. None serve Him so well as those whose sins are washed awaywho feel the same within.

Now, we will read the 32nd Psalm.  
Verses 1-5. Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputes not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile. When I kept silent, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah. I acknowledged my sin unto You, and my iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD, and You forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah. Soon over. Once poured into Jehovahs ear out of a contrite heart, and the transgression was gone forever! May it be so with you, dear Hearer. If Your sin has never been forgiven you till tonight, may you this night obtain pardon through confession of sin.   
6, 7. For this shall everyone that is godly pray unto You in a time when You may be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come near him. You are my hiding place. You shall preserve me from trouble. You shall compass me about with songs of deliverance. Selah.

**MATTHEW 26:59-68; LUKE 23.**   
Verses 59-60. Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put Him to death; but found none. Neither for love nor money.

60. Yes, though many false witnesses came, yet they found none. That is, none that agreedthe lie that one man spoke was refuted by the next!   
61. At last came two false witness, and said thisThey did not say any other word, as if they did not know any word in any language vile enough for Him. Thisour translators have very properly put in the word Fellow.   
61. Fellow said, I am able to destroy the Temple of God, and to build it in three days. He never said anything of the kind! It was a most wicked misrepresentation of what He had said. If men wish to find an accusation against us, they can do it without any materials.   
62-64. And the high priest arose and said unto Him, Do You not answer? What is it which these witness against You? But Jesus held His peace. And the high priest answered and said unto Him, I command You by the living God, that You tell us whether you are the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus said unto him, You have said it: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall you see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of Heaven. He binds them over to make their appearance before Him when He becomes the Judge and they shall take the place of the criminal!

65, 66. Then the high priest tore his clothes, saying, He has spoken blasphemy! What further need have we of witnesses? Behold, now you have heard His blasphemy, What do you think? He looks round upon the seventy elders of the people who were sitting there in the great council and They answered and said, He is guilty of death. Probably Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus were not therethey were the only two friends the Lord had in the Sanhedrin.   
66, 67, 68. They answered and said, He is guilty of death. Then did they spit in His face, and buffeted Him; and others smote Him with the palms of their hands, Saying, prophesy unto us, You Christ, Who is he that smote You? This ended the regular ecclesiastical trial of Christ. A little time was spent before Pilate, the judicial ruler, was ready to see Christ, but as soon as the dawn was come, they dragged Him before another tribunal. We shall now turn to Luke 23.   
Verse 1, 2, And the whole multitude of them arose and led Him unto Pilate. And they began to accuse Him, saying, We found thisPut in what word you likevillainscoundrelour translators could not find a better word than that inexpressive-expressive word, fellow. We found this Fellow perverting the nation and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that He, Himself is Christ, a King. They shift the charge, you see, now! Before, it was blasphemy, now it is sedition.   
2, 3. Fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar saying that He, Himself, is Christ a King. And Pilate asked Him, saying, Are You the King of the Jews? And He answered him and said, You said it. Another of the Evangelists tells us that He first asked Pilate what he meant by the question, explaining that He only claimed the kingdom in a spiritual sense.   
4, 5. Then said Pilate to the chief priests and to the people, I find no fault in this Man. And they were the more fierce, saying, He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place. When Pilate heard them say Galilee, he caught at thathe did not wish to displease the multitude.   
6, 7. When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether the Man was a Galilean. And as soon as he knew that He belonged unto Herods jurisdiction, he sent Him to Herod, who himself also was at Jerusalem at that time. So away the Master goesHe must be dragged through the streets again to a third tribunal! Oh, You blessed Lamb of God! Never were sheep driven to the shambles as You were driven to death!   
8. And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceedingly glad, for he was desirous to see Him for a long season, because he had heard many things of Him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by Him. But the Lord never worked miracles to gratify idle curiosity! He who would have worked a miracle to heal the poorest beggar in the street would not work a wonder to please the king in whose power He was!   
9. Then he questioned Him in many words: but He answered him nothing. No, says good Christopher NessJohn Baptist was Christs voice and Herod had killed himthere Christ would not speakas if He would say, No, no, you did cut off John Baptists head, who was My messenger, and since you have ill-treated My ambassador, I, the King of kings, will have nothing to say to you.   
10. And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused Him. The original word is made nothing of Himmade Him as nothing.   
11, 12. And Herod with his men of war set Him at nothing, and mocked Him, and arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe, and sent Him again to Pilate. And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together; for before they were at enmity between themselves. Two dogs could well agree to hunt the same prey! And sinners who quarrel on other things will often be quite agreed to persecute the Gospel.   
13-16. And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people, said unto them, You have brought this Man unto me, as one that perverts the people, and, behold, I, having examined Him before you, have found no fault in this Man touching those things whereof you accuse Him. No, nor yet Herod; for I sent you to him and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto Him. I will therefore chastise Him, and release Him. Ah, that word, chastise, slips so glibly over the tongue! But you know what it meant, when the Roman lictors laid bare the back and used the terrific scourge! I will scourge Him, said Pilate. Perhaps he thought that if he scourged Him, His suffering would induce the Jews to spare His life.   
17-20. (For of necessity he must release one unto them at the feast). And they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this Man, and release unto us, Barabbas! (Who for a certain sedition made in the city, and for murder, was cast into prison). Pilate, therefore, willing to release Jesus, spoke again to them. He seems to have gone backward and forward many times, desiring to save the life of Christ, but not having the moral courage to do it.   
21-26. But they cried, saying, Crucify Him, crucify Him! And he said unto them the third time, Why? What evil has He done? I have found no cause of death in Him: I will therefore chastise Him, and let Him go. And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that He might be crucified. And the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed. And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required. And he released unto them him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they had desired. But he delivered Jesus to their will. And as they led Him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the Cross, that he might bear it after Jesus

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #2344 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

CHRISTS DYING WORD FOR HIS CHURCH   
NO. 2344

**A SERMON INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS DAY, JANUARY 21, 1894. DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON. ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 3, 1889.

**It is finished.   
John 19:30.**

IN the original Greek of Johns Gospel there is only one word for this utterance of our Lord. To translate it into English, we have to use three words, but when it was spoken, it was only onean ocean of meaning in a drop of language, a mere drop, for that is all that we can call one word! It is finished. Yet it would need all the other words that ever were spoken, or ever can be spoken, to explain this one word. It is altogether immeasurable! It is highI cannot attain to it. It is deepI cannot fathom it. Finished. I can half imagine the tone in which our Lord uttered this word, with a holy glorying, a sense of relief, the bursting out of a heart that had long been shut up within walls of anguish. Finished. It was a Conquerors cryit was uttered with a loud voice! There is nothing of anguish about it, there is no wailing in it. It is the cry of One who has completed a tremendous labor and is about to dieand before He utters His deathprayer, Father, into Your hands I commend My spirit, He shouts His lifes last hymn in that one word, Finished.

May God the Holy Spirit help me to handle aright this text that is at once so small and yet so great! There are four ways in which I wish to look at it with you. First, I will speak of this dying saying of our Lord to His Glory. Secondly, I will use the text to the Churchs comfort. Thirdly, I will try to handle the subject to every Believers joy. And fourthly, I will seek to show how our Lords Words ought to lead to our own awakening.

I. First, then, I will endeavor to speak of this dying saying of Christ TO HIS GLORY. Let us begin with that.   
Jesus said, It is finished. Let us glory in Him that it is finished. You and I may well do this when we remember how very few things we have finished. We begin many things and, sometimes, we begin well. We commence running like champions who must win the race, but soon we slacken our pace and we fall exhausted on the course. The race commenced is never completed. In fact, I am afraid that we have never finished anything perfectly. You know what we say of some pieces of work, Well, the man has done it, but there is no, finish, about it. No, and you must begin with, finish, and go on with, finish, if you are, at last, able to say broadly as the Savior said without any qualification, It is finished.   
What was it that was finished? His lifework and His atoning Sacrifice on our behalf. He had interposed between our souls and Divine Justice and He had stood in our place to obey and suffer on our behalf. He began this work early in life, even while He was a Child. He persevered in holy obedience 33 years. That obedience cost Him many a pang and groan. Now it is about to cost Him His life and, as He gives away His life to finish the work of obedience to the Father, and of redemption for us, He says, It is finished. It was a wonderful work, even to contemplateonly Infinite Love would have thought of devising such a plan! It was a wonderful work to carry on for so longonly boundless patience would have continued at itand now that it requires the offering of Himself and the yielding up of His earthly life, only a Divine Savior, very God of very God, would or could have consummated it by the surrender of His breath! What a work it was! Yet it was finished while you and I have lots of little things lying about that we have never finished. We have begun to do something for Jesus that would bring Him a little honor and glory, but we have never finished it. We did mean to glorify Christhave not some of you intended, oh, so much? Yet it has never come to anything. But Christs work, which cost Him heart and soul, body and spiritcost Him everythingeven His death on the Cross! He pushed through all that till it was accomplished and He could say, It is finished.   
To whom did our Savior say, It is finished? He said it to all whom it might concern, but it seems to me that He chiefly said it to His Father, for, immediately after, apparently in a lower tone of voice, He said, Father, into Your hands I commend My spirit. Beloved, it is one thing for me to say to you, I have finished my workpossibly, if I were dying, you might say that I had finished my workbut for the Savior to say that to God, to hang in the Presence of Him whose eyes are as a flame of fire, the great Reader and Searcher of all hearts. For Jesus, I say, to look the dread Father in the face and say, as He bowed His head, Father, it is finished; I have finished the work which You gave Me to dooh, who but He could venture to make such a declaration as that? We can find a thousand flaws in our best works! And when we lie dying, we shall still have to lament our shortcomings and excesses. But there is nothing of imperfection about Him who stood as Substitute for us and, unto the Father, Himself, He can say, concerning

all His work, It is finished. Therefore, glorify Him tonight! Oh, glorify Him in your hearts, tonight, that even in the Presence of the Great Judge of all, your Surety and your Substitute is able to claim perfection for all His service!   
Just think also, for a minute or two, now that you have remembered what Jesus finished, and to whom He said that He had finished it, how truly He had finished it. From the beginning to the end of Christs life there is nothing omitted, no single act of service ever left undone! Neither is there any action of His slurred over, or performed in a careless manner. It is finished, refers as much to His Childhood as to His death. The whole of the service that He was to render to God, when He came here in human form, was finished in every single part and portion of it. I take up a piece of a cabinet-makers work and it bears a good appearance. I open the lid and am satisfied with the workmanship. But there is something about the hinge that is not properly finished. Or, perhaps, if I turn it over and look at the bottom of the box, I shall see that there is a piece that has been scratched, or that one part has not been well planed or properly polished.   
But if you examine the Masters work right throughif you begin at Bethlehem and go on to Golgotha and look minutely at every portion of it, the private as well as the public, the silent as well as the spoken part you will find that it is finished, completed, perfected! We may say of it that, among all works, there is none like it! It is a multitude of perfections joined together to make up one absolute perfection! Therefore, let us glorify the name of our blessed Lord. Crown Him! Crown Him, for He has done His work well! Come, you saints, speak much to His honor and in your hearts keep on singing to the praise of Him who did so thoroughly, so perfectly, all the work which His Father gave Him to do!   
In the first place, then, we use our Lords words to His Glory. Much might be said upon such a theme, but time will not permit it.   
II. Secondly, we will use the text TO THE CHURCHS COMFORT.  
I am persuaded that it was so intended to be used, for none of the Words of our Lord on the Cross are addressed to His Church but this one. I cannot believe that when He was dying He left His people, for whom He died, without a word. Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do, is for sinners, not for saints. I thirst, is for Himself, and so is that bitter cry, My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Woman, behold your son! is for Mary. Today shall you be with Me in Paradise, is for the penitent thief. Into Your hands I commend My spirit, is for the Father. Jesus must have had something to say, in the hour of death, for His Church and, surely, this is His dying word for her! He tells her, shouting it in her ear that has become dull and heavy with despair, It is finished. It is finished, O My redeemed one, My bride, My well-beloved for whom I came to lay down My life. It is finished, the work is done! *Loves redeeming work is done.   
Fought the fight, the battle won.*   
Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it. John, in the Revelation, speaks of the Redeemers work as already accomplished and, therefore, He sings, Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. This Truth of God is full of comfort to His people.   
And, first, as it concerns Christ, do you not feel greatly comforted to think that He is no longer to be humiliated? His suffering and shame are finished. I often sing, with sacred exultation and pleasure, those lines of Dr. Watts

*No more the bloody spear!   
The Cross and nails no more, For Hell itself shakes at His name And all the heavens adore.   
There His full glories shine With uncreated rays,*

***And bless His saints and angels eyes   
To everlasting days.***

I also like that expression in another of our hymns   
*Now both the Surety and sinner are free.*   
Not only are they free for whom Christ became a Surety, but He, Himself,   
is forever free from all the obligations and consequences of His Suretyship. Men will never spit in His face again! The Roman soldiers will never  
scourge Him again! Judas, where are you? Behold the Christ sitting upon  
His Great White Throne, the glorious King who was once the Man of Sorrows! Now, Judas, come and betray Him with a kiss! What, man, dare you   
not do it? Come, Pilate, and wash your hands in pretended innocence and   
say, now, that you are guiltless of His blood! Come, you scribes and   
Pharisees, and accuse Him and oh, you Jewish mob and Gentile rabble,  
newly risen from the grave, shout now, Away with Him! Crucify Him! But   
look! They flee from Him! They cry to the mountains and rocks, Fall on   
us and hide us from the face of Him that sits on the Throne! Yet that is   
the face that was more marred than any mansthe face of Him whom   
they once despised and rejected. Are you not glad to think that they cannot despise Him now, that they cannot entreat Him now?   
*Tis pastthat agonizing hour   
Of torture and of shame*   
and Jesus says of it, It is finished.   
We derive further comfort and joy as we think that not only are Christs   
pangs and sufferings finished, but His Fathers will and Word have had a  
perfect completion. Certain things were written that were to be done and   
these are done. Whatever the Father required has been rendered. It is finished. My Father will never say to me, I cannot save you by the death of  
My Son, for I am dissatisfied with His work. Oh, no, Beloved, God is well   
pleased with Christ and with us in Him! There is nothing which was arranged in the eternal mind to be done! No, not a jot or tittleChrist has   
done it all! As His eyes, those eyes that often wept for us, reads down the   
ancient writing, Christ is able to say, I have finished the work which My  
Father gave Me to do. Therefore, be comforted, O My people, for My Father   
is well pleased with Me and well pleased with you in Me!   
I like, sometimes, when I am in prayer, to say to the great Father, Father, look on Your Son. Is He not all loveliness? Are there not in Him unutterable beauties? Do You not delight in Him? If You have looked on me   
and grown sick of me, as well You may, now refresh Yourself by looking  
on Your Well-Beloved. Delight Yourself in Him   
*Him, and then the sinner see,   
Look through Jesus wounds on me.*   
The perfect satisfaction of the Father with Christs work for His people so   
that Christ could say, It is finished, is a ground of solid comfort to His  
Church forevermore!   
Dear Friends, once more, take comfort from this, It is finished, for the  
redemption of Christs Church is perfected! There is not another penny to   
be paid for her full release. There is no mortgage upon Christs inheritance. Those whom He bought with blood are forever clear of all charges,   
paid for to the utmost! There was a handwriting of ordinances against us, but Christ has taken it away, He has nailed it to His Cross. It is finished, finished forever. All those overwhelming debts which would have sunk us to the lowest Hell have been dischargedand they who believe in Christ may appear with boldness even before the Throne of God, itself. It is fin  
ished. What comfort there is in this glorious Truth of God! *Lamb of God! Your death has given   
Pardon, peace, and hope of Heaven!   
It is finished, let us raise   
Songs of thankfulness and praise!*   
And I think that we may say to the Church of God that when Jesus   
said, It is finished, her ultimate triumph was secured. Finished! By that   
one Word He declared that He had broken the head of the old dragon. By  
His death Jesus has routed the hosts of darkness and crushed the rising  
hopes of Hell. We have a stern battle yet to fightnobody can tell what   
may await the Church of God in years to comeit would be idle for us to   
attempt to prophesy. But it looks as if there are to be sterner times and   
darker days than we have ever yet known, but what of that? Our Lord has   
defeated the foe and we have to fight with one who is already vanquished!  
The old serpent has been crushed, his head is bruised, and we have, now,  
to trample on him. We have this sure Word of promise to encourage us,   
The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. Surely, It   
is finished, sounds like the trumpet of victory! Let us have faith to claim   
that victory through the blood of the Lamb! And let every Christian, here  
let the whole Church of God, as one mighty army take comfort from this   
dying Word of the now risen and ever-living SaviorIt is finished. His   
Church may rest perfectly satisfied that His work for her is fully accomplished!   
III. Now, thirdly, I want to use this expression, It is finished, TO   
EVERY BELIEVERS JOY. When our Lord said, It is finished, there was   
something to make every Believer in Him glad. What did that utterance   
mean? You and I have believed in Jesus of Nazareth. We believe Him to be   
the Messiah, sent of God. Now, if you will turn to the Old Testament, you   
will find that the marks of the Messiah are very many and very complicated. And if you will then turn to the life and death of Christ, you will see   
in Him every mark of the Messiah plainly exhibited. Until He had said, It  
is finished, and until He had actually died, there was some doubt that   
there might be some one prophecy unfulfilledbut now that He hangs   
upon the Cross, every mark, every sign and every token of His Messiahship has been fulfilled and He says, It is finished. The life and death   
of Christ and the types of the Old Testament fit each other like hand and   
glove. It would be quite impossible for any person to write the life of a   
man, by way of fiction, and then in another book to write out a series of  
types, personal and sacrificial, and to make the character of the man fit   
all the typeseven if he had permission to make both books, he could not  
do it. If he were allowed to make both the lock and the key, he could not

do it, but here we have the lock made beforehand! In all the Books of the  
Old Testament, from the prophecy in the Garden of Eden right down to   
Malachi, the last of the Prophets, there were certain marks and tokens of  
the Christ. All these were so very singular that it did not appear as if they could all meet in one Person. But they did all meet in Oneevery one of themwhether it concerned some minute point or some prominent characteristic! When the Lord Jesus Christ had ended His life, He could say, It is finished; My life has tallied with all that was said of it from the first Word of prophecy even to the last. Now, that ought greatly to encourage your faith! You are not following cunningly-devised fables, but you are following One who must be the Messiah of God since He so exactly fits all the Prophecies and all the Types that were given before concerning Him! It is finished. Let every Believer be comforted in another respect, that every honor which the Law of God could require has been rendered to it. You and I have broken that Law, as all the race of mankind has broken it! We have tried to thrust God from His Throne. We have dishonored His Law. We have broken His Commandments willfully and wickedly. But there has come One who is, Himself, God, the Law-Giver, and He has taken human Nature, and in that Nature He has kept the Law perfectly! And, inasmuch as the Law had been broken by man, He has in the Nature of man borne the sentence due for all mans transgressions. The Godhead, being linked with the Manhood, gave supreme virtue to all that the Manhood suffered. And Christ, in life and in death, has magnified the Law and made it honorable. And Gods Law at this day is raised to even greater honor than it had before man broke it! The death of the Son of God, the Sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, has vindicated the great moral principle of Gods government and made His Throne to stand out gloriously before the eyes of men and angels forever and ever! If Hell were filled with men, it would not be such a vindication of Divine Justice as when God spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, and made Him to die, the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God! Now let every Believer rejoice in the great fact that, by the death of Christ, the Law of God is abundantly honored! You can be saved without impugning the holiness of God! You are saved without putting any stain upon the Divine statute-book! The Law is kept and mercy triumphs, too.   
And, Beloved, here is included, of necessity, another comforting Truth. Christ might well say, It is finished, for every solace conscience can need is now given. When your conscience is disturbed and troubled, if it knows that God is perfectly honored and His Law vindicated, then it becomes easy. Men are always starting some new theory of the Atonement and one has said, lately, that the Atonement was simply meant as an easement to the conscience of men. It is not so, my Brothers and Sistersthere would be no easing of the conscience by anything that was meant for that, alone. Conscience can only be satisfied if God is satisfied! Until I see how the Law is vindicated, my troubled conscience can never find rest. Dear Heart, are your eyes red with weeping? Look to Him who hangs on the tree! Is your heart heavy, even to despair? Look to Him who hangs on the tree and believe in Him! Take Him to be your souls atoning Lamb, suffering in your place. Accept Him as your Representative, dying your death that you may live His life, bearing your sin that you may be made the righteousness of God in Him! This is the best quietus in the world for every fear that conscience can raiselet every Believer know that it is so.   
Once more, there is joy to every Believer when he remembers that, as Christ said, It is finished, every guarantee was given of the eternal salvation of all the redeemed. It appears to me that if Christ finished the work for us, He will finish the work in us. If He has undertaken so supreme a labor as the redemption of our souls by blood and that is finished, then the great, but yet minor labor of renewing our natures and transforming us even unto perfection, shall be finished, too! If, when we were sinners, Christ loved us so as to die for us, now that He has redeemed us, and has already reconciled us to Himself, and made us His friends and His disciples, will He not finish the work that is necessary to make us fit to stand among the golden lamps of Heaven and to sing His praises in the country  
where nothing that defiles can ever enter?   
*The work which His goodness began,   
The arm of His strength will complete!   
His promise is yes and Amen,   
And never was forfeited yet!   
Things future, nor things that are now,   
Not all things below nor above,   
Can make Him His purpose forego,   
Or sever my soul from His love!*   
I believe it, my Brothers and Sisters. He who has said, It is finished, will   
never leave anything undone! It shall never be said of Him, This Man began, but was not able to finish. If He has bought me with His blood and   
called me by His Grace, and I am resting on His promise and power, I   
shall be with Him where He is, and I shall behold His Glory, as surely as   
He is Christ the Lord and I believe in Him! What comfort this Truth of God   
brings to every child of God!   
Are there any of you, here, who are trying to do something to make a   
righteousness of your own? How dare you attempt such a work when Jesus says, It is finished! Are you trying to put a few of your own merits   
together, a few odds and ends, fig leaves and filthy rags of your own righteousness? Jesus says, It is finished. Why do you want to add anything  
of your own to what He has completed? Do you say that you are not fit to   
be saved? What? Have you to bring some of your fitness to eke out  
Christs work? Oh, you say, I hope to come to Christ one of these days  
when I get better. What? What? What? What? Are you to make yourself  
better and then is Christ to do the rest of the work? You remind me of the   
railways to our country towns! You know that, often, the station is half-amile or a mile out of the town, so that you cannot get to the station without having an omnibus to take you there. But my Lord Jesus Christ   
comes right to the town of Mansoul! His railway runs close to your feet  
and there is the carriage door wide openstep in! You have not even to go   
over a bridge, or under a subwaythere stands the carriage just before  
you. This royal railroad carries souls all the way from Hells dark door,   
where they lie in sin, up to Heavens great gate of pearl where they dwell  
in perfect righteousness forever! Cast yourself on Christ! Take Him to be  
everything you need, for He says of the whole work of salvation, It is finished.   
I recollect the saying of a Scotchwoman who had applied to be admitted to the communion of the Church. Being thought to be very ignorant and little instructed in the things of God, she was put back by the elders. The minister also had seen her and thought that, at least for a while, she should wait. I wish I could speak Scotch, so as to give you her answer, but I am afraid that I would make a mistake if I tried it. It is a fine language, doubtless, for those who can speak it. She said something like this, Aweel, Sir; aweel, Sir, but I ken ae thing. As the lintbell opens to the sun, so my heart opens to the name of Jesus. You have, perhaps, seen the flax flower shut itself up when the sun has gone and, if so, you know that whenever the sun has come back, the flower opens itself at once. So, said the poor woman, I know one thing, that as the flower opens to the sun, so my heart opens to the name of Jesus. Do you know that, Friends? Do you know that one thing? Then I do not care if you do not know much else! If that one thing is known by you, and if it is really so, you may be far from perfect in your own estimation, but you are a saved soul!   
One said to me, when she came to join the Church, and I asked her whether she was perfect, Perfect? Oh, dear no, Sir! I wish that I could be. Ah, yes! I replied, that would just please you, would it not? Yes, it would, indeed, she answered. Well, then, I said, that shows that your heart is perfect and that you love perfect things; you are pining after perfectionthere is a something in you, an, I in you, that sins not, but that seeks after that which is holy. And yet you do that which you would not, and you groan because you do, and the Apostle is like you when he says, It is no more I, the real I, that do it, but sin that dwells in me. May the Lord put that I into many of you, tonight, that I which will hate sin, that I which will find its Heaven in being perfectly free from sin, that I which will delight itself in the Almighty, that I which will sun itself in the smile of Christ, that I which will strike down every evil within as soon as ever it shows its head! So will you sing that familiar prayer of Topladys   
that we have often sung   
**Let the water and the blood   
From Your riven side which flowed,   
Be of sin the double cure,   
Cleanse me from its guilt and power!**   
IV. I close by saying, in the fourth place, that we shall use this text, It  
is finished, TO OUR OWN AWAKENING.   
Somebody once wickedly said, Well, if Christ has finished it, there is   
nothing for me to do, now, but to fold my hands and go to sleep. That is   
the speech of a devil, not of a Christian! There is no Grace in the heart   
when the mouth can talk like that. On the contrary, the true child of God   
says, Has Christ finished His work for me? Then tell me what work I can  
do for Him! You remember the two questions of Saul of Tarsus. The first   
enquiry, after He had been struck down, was, Who are You, Lord? And   
the next was, Lord, what will You have me to do? If Christ has finished   
the work for you which you could not do, now go and finish the work for   
Him which you are privileged and permitted to do. Seek to *Rescue the perishing,   
Care for the dying,   
Snatch them in pity from sin and the grave. Weep over the erring one,   
Lift up the fallen,   
Tell them of Jesus, the Mighty to save.*   
My inference from this saying of Christ, It is finished, is thisHas He finished His work for me? Then I must get to work for Him and

I must persevere until I finish my work, toonot to save myself, for that is all done but because I am saved! Now I must work for Him with all my might and if there comes discouragements, if there comes sufferings, if there comes a sense of weakness and exhaustion, yet let me not give way to it, but, inasmuch as He pressed on till He could say, It is finished, let me press on till I, too, shall be able to say, I have finished the work which You gave me to do. You know how men who go fishing look out for the fish. I have heard of a man going to Keston Ponds on Saturday to fish and staying all day Sunday, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday! There was another man fishing there and the other man had only been there two days. He said, I have been here two days and I have only had one bite. Why, replied the other, I have been here ever since last Saturday and I have not had a bite yet! But I mean to keep on. Well, answered the other, I cannot keep on without catching something. Oh! said number one, but I have such a longing to catch some fish that I shall stay here till I do. I believe that fellow would ultimately catch some fish if there were any to be caught! He is the kind of fisherman to do it and we need to have men who feel that they must win souls for Christand that they will persevere till they do! It must be so with us, Brothers and Sisterswe cannot let men go down to Hell if there is any way of saving them!   
The next inference is that we can finish our work, for Christ finished His. You can put a lot of finish into your work and you can hold on to the end and complete the work by Divine Grace! And that Grace is waiting for you, that Grace is promised to you. Seek it, find it, get it! Do not act as some do, ah, even some who are before me now! They served God, once, and then they ran away from Him. They have come backGod bless them and help them to be more useful! But future earnest service will never make up for that sad gap in their earlier career. It is best to keep on, and on, and on, from the commencement to the close. May the Lord help us to persevere to the end, till we can truly say of our lifework, It is finished! One word of caution I must give you. Let us not think that our work is finished till we die. Well, says one, I was just going to say of my work, It is finished. Were you? Were you? I remember that when John Newton wrote a book about Grace in the blade, and Grace in the ear, and Grace in the full corn in the ear, a very talkative body said to him, I have been reading your valuable book, Mr. Newton. It is a splendid work and when I came to that part, The full corn in the ear, I thought how wonderfully you had described me. Oh, replied Mr. Newton, but you could not have read the book rightly, for it is one of the marks of the full corn in the ear that it hangs its head very low. So it is and when a man, in a careless, boastful spirit, says of his work, It is finished, I am inclined to ask, Brother, was it ever begun? If your work for Christ is finished, I should think that you never realized what it ought to be. As long as there is breath in our bodies, let us serve Christ! As long as we can think, as long as we can speak, as long as we can work, let us serve Him! Let us even serve Him with our last gasp and, if it is possible, let us try to set some work going that will glorify Him when we are dead and gone! Let us scatter some seed that may spring up when we are sleeping beneath the hillock in the cemetery. Ah, Beloved, we shall never have finished our work for Christ until we bow our heads and give up the ghost!   
The oldest friend here has a little something to do for the Master. Someone said to me, the other day, I cannot think why old Mrs. So-andSo is sparedshe is quite a burden to her friends. Ah, I replied, she has something yet to do for her Lord, she has another word to speak for Him. Sister, look up your work and get it done! And you, Brother, see what remains of your lifework yet incomplete. Wind off the ends, get all the little corners finished. Who knows how long it may be before you and I may have to give in our account? Some are called away very suddenly they are apparently in good health one dayand they are gone the next! I should not like to leave a half-finished life behind me. The Lord Jesus Christ said, It is finished, and your heart should say, Lord, and I will finish, toonot to mix my work with Yours, but because You have finished Yours, I will, by Your Grace, finish mine.   
Now may the Lord give us the joy of His Presence at His Table! May the bread and wine speak to you much better than I can! May every heir of Heaven see Christ, tonight, and rejoice in His finished work, for His dear names sake! Amen.

EXPOSITIONS BY C. H. SPURGEON: **PSALM 121. AND 122.**

Psalm 121:1. I will lift up my eyes unto the hills, from where comes my help. No help comes from anywhere else but from the eternal hills. Let us lift up our eyes, therefore, hopefully expecting help from the hillsit is on the roadit comes. The Psalmist, with the eye of faith, could see it coming, so he watched its approach.

2. My help comes from the LORD, who made Heaven and earth. He would sooner unmake them than desert His people. He that made Heaven and earth could certainly find shelter for us either in Heaven or in earth. He cannot, He will not leave us, He will make room for us in Heaven when there is no room for us here. What a blessed thing it is to look right away from the creature to the Creator! The creature may fail you, but the Creator is an ever-springing well of all-sufficient Grace.

3. He will not suffer your foot to be moved. He will not endure it, He will not suffer it. Many would like to trip you up, but He will not allow itHe loves you too well.

3. He that keeps you will not slumber. You may slumber, for you are frail, but He is a Watchman to whose eyes sleep never comes. You are always safe. Alexander went to sleep, he said, because Parmenio watched. And you may take the sleep of the beloved because Jehovah watches over you.

4. Behold, He that keeps Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. Behold it, that is, mark itput a nota bene at the side of it, take cognizance of this as a great and sure Truth of God! Jacob went to sleep with a stone for his pillow, but He that kept him did not sleep. He came to him in the night watches and revealed to him His Covenant.

5. The Lord is your keeper: the LORD is your shade upon your right hand. Oh, what a Keeper we have! Can you not trust Him? Will you not be at peace in your mind if it is, indeed, true that Jehovah keeps you and is your Guard in the hour of danger?

6. The sun shall not smite you by day, nor the moon by night. Then, when can you get hurt? If you are protected both day and night, these make up all the time! God does not make a new sun for His people, the sun would smite us as well as others, but He takes the sting out of the suns excessive brightness. And we have the same sickly moon as others have, with the same influences over us, but God takes care that the moonbeams do not harm His people. Neither the sun of prosperity nor the night of adversityneither the light of Truth of God nor even the dimness of mystery shall injure one of the chosen seed.

7. The LORD shall preserve you from all evil: He shall preserve your soul. That is the soul of our preservationif the life, the soul, is kept, then are we altogether kept.

8. The LORD shall preserve your going out and your coming inYour early days of youth, when you are going out into lifeand your coming in when the older days creep over you and you are coming into God and Heaven. Your going out into business and your coming in to private devotion.

8. From this time forth, and even forevermore. Let us, therefore, feel restful at this time, and even forevermore, having the Lord for our Keeper and Preserver.

Psalm 122:1. I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD. I was glad for their sake, glad to think they were so willing to go. I was glad, also, for my own sake, for I was glad to go, too.

2. Our feet shall stand within your gates, O Jerusalem. Happy men who were citizens of such a city! Happy worshippers coming together to the place whose very name signifies the vision of peace, the metropolis of God, type of the New Jerusalem which is from above!

3. Jerusalem is built as a city that is compact together. Not a conglomeration of huts, but built as a city with substantial structures. And not a straggling city, like some we read of, that have been called, cities of magnificent distancesbut it was compact together. Happy is the Church that is at peaceblessed are the people who are joined together by a gracious brotherly love.

4. Where the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the LORD. The Church is the point of meetingWhere the tribes go up. The Church is the place of testimonyand saints go to hear testimony and to bear it. I wish there was more of this bearing testimony among Christian people and that they looked upon it as a sacred duty to tell others what God has told them. To give thanks unto the name of the Lordthat is another part of true worshippraise, joyful thanksgiving should be one of the saints continual avocations. Let us not forget it at this time. Some are here who have been sicklet them give thanks unto the name of the Lord. Some are here who are still weak, yet able to come up with Gods peoplelet us give thanks unto the name of the Lord. We have all some special mercy, some choice favor for which to praise His name. Then let us all give thanks unto the name of the Lord!

5. For there are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David. If any of the people had been wronged by the petty magistrates, they went up to Jerusalem and made their appeal to the king. Here may we bring our suit before God and order our case before Him, for He is true and just, and nothing shall go amiss that is left with Him.

6. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem. Pray for it now, breathe a silent prayer to God.   
6. They shall prosper that love You. God loves those who love His Church and love His causeand He rewards them with prosperity, as much of earthly prosperity as they can bear, and prosperity to their souls beyond measure.  
7. Peace be within your walls, and prosperity within your palace. The Psalmist bade us pray and now he, himself, prays. He who bids others do a thing should be prepared to set the example.   
8. For my brethren and companions sakes, I will now pray, Peace be within you. Let us say it, for the sake of beloved ones in Heaven, and dear ones on earth who are on the way there, Peace be within you.   
9. Because of the house of the LORD our God I will seek your good. Not only pray for it, but work for it, give for it, live for it! I will seek your good! God bless to us these two Psalms and put us all in a right state of heart tonight! Amen.

HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK122 (SONG 1), 944, 300.  
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CHRISTS FINISHED WORK   
NO. 378

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON THURSDAY EVENING, APRIL 4, 1861, BY THE REV. OCTAVIUS WINSLOW, D.D.,**  
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**It is finished!   
John 19:30.**

THERE never existed but one Being who in Truth could affirm of His workIt is finished! Incompleteness and defect trace the most vast, elaborate and accomplished products of human genius and power. That brilliant volume of history at a period of thrilling interest falls from the death-struck hand of its author, fragmentary and incomplete. That magnificent work of art fades before the glazed eye of the painter and the sculptor at a moment when the pencil is pointed and the chisel upraised to impart the last and perfecting touch. That splendid edifice, the conception of a master mind, with all its architectural skill and beauty is but a monument of human forethought and power, blinded and cramped in its range.

Thus, contemplate mans noblest achievementsthe intellectual and the physicalthe touch of human imperfection and incompleteness mars and traces all. The great truth, then, stands out like a constellation flaming in its own solitary orbit, that there never was but one man who could gaze with complacency upon His work and, with His expiring breath, exclaim, It is finished!

That man was the God-Man, Mediator. He, as the Son and yet the Servant of the Father, relinquished His Throne for a Cross that He might accomplish the redemption. Work out the salvation of His Churchthe people given to Him of Godand who, on the eve of that redemption and with all the certainty of an actual atonement, could thus breathe His intercessory petition to Heaven, I have finished the work which You gave Me to do.

We summon you this evening around the Cross of Calvary to listen to the words now breathing from the quivering lips of our dying LordIt is finished! And understand that believing as I do most firmly and solemnly that no Scriptural doctrine or no revealed Truth will ever be able to crush the infidelity of the present daywe meet to explode the many errors and heresiesfearful and fatal which are inseparable from this age of licentious thought, unchecked utterance and freedom of opinion. We summon you this evening to proclaim the one remedythe simple, full, unreserved exhibition of the ATONEMENT, the SACRIFICIAL and FINISHED WORK of the Lord Jesus Christ! I am most anxious and earnest on this important and impressive occasion to bend upon it your especial, devout and solemn attention.

Oh, that our modern theological controversialiststhe men who are desirous of contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saintswho are putting on their armor and furbishing their weapons for the approaching conflict? Oh that they might learn the secret of their might wherein their great strength lies! It is not in accumulating around the Cross the stores of ancient and modern love. It is not in a strife of arms, dazzling and distinguished by profound intellectualism, learning and eloquencebut in a simple, bold, uncompromising presentation of the Atoning and Finished Sacrifice of Christ! The lifting up, in its naked simplicity and solitary, unapproachable grandeur of the Cross of the Incarnate God, the instrument of the sinners salvation, the foundation of the believers hope, the symbol of pardon, reconciliation and hope to the soul.

In a word, the grand weapon by which error shall bow to Truth and sin give place to righteousness. The weapon by which the kingdoms of this world long in rebellion against God will be crushed, enthralled and shall yield to Messiahs specter. They shall submit to the undisputed supremacy and kind reign of Jesus.

I ask you why the large amount of corroding doubts, gloomy fears and painful forebodings which so essentially and so widely impede the religious progress of the Lords people? What is invading and beclouding the spiritual joy and hope of the Lords people? I believe it is mainly traceable to imperfect, crude and dim views and apprehensions of Christs complete work. False notions of the Saviors finished salvation which He has wrought for His Church. Not distinctly seeing that all is donethe great debt paid, the mighty bond cancelled, the full atonement made and sin all and freely forgiven.

I am still the more desirous of placing this great, this cardinal and precious Truth prominently and broadly, as the Lord the Spirit shall help me, before the present assembly, trusting and believing that, in answer to prayer, there will be tonight the presence and power of the Holy Spirit descending, invisible and noiseless, upon your souls, sealing upon your hearts this grand, this essential, this saving Truththe FINISHED WORK OF CHRIST. It is finished.

Let us consider these memorable words   
I. As THE CRY OF A SUFFERER. And what a Sufferer! Contemplate for a moment the Divine dignity of the Sufferer. Here was no ordinary Sufferer, my Brethren. We approach the scene of the crucifixion and we behold three individuals alike suspended upon three different crosses, two on either side and one in the center. They all sufferall languishall die. But the sufferings and death of One is attended by circumstances so strange and events so unparalleled, by prodigies so miraculous and sublime, that we are led to exclaim in wondering awe, Who is this?

And the voice of prophecy replies, This is He of whom I spoke Awake, O sword, against My shepherd and against the Man that is My Fellow, says the Lord of Hostssmite the Shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered. My dear Hearers, if throughout the life of Christ I could fasten upon no other event confirming the doctrine of the Godhead of Christ, I would be willing and satisfied to predicate my argument in vindication of His essential dignity upon the closing scene of the Crossthe last moments of His parting life. If His life were destitute of fact, His death would alone supply the evidence that He who died upon Calvary was none other than the Son of God!

Hold fast the doctrine of Christs essential Deity, for upon it, as upon a rock, reposes the entire and stupendous fabric of the ATONEMENT. The sufferings of Christ were expiatory and vicarious. You are aware that by many this fact is denied. The only solution of the mystery of Christs death offered by the school to which I refer, is that which presents our Lord as a model of patience and resignation in sufferinga saint in virtuea hero in endurance. And thus, the Cross of Christ is deprived of its magnificence and robbed of its glory.

But our Lord suffered as an expiatory offering, as a vicarious victim. All suffering is, in a sense, vicariousnot in the fullest meaning of the term, as conveying the idea of substitution, but simply and only in the sense that all suffering is the effect and consequence of sin. The man who violates the laws of his physical naturewho puts the empoisoned cup of intemperance to his lips to steal away his brains. Who wastes his substance in riotous living. Who herds among the unclean and sacrifices to his baser passions health, property, charactershall suffer as a consequence of his lawlessness, folly and sin. He cannot trample upon the laws of his physical and mental constitution with impunityhe shall suffer.

These sufferings shall not expiate his transgression, but they shall follow in its wake a sure and dire consequence. Our Lords sufferings were also the result and consequence of sinsin not His own, but His peoples. And in the fullest and most emphatic meaning of the terms, were expiatory and vicarioussufferings, not only the fruit of sin, but more than that, suffering expiatory of sin sufferings, substitutionary and vicarious, sacrificial and atoning. There are theologians who dispute this statement, who deny this doctrine. But I challenge them to explain these sufferings of our Lord satisfactorily upon any other hypothesis than this.

I bring them back to the idea that all human suffering is the effect of sinour Lord suffered the death of the Cross. Was not that death in some way connected with sin? Most assuredly! Had there been no sin there had been no suffering. This granted, we advance a step further and claim for that death of Christ, a substitutionary character, an atoning naturea sin-atoning result. And so the revealed Truth stands out in all its magnitude and glory. And this is the only clue to the mysteryHe was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities. Who, His own self, bore our sins in His own body on the tree. Christ also has loved us and has given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet smelling savor. The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleans us from all sin.

Behold the Almighty Sufferer! There hung the Son of God, bearing the sin and enduring the curse of His Churchputting away the one and exhausting entirely the otherby the sacrifice of Himself. To all the demands of Gods moral government, to all the claims of Law and justice, Jesus now on behalf of the people for whom He stood as Surety, gave a full, honorable and accepted satisfaction. Come, poor sin-burdened, heart-broken penitent and sit beneath the shadow of this tree of life and its bending fruit of pardon, peace, joy and hope shall be sweet to your believing taste.

But the sufferings of Christ were unparalleled and intense. Never since the universe was formed was there such a Sufferer as Jesus. He was the Prince of Sufferers. No sorrow ever broke the heart like that which rent His in two. Truly could He challenge the universe of sufferers and ask, Is it nothing to you, all you that pass by? Behold and see if there is any sorrow like unto My sorrow. No, Lord! Your sufferings had no parallel, no sorrows were ever like unto Yours! I do not go with the Greek Church, as you know. I differ from it both ecclesiastically and doctrinally. But I admire and love what is good, find it where I may. And I perfectly assent to the remark of my beloved Brother, made in the vestry before the service, That theres some good in all Christian communions and creeds and that it is our wisdom to accept what is good and leave what is evil.

Now, there is a sublime sentence in the liturgy of the Greek Church, which I have often pondered with emotionYour unknown agonies. Yes! the agonies of our sin-suffering, sin-atoning Lord were unknown. They were in their intensity known only to His own holy soul. No angel could ever fathom their depth, no finite mind shall ever be able to gauge the breadth, to scale the height, to conceive even of the agony of His soul when He exclaimed, My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? I can bear the abandonment of My disciplesone has denied Me, another has betrayed Me, all have forsaken Mebut O My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?

We may form some idea of their character, else how can we with Paul have fellowship with Him in his sufferings? First, there was the physical elementour blessed Lord suffered bodily. Men of science and of sanctified intellect have endeavored to analyze and describe the physical agonies which Christ endured, when His heart was broken with grief. But physiology in its noblest triumphs has never been able fully to portray what the Savior endured when, like the rending rocks around His Cross

*That heart was torn asunder,   
Never once defiled by sin.*

Then there was mental agony. The mental grief He endured, who can conceive? His mind was a human mind and all the more sensitive because it was a sinless mind. The human sympathy of Christ infinitely transcends the most exquisite sympathy that glows in our bosom just because it was the sympathy of a pure and sinless humanity. There is selfishness in our sympathy. We love to sympathize with the sufferer because we love the sufferer and we are paying a homage to our love to the creature when we take the hand and dry the tear and speak the words of consolation. But the sympathy of Christ was all the more exquisite and all the more tender and all the more human because it was all the more free from sin.

The perfect sinlessness of Christs sympathy did not in the slightest degree affect the perfect humanity of His sympathy. He was more human than you and I are, because His humanity was entirely free from sin. We are not all human. We possess a part of a demoniacal nature. Sin has impaired all those glorious virtues and excellencies which our humanity in its primitive condition possessed and ours is a distorted, paralyzed, altered humanity. Let your humanity be restored to its original righteousness, to its primitive puritylet it be elevated, renewed, sanctified, ennobled, as your humanity will be if you are believers in Christ and as you gradually recede from sin you will approach the perfect. As sin is eliminated and purged away from your nature, your crushed, your bruised, your bowed humanity will rise in its original purity and majesty and glory and you will be all the more human because you approach all the more to the purity of the Divine.

But the soul-suffering of our Lord was more intense than all. This was inconceivable, indescribable. Listen to the cry in Gethsemane, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. The billows of Gods wrath began now to penetrate His nature, the storm to break in upon His soul. Oh, that was a terrible moment! It was only now that He began to succumb to the woe. Before this He had maintained a comparatively calm and uncomplaining demeanor. The tempest until now was without. When a vessel, coursing its way over the ocean, is arrested by a stormthe fierce winds blowing, the ocean broken into billows, seething, raging, roaringas long as his gallant boat plows its way and keeps its course, the mariner treads its deck undaunted by fear, confident in the strength and firmness of his vessel to outride and outlive the tempest.

But let the cry be heard, a leak! A leak! A plank is sprung, the waters are coming in! And in a moment, despair enters and enthrones itself upon the brow and the hearts of the stern sons of the sea die within them. Beloved, that was the moment of our Lords deep, unknown agony, when He could exclaim, Save Me, O God, for the waters are come into My soul. I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing. I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow Me. All Your waves and Your billows are gone over Me!

All this, O child of God, was for your soul! It pleased the Lord to crucify Him and put Him to grief for you. By His stripes you are healed. Your healing flows from His wounds, your joy from His sorrow, your glory from His abasement, your riches from His poverty. Your hope beams through the darkness which enshrouds His holy soul. Oh, was ever love like Christs love? In what else can we resolve all this mystery of unknown agonyof intense, unparalleled suffering, but in the love of Christ which passes knowledge. Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself for it. O mystery of suffering! O deeper mystery of love!

But these sufferings now are over. Hear him cryIt is finished! Have you ever stood by the dying bed of one you have lovedand have marked the throb, the throe of agony, the maddening convulsion, the terrible shaking of the earthly tabernacle? Have you watched as pin after pin and beam after beam has fallen a shattered wreckand as you caught the last breath that floated from the pale, quivering lip and closed those eyes in deathhas not your heart in the depth of its grief felt something like a thrill of joy and gladness that the sufferings of the loved one now were over? Rejoice thenrejoice that the sufferings of Jesus are finished. That the storm and the tempest will no more beat around Him.

The sun of Gods love shall no more darken over Him for He took the cup, pressed it to His lips, exhausted the last bitter drop and then shouted out in words that made Heaven reverberate with its melody and Hell to ring with its mightiness, It is finished! Child of sorrow, child of suffering, rejoice that the sufferings of your Lord are over. Rejoice that in all the suffering and all the trial and all the sorrow through which He leads you Home to Himself. He took your cup of grief, your cup of the curse, pressed it to His lips, drank it to its dregs, then filled it with His sweet, pardoning, sympathizing love and gave it back for you to drink and to drink forever.

II. Secondly and more briefly, It is finished is not only the cry of a Sufferer, it is THE LANGUAGE OF A SAVIOR.   
Our Lords mission to our world was simply and singularly to save. He came for no other object than to save man, to give His life a ransom for many, to provide, to execute an expedient devised in the Eternal Council and purpose and love of the Triune God. He came to secure the full redemption of His Churchan expedient that should harmonize and unite all the moral attributes and perfections of His being and then lower from the battlement of Heaven to sins fathomless depths the golden chain of mercy, pardoning mercy, to which, if in faith you take hold, it will lift you up to the Throne from where it came.   
It is the fashion of the present day to ignore the Saviorship of Jesus. His Person, His life and His death are represented in any and every form except to acknowledge that He died on the Cross in the character of a Savior and that faith in the merits of His obedience and love are the efficacy of His death and constitute the only basis on which a lost sinner can build his hope of Heaven. I ask you, my beloved Hearers, what is the grand object of modern heresy but to undermine the Cross of Christ, to ignore the sacrifice of His death, to blot out the glorious atonement and to reduce the splendid paraphernalia of Calvary with all its moral and sublime results, to a mere nonentity? His death, His obedience was the obedience of the Law-maker in the form of the Law-fulfiller to a Law which man had broken and violated. That perfect and complete obedience of that broken Law is the righteousness that justifies the ungodly and places him that believes spotless before God.   
Hold fast that Truththe imputed righteousness of the Lordour righteousness worked out and complete in His perfect obedience to the precepts of a broken Law. His death on Calvary was an atonement to Divine justice. The shedding of His blood was for the remission of mans sins. The paying out of His soul to death was the perfect honor given to the moral government of Jehovah. He went out of the streets of Jerusalem staggering beneath the beam on which He was to be impaled. With lowly footsteps He ascended that sacred hill Calvary. And there, like a lamb led to the slaughter, He gave Himself up uncomplainingly and unreservedly into the hands of His executioners. They stretched Him on that tree, transfixed His limbs to those beams, lifted it and let it fall into the place excavated for it to stand. And there the Son of God poured out His holy soul unto death! Why? Why? Why?   
Oh, my Brethren, it was to harmonize justice and mercy, holiness and Truth, to blend in one vast bow of hope all these Divine attributes, that they might span the moral Heaven and encircle our lost humanity! It was then He gave up His soul unto death and offered up that sacrifice for sin, which man, in his madness, folly and infidelity, dares in this our day to ignore and to deny.

Yes, it is the language of a Savior. Those words speak hope to the hopeless, pardon to the guilty, acceptance to the lost. They tell you, O poor sin-smitten, burdened sinner that there is hope! There is pardon even for you. He has finished all that Justice askedthat the Law demanded. He has finished the mission His Father had confided to His hands. He has finished the grand oblation that has to restore to Gods moral government the glory it had lost in mans apostasy. He has finished all the ancient types, predictions and shadows. He tore the veil in two and opened the bright pathway for the sinner to retrace his steps back to Paradise, back to God and once more feel the warm embrace of his Fathers forgiving love. And yet this is the work, this is the atonement, this is the sacrifice which modern essayists dare with scorn and unbelief to trample beneath their feet.   
Oh, it is the language of a Savior which bids you come. Poor brokenhearted Sinner, with all your burden of sinbelieve and be saved! It bids you come without money and without price. It tells you the blood He poured from His broken heart can wash out and cancel the deepest stain that is on your soul. It tells you there is room in that bosom which He laid bare to the lightening-stroke of Gods wrath. It tells you dry your tears, embrace the Cross, trust in the finished work of Christfling to the heavens all your own righteousnessenwrap up by faith in the righteousness of Christ and all the choirs of Heaven shall tune their harps of gold and make the heavens reverberate with their songs of praise over your submission in faith to the atonement of the Son of God.  
III. Lastly and only one word or two on thisit is THE SHOUT OF A CONQUEROR.   
Christ was a man of war, our glorious Joshua was He. He had come to gird on the sword, to invest Himself with the armor and to go out and battle with Satan, with sin and with Hell. It was a terrible conflict, it was a fearful battle. He girded Himself for the mighty and the solemn work and He completed it, He finished it. He met his foes on the battlefield, confronted all His enemies and on the Cross He destroyedHe divested death of its sting, triumphed over Satan, the grave and Hell. And as He expired, He exclaimed, It is finished! Oh what a sublime conflict was that, my Brethren, when the Captain of our salvation met singlehandedly and overcame the powers of darkness, fought the fight, won the victory and died, saying It is finished!   
With two or three brief inferences from the subject I will close.   
1. What a spring of comfort flows from it to the true Believer amid his innumerable failures, flaws and imperfections. What service do you perform, what duty do you discharge of which you can say, It is finished? Alas, not one. Your service is imperfect, your obedience is incomplete, your love is fluctuatingyes, upon it all are the visible marks of human defilement and defect. But here is the work which God most delights in, finished. You are complete in Him. Turn, then, your eye of faith out of yourself and off of all your own doings and deal more immediately, closely and obediently with the finished work of Immanuel.   
Come away from your fickle love, from your weak faith, from your little fruitfulness, from your uneven walk, from all your shortcomings and imperfections and let your eye of faith repose where Gods eye of complacent love reposeson the finished work of Jesus. God beholds you only in Christit is not upon you He looks, but on His Beloved Son and upon you in Him, wherein He has made us accepted in the Beloved.  
2. If Christs atoning work is finished, what folly and what sin to attempt to supplement it! What vast numbers are doing this! Away with your tears, your confessions, your duties, your charities, even your repentance and faith, if these things dare to take their place side by side with the finished work of Christ. See that you attempt to add nothing to it. In a similar strain of exhortation let me   
3. Warn you of the utter worthlessness and fallacy of all grounds of faith and of all human hope that comes in conflict with the finished work of Christ. My dear Hearers, you have nothing to do in the great matter of your salvation but to accept in faith the one offering made once for all by God manifest in your nature. Cast your deadly doings at the foot of the Cross. Cease from your own works. Cease from your own righteousness. Cease from resting in your confessions, in your tears, in your prayers, in your going to your Church or your Chapel. Oh, cease from all this and in simple faith accepttake hold ofthe Divine work of the Lord Jesus Christ!   
God wants no more sacrifices. God asks no other atonement. God looks for nothing on your part to propitiate His regard, or present you with acceptance. He is satisfied with the Divine work of Christwith His obedienceand with His blood. And if tonight, sin-burdened and distressed one, you will abjure all your own doings and rest in the finished work of Christthe one eternal redemption He has offeredGod will expand His arms of love and embrace you, take you into a covenant, filial relation to Himself. And from that moment your path to eternity will be like the sun, growing brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. All is done! Christ has done all. Christ has suffered allall He asks of you is in faith to receive His glorious Sacrifices. Believe in Him and be saved!  
4. Beware of the errors of the day, the tendency of which is to veil the light and glory of Christs finished work and to mislead, misguide and misdirect souls on their way to the Judgment Seat. The fact is too patent to ignore and it would be affectation to veil itthat there exists at the present moment a theological school in our landwhich by the press is endeavoring to circulate doctrines and statements which go to undermine the Divine inspiration and authority of the Bible and to cast the pall of darkness and of death over the splendors of the Cross.   
I warn you of these terrorists and against their errors. Perfidious men! False to your Master and recreant to His Truth. You may attempt to veil the luster of the Cross, you may sepulcher incarnate Truth, roll upon it your stone, seal it and set your watch. Truth shall leap from the dark chamber in which you attempt to entomb it and shall walk this earth againa thing of life, light and beauty. Rejoice, O Christian, that all these attempts to subvert the Truth as it is in Jesus, God will laugh to scorn and finally His Gospel shall fully and universally prevail *Truth crushed to earth, shall rise again! The eternal years of God are hers;   
But error wounded writhes in pain,   
And dies amid her worshippers.*   
And now, from my heart, I ask the blessing of the Triune God upon my beloved Brother, the grand substance of whose ministry I believe from my very soul is to exalt the finished work of Jesus. And I pray that this noble edifice, reared in the name and consecrated to the glory of the Triune God, may for many years echo and re-echo with his voice of melody and of power in expounding to you the glorious doctrines and precepts of Christs one finished atonement. And God grant that none of you may be found rejecting to your everlasting woe the doctrine of the Cross.   
You may attempt to laugh it to scorn. You may make your excuses for its rejection. But the hour is coming, yes, the hour is near, when death confronting youthe veil falling upon all earthly scenes, rising upon all eternal realitiesyou will discover the unbelief and contumely that could trifle with the atonement, dispute it in life and in health, fail you in your solemn hour and you will find yourself on the brink of eternity, without a plank, without a life-boat, without a star of hope to cheer the dark spirits travel to the bar of God.   
Reject itdeny it at your peril. Your blood be upon your own heads. And may God grant in His grace that before long you who have believed in Him, confessed Him and loved Him here on earth, may cluster around His Throne, gaze upon His unclouded face, unite in the anthem of the blessed and from those lips which once uttered that glorious sentence It is finished, receive the Well done, good and faithful servant, and by His grace hear with joy, Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundations of the world.   
And to God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, we will all unite in one eternal ascription of praise. Amen.

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IT IS FINISHED!   
NO. 421

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON SUNDAY MORNING, DECEMBER 1, 1861, BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, He said, It is finished: and He bowed His head and gave up the ghost.   
John 19:30.**

MY Brethren, I would have you attentively observe the singular clearness, power and quickness of the Saviors mind in the last agonies of death. When pains and groans attend the last hour they frequently have the effect of discomposing the mind so that it is not possible for the dying man to collect his thoughts, or having collected them, to utter them so that they can be understood by others. In no case could we expect a remarkable exercise of memory or a profound judgment upon deep subjects from an expiring man. But the Redeemers last acts were full of wisdom and prudence although His sufferings were beyond all measure excruciating.

Remark how clearly He perceived the significance of every type! How plainly He could read with dying eye those Divine symbols which the eyes of angels could only desire to look into! He saw the secrets which have bewildered sages and astonished seers all fulfilled in His own body. Nor must we fail to observe the power and comprehensiveness by which He grasped the chain which binds the shadowy past with the sun-lit present. We must not forget the brilliance of that intelligence which threaded all the ceremonies and sacrifices on one string of thought, beheld all the prophecies as one great revelation and all the promises as the heralds of one Person and then said of the whole, It is finished, finished in Me.

What quickness of mind was that which enabled Him to traverse all the centuries of prophecy, to penetrate the eternity of the Covenant and then to anticipate the eternal glories! And all this when He is mocked by multitudes of enemies and when His hands and feet are nailed to the Cross. What force of mind must the Savior have possessed to soar above those Alps of Agony which touched the very clouds. In what a singular mental condition must He have been during the period of His crucifixionto be able to review the whole roll of Inspiration! Now this remark may not seem to be of any great value but I think its value lies in certain inferences that may be drawn from it.

We have sometimes heard it said, How could Christ, in so short a time, bear suffering which should be equivalent to the tormentsthe eternal torments of Hell? Our reply is we are not capable of judging what the Son of God might do even in a moment, much less what He might do and what He might suffer in His life and in His death. It has been frequently affirmed by persons who have been rescued from drowning that the mind of a drowning man is singularly active. One who, after being some time in the water was at last painfully restored, said that the whole of his history seemed to come before his mind while he was sinking and that if anyone

had asked him how long he had been in the water, he should have said twenty years, whereas he had only been there for a moment or two.

The wild romance of Mahomets journey upon Alborak is not an unfitting illustration. He affirmed that when the angel came in vision to take him on his celebrated journey to Jerusalem he went through all the seven heavens and saw all the wonders thereof. And yet he was gone so short a time that though the angels wing had touched a basin of water when they started, they returned soon enough to prevent the water from being spilt. The long dream of this epileptic impostor may really have occupied but a second of time. The intellect of mortal man is such that if God wills it when it is in certain statesit can think out centuries of thought at once. It can go through in one instant what we should have supposed would have taken years upon years of time for it to know or feel.

We think, therefore, that from the Saviors singular clearness and quickness of intellect upon the Cross it is very possible that He did in the space of two or three hours endure not only the agony which might have been contained in centuries, but even an equivalent for that which might be comprehended in everlasting punishment. At any rate, it is not for us to say that it could not be so. When the Deity is arrayed in manhood, then manhood becomes omnipotent to suffer. And just as the feet of Christ were once almighty to tread the seas, so now was His whole body become almighty to dive into the great waters, to endure an immersion in unknown agonies.

Do not, I pray, let us attempt to measure Christs sufferings by the finite one of our own ignorant reason, but let us know and believe that what He endured there was accepted by God as an equivalent for all our pains. And therefore it could not have been a trifle, but must have been all that Hart conceived it to be, when he says He bore

*All that incarnate God could bear,   
With strength enough, but none to spare.*

My discourse will, I have no doubt, more fully illustrate the remark with which I have commencedlet us proceed to it at once. First, let us hear the text and understand it. Then let us hear it and wonder at it. And then, thirdly, let us hear it and proclaim it.

I. LET US HEAR THE TEXT AND UNDERSTAND IT.   
The Son of God has been made Man. He has had a life of perfect virtue and of total self-denial. He has been all that life-long despised and rejected of men, a Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief. His enemies have been legion. His friends have been few and those few faithless. He is at last delivered over into the hands of them that hate Him. He is arrested while in the act of prayer. He is arraigned before both the spiritual and temporal courts. He is robed in mockery and then enrobed in shame. He is set upon His throne in scorn and then tied to the pillar in cruelty. He is declared innocent and yet He is delivered up by the judge who ought to have preserved Him from His persecutors.   
He is dragged through the streets of that Jerusalem which had killed the Prophets and would now crimson itself with the blood of the Prophets Master. He is brought to the Cross. He is nailed fast to the cruel wood. The sun burns Him. His cruel wounds increase the fever. God forsakes Him. My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? contains the concentrated anguish of the world. While He hangs there in mortal conflict with sin and Satan, His heart is broken, His limbs are dislocated. Heaven fails Him, for the sun is veiled in darkness. Earth forsakes Him, for His disciples forsook Him and fled. He looks everywhere and there is none to help. He casts His eye around and there is no man that can share His toil.   
He treads the winepress alone. And of all the people there is none with Him. On, on, He goes, steadily determined to drink the last dreg of that cup which must not pass from Him if His Fathers will is done. At last He criesIt is finished and He gives up the ghost. Hear it, Christians, hear this shout of triumph as it rings today with all the freshness and force which it had eighteen hundred years ago! Hear it from the Sacred Word and from the Saviors lips and may the Spirit of God open your ears that you may hear as the learned and understand what you hear!   
1. What meant the Savior, then, by thisIt is finished? He meant, first of all, that all the types, promises and prophecies were now fully accomplished in Him. Those who are acquainted with the original will find that the wordsIt is finished, occur twice within three verses. In the 28thverse we have the word in the Greek. It is translated in our version accomplished, but there it standsAfter this, Jesus knowing that all things were now finished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, says, I thirst. And then He afterwards said, It is finished. This leads us to see His meaning very clearly that all the Scripture was now fulfilled, that when He said, It is finished, the whole Book, from the first to the last, in both the Law and the Prophets, was finished in Him.   
There is not a single jewel of promise, from that first emerald which fell on the threshold of Eden, to that last sapphire-stone of Malachi which was not set in the breast-plate of the true High Priest. No, there is not a type, from the red heifer downward to the turtle-dove, from the hyssop upwards to Solomons temple itself which was not fulfilled in Him. And not a prophecy, whether spoken on Chebars bank, or on the shores of Jordan, not a dream of wise men, whether they had received it in Babylon, or in Samaria, or in Judea which was not now fully worked out in Christ Jesus. And, Brethren, what a wonderful thing it is, that a mass of promises and prophecies and types apparently so heterogeneous, should all be accomplished in one Person!   
Take away Christ for one moment and I will give the Old Testament to any wise man living and say to him, Take this. This is a problem, go home and construct in your imagination an ideal character who shall exactly fit all that which is herein foreshadowed. Remember, He must be a Prophet like unto Moses and yet a champion like Joshua. He must be an Aaron and a Melchisedek. He must be both David and Solomon, Noah and Jonah, Judah and Joseph. No, He must not only be the lamb that was slain and the scapegoat that was not slain, the turtle-dove that was dipped in blood and the priest who slew the bird, but He must be the altar, the tabernacle, the mercy seat and the showbread.   
No, to puzzle this wise man further, we remind him of prophecies so apparently contradictory that one would think they never could meet in one mansuch as these, All kings shall fall down before Him and all nations shall serve Him. And yet, He is despised and rejected of men. He must begin by showing a man born of a virgin motherA virgin shall conceive and bear a Son. He must be a man without spot or blemish, but yet one upon whom the Lord does cause to meet the iniquities of us all. He must be a glorious one, a Son of David, but yet a root out of a dry ground. Now I say it boldlyif all the greatest intellects of all the ages could set themselves to work out this problem, to invent another key to the types and propheciesthey could not do it.   
I see you, you wise menyou are poring over these hieroglyphsone suggests one key and it opens two or three of the figures. But you cannot proceed for the next one puts you at a nonplus. Another learned man suggests another cluebut that fails most where it is most neededand another and another and thus these wondrous hieroglyphs traced of old by Moses in the wilderness must be left unexplained, till one comes forward and proclaimsThe Cross of Christ and the Son of God incarnatethen the whole is clear, so that he that runs may read and a child may understand.   
Blessed Savior! In You we see everything fulfilled which God spoke of in old by the Prophets. In You we discover everything carried out in substance which God had set before us in the dim mist of sacrificial smoke. Glory be unto Your name! It is finishedeverything is summed up in YOU!   
2. But the words have richer meaning. Not only were all types and prophecies and promises thus finished in Christ, but all the typical sacrifices of the old Jewish Law were now abolished as well as explained.   
They were finishedfinished in Him. Will you imagine for a minute the saints in Heaven looking down upon what was done on earthAbel and his friends who had long ago before the flood been sitting in the glories above? They watch while God lights star after star in Heaven. Promise after promise flashes light upon the thick darkness of earth. They see Abraham come and they look down and wonder while they see God revealing Christ to Abraham in the person of Isaac. They gaze just as the angels do, desiring to look into the mystery. From the times of Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob they see altars smoking, recognitions of the fact that man is guilty and the spirits before the Throne say, Lord, when will sacrifices finish?when will blood no more be shed?

The offering of bloody sacrifices soon increases. It is now carried on by men ordained for the purpose. Aaron and the high priests and the Levites every morning and every evening offer a lamb, while great sacrifices are offered on special occasions. Bullocks groan, rams bleed, the necks of doves are wrung and all the while the saints are crying, O Lord, how long? when shall the sacrifice cease? Year after year the high priest goes within the veil and sprinkles the mercy seat with blood. The next year sees him do the like and the next and again and again and again.   
David offers hecatombsSolomon slaughters tens of thousands. Hezekiah offers rivers of oil, Josiah gives thousands of the fat of fed beasts and the spirits of the just say, Will it never be complete?will the sacrifice never be finished?must there always be a remembrance of sin?will not the last High Priest soon come?will not the order and line of Aaron soon lay aside its labor, because the whole is finished? Not yet, not yet, you spirits of the justfor after the captivity the slaughter of victims still remains. But lo, He comes! Gaze more intently than beforeHe comes who is to close the line of priests! Lo, there He stands, clothednot now with linen ephod, not with ringing bells, nor with sparkling jewels on His breastplatebut arrayed in human flesh He stands!   
His Cross, His altar, His body and His soulthe victim Himselfthe Priest and lo, before His God He offers up His own soul within the veil of thick darkness which has covered Him from the sight of men. Presenting His own blood He enters within the veil, sprinkles it there and coming forth from the midst of the darkness, He looks down on the astonished earth and upward to expectant Heaven and cries, It is finished! It is finished!that for which you looked so long is fully achieved and perfected forever!  
3. The Savior meant, we doubt not, that in this moment His perfect obedience was finished. It was necessary, in order that man might be saved, that the Law of God should be keptfor no man can see Gods face except he is perfect in righteousness. Christ undertook to keep Gods Law for His people, to obey its every mandate and preserve its every statute intact. Throughout the first years of His life He privately obeyed, honoring His father and His mother. During the next three years He publicly obeyed God, spending and being spent in His service, till if you would know what a man would be whose life was wholly conformed to the Law of God, you may see him in Christ   
*My dear Redeemer and my Lord,   
I read my duty in Your Word,   
But in Your life the Law appears   
Drawn out in living characters.*   
It needed nothing to complete the perfect virtue of life but the entire obedience of death. He who would serve God must be willing not only to give all his soul and his strength while he lives, but he must stand prepared to resign life when it shall be for Gods glory. Our perfect Substitute put the last stroke upon His work by dying and therefore He claims to be absolved from further debt, for it is finished. Yes, glorious Lamb of God, it is finished! You have been tempted in all points like as we are, yet have You sinned in none! It was finished, for the last arrow out of Satans quiver had been shot at You. The last blasphemous insinuation, the last wicked temptation had spent its fury on You.   
The prince of this world had surveyed You from head to foot, within and without, but he had found nothing in You. Now your trial is over, You have finished the work which Your Father gave You to do and so finished it that Hell itself cannot accuse You of a flaw. And now, looking upon Your entire obedience you say, It is finished, and we Your people believe most joyously that it is even so. Brothers and Sisters, this is more than you or I could have said if Adam had never fallen. If we had been in the garden of Eden today we could never have boasted a finished righteousnesssince a creature can never finish its obedience.   
As long as a creature lives it is bound to obey and as long as a free agent exists on earth it would be in danger of violating the vow of its obedience. If Adam had been in Paradise from the first day until now, he might fall tomorrow. Left to himself there would be no reason why that king of nature should not yet be uncrowned. But Christ the Creator, who finished creation, has perfected redemption. God can ask no more. The Law has received all it claims, the largest extent of justice cannot demand another hours obedience. It is done, it is complete. The last throw of the shuttle is over and the robe is woven from the top throughout. Let us rejoice, then, in this that the Master meant by His dying cry that His perfect righteousness wherewith He covers us was finished.   
4. But next, the Savior meant that the satisfaction which He rendered to the justice of God was finished. The debt was now, to the last farthing, all discharged. The atonement and propitiation were made once and for all and foreverby the one offering made in Jesus body on the Tree. There was the cup, Hell was in it, the Savior drank itnot a sip and then a pausenot a draught and then a ceasing. He drained it till there is not a dreg left for any of His people. The great ten-thronged whip of the Law was worn out upon His back. There is no lash left with which to smite one for whom Jesus died. The great cannonade of Gods justice has exhausted all its ammunitionthere is nothing left to be hurled against a child of God.   
Sheathed is your sword, O Justice! Silenced is your thunder, O Law! There remains nothing now of all the griefs and pains and agonies which chosen sinners ought to have suffered for their sins, for Christ has endured all for His own Beloved and it is finished. Brethren, it is more than the damned in Hell can ever say. If you and I had been constrained to make satisfaction to Gods justice by being sent to Hell we never could have said, It is finished. Christ has paid the debt which all the torments of eternity could not have paid. Lost souls, you suffer today as you have suffered for ages past, but Gods justice is not satisfied, His Law is not fully magnified.   
And when time shall fail and eternity shall have been flying on, still foreverthe uttermost never having been paid, the chastisement for sin must fall upon unpardoned sinners. But Christ has done what all the flames of the pit could not do in all eternity. He has magnified the Law and made it honorable and now from the Cross he criesIt is finished.  
5. Once againwhen He said, It is finished, Jesus had totally destroyed the power of Satan, of sin and of death. The Champion had entered the lists to do battle for our souls redemption against all our foes. He met Sin. Horrible, terrible, all-but omnipotent Sin nailed Him to the Cross. But in that deed, Christ nailed Sin also to the tree. There they both did hang togetherSin and Sins Destroyer. Sin destroyed Christ and by that destruction Christ destroyed Sin. Next came the second enemy, Satan. He assaulted Christ with all his hosts. Calling up his Myrmidons from every corner and quarter of the universe, he said, Awake, arise, or be forever fallen! Here is our great Enemy who has sworn to bruise my head. Now let us bruise His heel!   
They shot their hellish darts into His heart. They poured their boiling cauldrons on His brain, they emptied their venom into His veins. They spat their insinuations into His face. They hissed their devilish fears into His ear. He stood alone, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, hounded by all the dogs of Hell. Our champion quailed not, but used His holy weapons, striking right and left with all the power of God-supported manhood. On came the hosts, volley after volley was discharged against Him. No mimic thunders were these, but such as might shake the very gates of Hell. The Conqueror steadily advanced, overturning their ranks, dashing in pieces His enemies, breaking the bow and cutting the spear in sunder and burning the chariots in the fire, while he cried, In the name of God will I destroy you!   
At last, foot to foot, He met the champion of Hell and now our David fought with Goliath. Not long was the struggle. Thick was the darkness which gathered round them both. But He who is the Son of God as well as the Son of Mary, knew how to smite the fiend and He did smite him with Divine fury, till, having despoiled him of his armor, having quenched his fiery darts and broken his head, He cried, It is finished and sent the fiend, bleeding and howling, down to bed. We can imagine him pursued by the eternal Savior, who exclaims   
*Traitor!   
My bolt shall find and pierce you through, Though under Hells profoundest wave   
You divst, to seek a sheltering grave.*   
His thunderbolt overtook the fiend and grasping him with both His hands, the Savior drew around him the great chain. The angels brought the royal chariot from on high, to whose wheels the captive fiend was bound. Lash the coursers up the everlasting hills! Spirits made perfect come forth to meet Him. Sing to the conqueror who drags death and Hell behind Him and leads captivity captive! Lift up your heads, O you gates and be you lifted up, you everlasting doors, that the King of glory may come in. But staybefore He enters, let Him be rid of this His burden. Lo, He takes the fiend and hurls him down through illimitable night, broken, bruised, with his power destroyed, bereft of his crown, to lie forever howling in the pit of Hell.   
Thus when the Savior cried, It is finished, He had defeated Sin and Satannor less had he vanquished Death. Death had come against Him, as Christmas Evans puts it, with his fiery dart which he struck right through the Savior, till the point fixed in the Cross. And when he tried to pull it out again, he left the sting behind. What could he do more? He was disarmed. Then Christ set some of his prisoners free. For many of the saints arose and were seen of manythen He said to him, Death, I take from you your keysyou must live for a little while to be the warden of those beds in which My saints shall sleep but give Me your keys.

And lo, the Savior stands today with the keys of death hanging at His girdle and He waits until the hour shall come of which no man knows, when the trumpet of the archangel shall ring like the silver trumpets of Jubilee and then He shall say, Let My captives go free. Then shall the tombs be opened in virtue of Christs death and the very bodies of the saints shall live again in an eternity of glory   
**It is finished!   
Hear the dying Savior cry.**   
II. Secondly, LET US HEAR AND WONDER.   
Let us perceive what mighty things were effected and secured by these words, It is finished. Thus He ratified the Covenant. That Covenant was signed and sealed before and in all things it was ordered well, but when Christ said, It is finished, then the Covenant was made doubly sure, when the blood of Christs heart bespattered the Divine roll. Then it could never be reversed, nor could one of its ordinances be broken, nor one of its stipulations fail. You know of the Everlasting CovenantGod covenants on His part that He would give Christ to see of the travail of His soulthat all who were given to Him should have new hearts and right spirits. They should be washed from sin and should enter into life through Him.   
Christs side of the Covenant was thisFather, I will do Your will. I will pay the ransom to the last jot and tittle. I will give You perfect obedience and complete satisfaction. Now if this second part of the Covenant had never been fulfilled, the first part would have been invalidbut when Jesus said, It is finishedthen there was nothing left to be performed on His part and now the Covenant is all on one side. It is Gods, I will, and They shall. A new heart will I give you and a right spirit will I put within you. I will sprinkle clean water upon you and you shall be clean. From all your iniquities will I cleanse you. I will lead you by a way that you know not. I will surely bring them in.   
The Covenant that day was ratified. When Christ said, It is finished, His Father was honored and Divine justice was fully displayed. The Father always did love His people. Do not think that Christ died to make God the Father loving. He always had loved them from before the foundation of the world, butIt is finished, took away the barriers which were in the Fathers way. He would, as a God of love and now He could as a God of justice, bless poor sinners. From that day the Father is well-pleased to receive sinners to His bosom. When Christ saidIt is finished, He Himself was glorified. Then on His head descended the all-glorious crown. Then did the Father give to Him honors which He had not before. He had honor as God, but as Man He was despised and rejectednow as God and Man Christ was made to sit down forever on His Fathers Throne crowned with honor and majesty.   
Then, too, by It is finished, the Spirit was procured for us *Tis by the merit of His death   
Who hung upon the tree,   
The Spirit is sent down to breathe   
On such dry bones as we.*   
Then the Spirit which Christ had aforetime promised perceived a new and living way by which He could come to dwell in the hearts of men and men might come up to dwell with Him above. That day, too, when Christ said It is finished, the words had effect on Heaven. Then the walls of chrysolite stood fast. Then the jasper-light of the pearly-gated city shone like the light of seven days. Before, the saints had been saved as it were on credit. They had entered Heaven, God having faith in His Son Jesus. Had not Christ finished His work, surely they must have left their shining spheres and suffered in their own persons for their own sins.   
I might represent Heaven if my imagination might be allowed a moment as being ready to totter if Christ had not finished His workits stones would have been unloosedmassive and stupendous though its bastions are. Yet they would have fallen as earthly cities reel under the throes of earthquake. But Christ said, It is finished, and oath and Covenant and blood set fast the dwelling place of the redeemed, made their mansions safely and eternally their own and bade their feet stand immovably upon the Rock. No, more. That word, It is finished! took effect in the gloomy caverns and depths of HELL. Then Satan bit his iron bands in a rage, howling, I am defeated by the very Man whom I thought to overcome! My hopes are blasted. Never shall an elect one come into my prison, never a blood-bought one be found in my abode.   
Lost souls mourned that day, for they saidIt is finished! And if Christ Himself, the Substitute, could not be permitted to go free till He had finished all His punishment, then we shall never be free. It was their double death-knell, for they said, Alas for us! Justice, which would not suffer the Savior to escape, will never suffer us to be at liberty. It is finished with Him and therefore it shall never be finished for us. That day, too, the earth had a gleam of sunlight cast over her which she had never known before. Then her hilltops began to glisten with the rising of the sun.   
And though her valleys still are clothed with darkness and men wander here and there and grope in the noon-day as in the night, yet that sun is rising, climbing still its heavenly steeps, never to set and soon shall its rays penetrate through the thick mists and clouds and every eye shall see Him and every heart be made glad with His light. The words It is finished! consolidated Heaven, shook Hell, comforted earth, delighted the Father, glorified the Son, brought down the Spirit and confirmed the Everlasting Covenant to all the chosen seed.   
III. And now I come to my last point, very briefly. It is finished! LET US PUBLISH IT.  
Children of God, you who by faith received Christ as your All in All, tell it every day of your lives that it is finished. Go and tell it to those who are torturing themselves thinking through obedience and mortification to offer satisfaction. Yonder Hindu is about to throw himself down upon the spikes. Stay, poor Man! Why would you bleed, for it is finished? Yonder Fakir is holding his hand erect till the nails grow through the flesh, torturing himself with fasting and with self-denials. Cease, cease, poor wretch, from all these pains, for it is finished!   
In all parts of the earth there are those who think that the misery of the body and the soul may be an atonement for sin. Rush to them, stay them in their madness and say to them, Why do you this? It is finished. All the pains that God asks, Christ has suffered. All the satisfaction by way of agony in the flesh that the Law demands, Christ has already endured. It is finished! And when you have done this, go next to the benighted votaries of Rome when you see the priests with their backs to the people, offering every day the pretended sacrifice of the mass and lifting up the host on higha sacrifice, they sayan unbloody sacrifice for the quick and the dead. Cry to them, Cease, false priest, cease! For it is finished! Cease, false worshipper, cease to bow, for it is finished!   
God neither asks nor accepts any other sacrifice than that which Christ offered once for all upon the Cross. Go next to the foolish among your own countrymen who call themselves Protestants but who are Papists after allwho think by their gifts and their gold, by their prayers and their vows, by their church-goings and their chapel-goings, by their baptisms and their confirmations to make themselves fit for God. And say to them, Stop, it is finished. God needs not this of you. He has received enough. Why will you pin your rags to the fine linen of Christs righteousness? Why will you add your counterfeit farthing to the costly ransom which Christ has paid into the treasure-house of God? Cease from your pains, your doings, your performances, for it is finished! Christ has done it all.   
This one text is enough to blow the Vatican to the four winds. Lay but this beneath Popery and like a train of gunpowder beneath a rock, it shall blast it into the air. This is a thunderclap against all human righteousness. Only let this come like a two-edged sword and your good works and your fine performances are soon cast away. It is finished. Why improve on what is finished? Why add to that which is complete? The Bible is finishedhe that adds to it never had his name in the Book of Life and will never see the Holy City. Christs atonement is finished and he that adds to that must expect the selfsame doom.   
And when you shall have told it thus to the ears of men of every nation and of every tribe, tell it to all poor despairing souls. You find them on their knees, crying, O God, what can I do to make recompense for my offenses? Tell them, It is finished, the recompense is made already. O God! they say, how can I ever get a righteousness in which You can accept such a worm as I am. Tell them, It is finished, their righteousness is worked out already. They have no need to trouble themselves about adding to it, for it is finished.   
Go to the poor despairing wretch who has given himself up, not for death merely, but for damnationhe who says, I cannot escape from sin and I cannot be saved from its punishment. Say to him, Sinner, the way of salvation is finished once and for all. And if you meet some professed Christians in doubts and fears, tell them, It is finished. Why, we have hundreds and thousands that are converted who do not know that it is finished. They never know that they are safe. They do not know that it is finished. They think they have faith today but perhaps they may become unbelieving tomorrow. They do not know that it is finished.   
They hope God will accept them if they do some things, forgetting that the way of acceptance is finished. God as much accepts a sinner who only believed in Christ five minutes ago as He will a saint who has known and loved Him eighty years for He does not accept men because of anything they do or feel, but simply and only for what Christ did and that is finished. Oh, poor Hearts! Some of you do love the Savior in a measure, but blindly. You are thinking that you must be this and attain to that and then you may be assured that you are saved.

Oh, you may be assured of it todayif you believe in Christ you are saved. But I feel imperfections. Yes, but what of that? God does not regard your imperfectionsHe covers them with Christs righteousness. He sees them to remove them, but not to lay them to your charge. Yes, but I cannot be what I would be. But what if you can not? God does not look at you, as what you are in yourself, but as what you are in Christ.   
Come with me, poor Soul and you and I will stand together this morning, while the tempest gathers, for we are not afraid. How sharp that lightning flash! But yet we tremble not. How terrible that peal of thunder! And yet we are not alarmed and why? Is there anything in us why we should escape? No, but we are standing beneath the Crossthat precious Crosswhich like some noble lightning rod in the storm takes to itself all the death from the lighting and all the fury from the storm. We are safe. Loud may you roar, O thundering Law and terribly may you flash, O avenging Justice! We can look up with calm delight to all the tumult of the elements, for we are safe beneath the Cross.   
Come with me again. There is a royal banquet spread. The King Himself sits at the table and angels are the servitors. Let us enter. And we do enter and we sit down and eat and drink, but how dare we do this? Our righteousness are as filthy ragshow could we venture to come here? Oh, because the filthy rags are not ours any longer. We have renounced our own righteousness and therefore we have renounced the filthy rags. And now, today we wear the royal garments of the Savior and are from head to foot arrayed in white, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. We stand in the clear sunlightblack, but comelyloathsome in ourselves, but glorious in Him! Condemned in Adam, but accepted in the Beloved. We are neither afraid nor ashamed to be with the angels of God, to talk with the glorified, no, nor even alarmed to speak with God Himself and call Him our Friend.   
And now last of all, I publish this to sinners. I know not where you are this morning, but may God find you out. You who have been a drunkard, swearer, thief. You who have been a blackguard of the blackest kind. You who have dived into the very kennel and rolled yourself in the mireif today you feel that sin is hateful to you, believe in Him who has said, It is finished. Let me link your hand in mine, let us come together, both of us and say, Here are two poor naked souls, good Lord, we cannot clothe ourselves. And He will give us a robe, for it is finished. But, Lord, is it long enough for such sinners and broad enough for such offenders? Yes, says He, it is finished.   
But we need washing, Lord! Is there anything that can take away black spots so hideous as ours? Yes, says He, here is the bath of blood. But must we not add our tears to it? No, says He, no, it is finished. That is enough. And now, Lord, You have washed us and You have clothed us, but we desire to be completely clean within, so that we may never sin any more. Lord, is there a way by which this can be done? Yes says He, there is the bath of water which flows from the wounded side of Christ. And, Lord, is there enough there to wash away my guiltiness as well as my guilt? Yes, says He, it is finished. Jesus Christ is made unto you sanctification as well as redemption.   
Child of God, will you have Christs finished righteousness this morning and will you rejoice in it more than you have ever done before? And oh, poor Sinner, will you have Christ or nothing? Ah, says one, I am willing enough, but I am not worthy. He does not want any worthiness. All He asks is willingness, for you know how He puts it, Whoever will, let him come. If He has given you willingness, you may believe in Christs finished work this morning. Ah, you say, but you cannot mean me. But I do, for it says, Ho, everyone that thirsts.   
Do you thirst for Christ? Do you wish to be saved by Him? Everyone that thirstsnot only that young woman yonder, not simply that grayheaded old rebel yonder who has long despised the Saviorbut this mass below and you in these double tiers of galleryEveryone that thirsts, come you to the waters and he that has no money come. O that I could compel you to come! Great God, wont You make the sinner willing to be saved? He wills to be damnedand will not come unless You change his will! Eternal Spirit, source of light and life and grace, come down and bring the strangers home!   
It is finished. Sinner, there is nothing for God to do. It is finished. There is nothing for you to do. It is finished, Christ need not bleed. It is finished. You need not weep. It is finished. God the Holy Spirit need not tarry because of your unworthiness, nor need you tarry because of your helplessness. It is finished. Every stumbling block is rolled out of the road, every gate is opened, the bars of brass are broken, the gates of iron are burst asunder.   
It is finished! Come and welcome, come and welcome! The table is laid, the fatlings are killed. The oxen are ready. Lo, here stands the messenger! Come from the highways and from the hedges! Come from the dens and from the kens of London. Come, you vilest of the vile. You who hate yourselves today, come! Jesus bids you! Oh, will you tarry? Oh, Spirit of God, wont You repeat the invitation and make it an effectual call to many a heart, for Jesus sake! Amen.

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ON THE CROSS AFTER DEATH   
NO. 1956

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, APRIL 3, 1887, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**The Jews therefore, because it was the Preparation Day, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the   
Sabbath (for that Sabbath day was a high day), besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. Then the soldiers came and broke   
the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified   
with Him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that He was dead already they did not break His legs. But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. And he who has seen has testified, and his record is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth,   
so that you may believe. For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, Not one of His bones of Him shall be broken. And again another Scripture says, They shall look on Him whom they pierced. John 19:31-37.**

CRIMINALS who were crucified by the Romans were allowed to rot upon the cross. That cruel nation can hardly be so severely condemned as our own people who, up to a late period, allowed the bodies of those condemned to die to hang in chains upon gallows in conspicuous places. The horrible practice is now abandoned, but it was retained to a time almost, if not quite, within living memory. I wonder whether any aged person here remembers such a horrible spectacle. Among the Romans it was usual, for there are classical allusions to this horror showing the bodies of persons crucified were usually left to be devoured by ravenous birds. Probably out of deference to the customs of the Jews, the authorities in Palestine would, sooner or later, allow of the interment of the crucified, but they would by no means hasten it, since they would not feel such a disgust at the sight as an Israelite would.

The Mosaic Law, which you will find in the Book of Deuteronomy, runs as followsIf you hang him on a tree, his body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but you shall surely bury him that day (21:22, 23). This alone would lead the Jews to desire the burial of the executed, but there was a further reason. Lest the land should be defiled upon the holy Sabbath of the Passover, the chief priests were importunate that the bodies of the crucified should be buried and, therefore, that their deaths should be hastened by the breaking of their legs. Their consciences were not wounded by the murder of Jesus, but they were greatly moved by the fear of ceremonial pollution! Religious scruples may live in a dead conscience. Alas, this is not the only proof of that factwe could find many in our own day!

The Jews hurried to Pilate and sought, as a blessing, the merciless act of having the legs of the crucified dashed to pieces with an iron bar. That act was sometimes performed upon the condemned as an additional punishmentbut in this instance it was meant to be a finishing stroke hastening death by the terrible pain which it would cause and the shock to the system which it would occasion. Ferocious hate of our Lord made His enemies forgetful of everything like humanitydoubtless the more of pain and shame which they could cause to Him, the better would they be pleased. Not, however, out of cruelty, but out of regard to the ceremonials of their religion, they, besought Pilate that their legs might be broken and that they might be taken away. I have already told you that this breaking of the bones of the crucified was a Roman custom. We have evidence of this, since there is a Latin word, crucifragium, to express this barbarous act. Pilate had no hesitation in granting the desire of the Jewswhat would he care about the dead body since he had already delivered up the living Man?

Soldiers go at once to perform the hideous operation and they commence with the two malefactors. It is a striking fact that the penitent thief, although he was to be in Paradise with his Lord that day, was not, therefore, delivered from the excruciating agony occasioned by the breaking of his legs. We are saved from eternal misery, not from temporary pain! Our Savior, by our salvation, gives no pledge to us that we shall be screened from suffering in this life. It is true, as the Proverb has it, All things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked; to the clean and to the unclean. Accidents and diseases afflict the godly as well as the ungodly. Penitent or impenitent, we share the common lot of men and are born to troubles as the sparks fly upward. You must not expect, because you are pardoned, even if you have the assurance of it from Christs own lips, that, therefore, you shall escape tribulation! No, but from His gracious mouth you have the forewarning assurance that trial shall befall you, for Jesus said, These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me you might have peace. In the world you shall have tribulation. Suffering is not averted, but it is turned into a blessing! The penitent thief entered Paradise that very day, but it was not without suffering. Say, rather, that the terrible stroke was the actual

means of the prompt fulfillment of his Lords promise to him! By that blow, he died that day, otherwise he might have lingered long. How much we may, any of us, receive by the way of suffering it were hard to guessperhaps the promise that we shall be with our Lord in Paradise will be fulfilled that way.

At this point it seemed more than probable that our blessed Lord must undergo the breaking of His bones, but He was dead already. It had pleased Him, in the infinite willingness with which He went to His Sacrifice, to yield up His life and His spirit had, therefore, departed. Yet one might have feared that the coarse soldiers would have performed their orders to the letter. Look, they do not! Had they conceived a dread of One around whom such prodigies had gathered? Were they, like their centurion, impressed with awe of this remarkable Person? At any rate, perceiving that He was dead already, they did not use their hammer. Happy are we to see them cease from such loathsome brutality. But we may not be too glad, for another outrage will take its place! To make sure that He was dead, one of the four soldiers pierced His side with a spear, probably thrusting His lance quite through the heart. Here we see how our gracious God ordained, in His Providence, that there should be sure evidence that Jesus was dead and that, therefore, the Sacrifice was slain.

Paul declares this to be the Gospel, that the Lord Jesus died according to the Scriptures. Strange to say, there have been heretics who have ventured to assert that Jesus did not actually die. They stand refuted by this spear-thrust. If our Lord did not die, then no Sacrifice has been presented, the Resurrection is not a fact and there is no foundation of hope for men! Our Lord assuredly died and was buriedthe Roman soldiers were keen judges in such matters and they saw that, he was dead already and, moreover, their spears were not used in vain when they meant to make death a certainty.

When the side of Christ was pierced, there flowed from it blood and waterupon which a great deal has been said by those who think it proper to dilate upon such tender themes. It was supposed by some that by death the blood was divided, the clots parting from the water in which they float and that in a perfectly natural way. But it is not true that blood would flow from a dead body if it were pierced. Only under certain very special conditions would blood gush forth. The flowing of this blood from the side of our Lord cannot be considered as a common occurrenceit was a fact entirely by itself! We cannot argue from any known fact in this case, for we are here in a new region. Granted, that blood would not flow from an ordinary dead body, yet remember that our Lords body was unique, since it saw no corruption. Whatever change might come over a body liable to decay, we may not ascribe any such change to His frame and, therefore, there is no arguing from facts about common bodies so as to conclude from them anything concerning our blessed Lords body. Whether, in His case, blood and water flowed naturally from His holy and incorruptible body, or whether it was a miracle, it was evidently a most notable and remarkable thing and John, as an eyewitness, was evidently astonished at itso astonished at it that he recorded a solemn affirmation in order that we might not doubt his testimony. He was certain of what he saw and he took care to report it with a special note in order that we might believeas if he felt that if this fact was truly believed, there was a certain convincing power which would induce many to believe on our Lord Jesus as the appointed Savior! I could enter into many details, but I prefer to cast a veil over this tender mystery. It is scarcely reverent to be discoursing anatomy when the body of our adorable Lord is before us. Let us close our eyes in worship rather than open them with irreverent curiosity.

The great task before me this morning is to draw truth out of this well of wonders. I shall ask you to look at the events before us in three lights first, let us see, here, the fulfillment of Scripture. Secondly, the identification of our Lord as the Messiah. And thirdly, the instruction which He intends.

I. I ask you to notice THE FULFILLMENT OF SCRIPTURE. Two things are predictednot a bone of Him must be broken and He must be pierced. These were the Scriptures which now remained to be accomplished. Last Lords-Day morning we were, all of us, delighted as we saw the fulfillment of Scripture [#1955Jesus Declining the Legions] in the capture of our Lord and His refusal to deliver Himself from His enemies. The theme of the fulfillment of Scripture is worth pursuing yet further in an age when Holy Scripture is treated with so much slight and is spoken of as having no Inspiration in it, or, at least, no Divine Authority by which its Infallibility is secured. You and I favor no such error! On the contrary, we conceive it to be to the last degree, mischievous. If the foundations are removed, what can the righteous do? We are pleased to notice how the Lord Jesus Christ and those who wrote concerning Him treated the Holy Scriptures with an intensely reverent regard. The prophecies that went before of Christ must be fulfilledand holy souls found great delight in dwelling upon the fact that they were so!

I want you to notice, concerning this case, that it was amazingly complicated. It was negative and positivethe Saviors bones must not be broken and, He must be pierced. In the type of the Passover lamb, it was expressly enacted that not a bone of it should be brokentherefore not a bone of Jesus must be broken. At the same time, according to Zechariah 12:10, the Lord must be pierced. He must not only be pierced with the nails and so fulfill the prophecy, They pierced My hands and My feet, but He must be conspicuously pierced so that He can be emphatically regarded as a Pierced One. How were these prophecies and a multitude more, to be accomplished? Only God, Himself, could have brought to pass the fulfillment of prophecies which were of all kinds and appeared to be confusingand even in contradiction to each other!

It would be an impossible task for the human intellect to construct so many prophecies, types, foreshadowing and then to imagine a person in whom they should all be embodied! But what would be impossible to men has been literally carried out in the case of our Lord! There are prophecies about Him and about everything connected with Himfrom His hair to His garments, from His birth to His tomband yet they have all been carried out to the letter! That which lies immediately before us was a complicated case, for if reverence to the Savior would spare His bones, would it not also spare His flesh? If a coarse brutality pierced His side, why did it not break His legs? How can men be kept from one act of violenceand that an act authorized by the authorityand yet perpetrate another violence which had not been suggested to them? But, let the case be as complicated as it were possible for it to have been, Infinite Wisdom knew how to work it out in all pointsand He did so! The Christ is the exact substance of the foreshadowing of the Messianic prophecies!

Next, we may say of the fulfillment of these two prophecies, that it was especially improbable. It did not seem at all likely that when the order was given to break the legs of the crucified, Roman soldiers would abstain from the deed. How could the body of Christ be preserved after such an order had been issued? Those four soldiers are evidently determined to carry out the governors orders. They have commenced their dreadful task and they have broken the legs of two of the executed three. The crosses were arranged so that Jesus was hanging in the midstHe is the second of the three. We naturally suppose that they would proceed in order from the first cross to the second. But they seem to pass by the second cross and proceed from the first to the third! What was the reason of this singular procedure? The supposition is, and I think a very likely one, that the center cross stood somewhat back and that thus the two thieves formed a sort of first rank. Jesus would thus be all the more emphatically, in the midst.

If He was placed a little back, it would certainly have been easier for the penitent thief to have read the inscription over His head and to have looked to our Lord and held a conversation with Him. Had they been placed exactly in a line, this might not have been so natural. But the suggested position seems to suit the circumstances. If it were so, I can understand how the soldiers would be taking the crosses in order when they performed their horrible office upon the two malefactors and came last to Jesus, who was in the midst. In any case, such was the order which they followed. The marvel is that they did not, in due course, proceed to deal the horrible blow in the case of our Lord! Roman soldiers are apt to fulfill their commissions very literallythey are not often moved with much desire to avoid barbarities. Can you see them intent upon their errand? Will they not even now mangle that sacred body? Commend me for roughness to the ordinary Roman soldierhe was so used to deeds of slaughter, so accustomed to an empire which had been established with blood and iron, that the idea of pity never crossed his soul, except to be mocked as a womanly feeling unworthy of a brave man! Yet behold and wonder! The order is given to break their legstwo out of the three have sufferedand yet no soldier may crush a bone of that sacred body! They see that He is dead already and they do not break His legs.

As yet you have only seen one of the prophecies fulfilled. He must be pierced as well. And what was that which came into that Roman soldiers mind when, in a hasty moment, he resolved to make sure that the apparent death of Jesus was a real one? Why did he open that sacred side with his lance? He knew nothing of the prophecy. He had no dreams of Eve being taken from the side of the man and the Church from the side of Jesus. He had never heard that ancient notion of the side of Jesus being like the door of the ark, through which an entrance to safety is opened. Why, then, does he fulfill the prediction of the Prophet? There was no accident or chance here! Where are there such things? The hand of the Lord is here and we desire to praise and bless that Omniscient and Omnipotent Providence which thus fulfilled the Word of Revelation! God has respect unto His own Word and while He takes care that no bone of His Son shall be broken, He also secures that no text of Holy Scripture shall be broken! That our Lords bones should remain unbroken and yet that He should be pierced seemed a very unlikely thing, but it was carried out! When next you meet with an unlikely promise, believe it firmly. When next you see things working contrary to the Truth of God, believe God and believe nothing else! Let God be true and every man a liar! Though men and devils should give God the lie, hold on to what God has spoken, for Heaven and earth shall pass away, but not one jot or tittle of His Word shall fall to the ground!

Note again, dear Friends, concerning this fulfillment of Scripture, that it was altogether indispensable. If they had broken Christs bones, then that Word of John the Baptist, Behold the Lamb of God, had seemed to have a slur cast upon it. Men would have objected, But the bones of the Lamb of God were not broken. It was especially commanded twice over, not only in the first ordaining of the Passover in Egypt, but in the allowance of a second to those who were defiled at the time of the first Passover. In Numbers, as well as in Exodus, we read that not a bone of the lamb must be broken. How, then, if our Lords bones had been broken, could we have said, Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us, when there would have been this fatal flaw? Jesus must remain intact upon the Cross and He must also be pierced, otherwise that famous passage in Zechariah, which is here alluded to, They shall look on Me whom they have pierced, could not have been true of Him. Both prophecies must be carried out and they were so in a conspicuous manner!

But why need I say that this fulfillment was indispensable? Beloved, the keeping of every Word of God is indispensable. It is indispensable to the Truth of God that He should always be true, for if one Word of His can fall to the ground, then all may falland His veracity is gone. If it can be demonstrated that one prophecy was a mistake, then all the rest may be mistakes. If one part of the Scripture is untrue, all may be untrue and we have no sure ground to go on. Faith loves not slippery places! Faith seeks the sure Word of Prophecy and sets her foot firmly upon certainties. Unless all the Word of God is sure and pure, as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times, then we have nothing to go upon and are virtually left without a Revelation from God!

If I am to take the Bible and say, Some of this is true and some of it is questionable, I am no better off than if I had no Bible! A man who is at sea with a chart which is only accurate in certain places is not much better off than if he had no chart at all. I see not how it can ever be safe to be converted and become as little children if there is no Infallible Teacher for us to follow. Beloved, it is indispensable to the honor of God and to our confidence in His Word, that every line of Holy Scripture should be true! It was evidently indispensable in the case now before us and this is only one instance of a rule which is without exception.

But now let me remind you that although the problem was complicated and its working out was improbable, yet it was fulfilled in the most natural manner. Nothing can be less constrained than the action of the soldiers. They have broken the legs of two, but the other is dead and so they do not break His legs. Yet, to make sure that they will be safe in omitting the blow, they pierce His side. There was no compulsion put upon themthey did this of their own proper thought. No angel came from Heaven to stand with his broad wings in front of the Cross, so as to protect the Savior! No awful protection of mystery was hung over the sacred body of the Lord so that intruders might be driven back with fear! No, the quaternion of soldiers did whatever they wished to do. They acted of their own free will and yet, at the same time, they fulfilled the eternal counsel of God! Shall we never be able to drive into mens minds the Truth of God that predestination and free agency are both facts?

Men sin as freely as birds fly in the air and they are altogether responsible for their sinand yet everything is ordained and foreseen of God! The fore-ordination of God in no degree interferes with the responsibility of man! I have often been asked by persons to reconcile the two Truths of God. My only reply isThey need no reconciliation, for they never fell out. Why should I try to reconcile two friends? Prove to me that the two Truths do not agree. In that request I have set you a task as difficult as that which you propose to me! These two facts are parallel linesI cannot make them unitebut you cannot make them cross each other. Permit me, also, to add that I have long ago given up the idea of making all my beliefs into a system. I believe, but I cannot explain. I fall before the majesty of Revelation and adore the Infinite Lord. I do not understand all that God reveals, but I believe it! How can I expect to understand all the mysteries of Revelation, when even the arithmetic of Scripture surpasses My comprehension, since I am taught that in the Godhead the Three are One, while in the undivided One I see most manifestly Three?

Need I measure the sea? Is it not enough that I am borne up by its waves? I thank God for waters deep enough for my faith to swim in! Understanding would compel me to keep to the shallows, but faith takes me to the main ocean. I think it more to my souls benefit to believe than to understand, for faith brings me nearer to God than reason ever did! The faith which is limited by our narrow faculties is a faith unworthy of a child of God, for as a child of God he should begin to deal with infinite sublimities, like those in which his great Father is at home. These are only to be grasped by faith. To return to my subjectalbeit the matter must be as Scripture foreshadowed, yet no constraint nor inducement was put forth. But, as free agents, the soldiers performed the very things which were written in the Prophets concerning Christ.

Dear Friends, suffer one more observation upon this fulfillment of Scriptureit was marvelously complete. Observe that in these transactions a seal was set upon that part of Scripture which has been most exposed to skeptical derision, for the seal was set, first of all, upon the types. Irreverent readers of Scripture have refused to accept the types. They say, How do you know that the Passover was a type of Christ? In other cases, more serious persons object to detailed interpretations and decline to see a meaning in the smaller particulars. Such persons would not attach spiritual importance to the law, Not a bone of it shall be broken, but would dismiss it as a petty regulation of an obsolete religious rite.

But observe, Beloved, the Holy Spirit does nothing of the kind, for He fixes upon a minor particular of the type and declares that this must be fulfilled. Moreover, the Providence of God intervenes so that it shall be carried out. Therefore, be not scared away from the study of the types by the ridicule of the worldly-wise. There is a general timidity coming over the minds of many about Holy Scripturea timidity to which, thank God, I am an utter stranger! It would be a happy circumstance if the childlike reverence of the early fathers could be restored to the Church and the present irreverent criticism could be repented of and cast away. We may delight ourselves in the types as in a very Paradise of Revelation! Here we see our best Beloveds beauties mirrored in 10,000 delightful ways. There is a world of holy teaching in the books of the Old Testament and in their types and symbols! To give up this patrimony of the saints and to accept criticism instead of it would be like selling ones birthright for a mess of pottage! I see in our Lords unbroken bones a setting of the seal of God upon the types of Scripture!

Let us go further. I see, next, the seal of God set upon unfulfilled prophecy, for the passage in Zechariah is not yet completely fulfilled. It runs thusThey shall look upon Me whom they have pierced. Jehovah is the speaker and He speaks of the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. They are to look on Jehovah whom they have pierced and to mourn for Him. Although this prophecy is not yet fulfilled on the largest scale, yet it is so far certified, for Jesus is piercedthe rest of it, therefore, stands goodand Israel shall one day mourn because of her insulted King. The prophecy was fulfilled in part when Peter stood up and preached to the eleven, when a great company of the priests believed and when multitudes of the seed of Abraham became preachers of Christ Crucified. Still it awaits a larger fulfillment and we may rest quite sure that the day shall come when all Israel shall be saved. As the piercing of their Lord is true, so shall the piercing of their hearts be true and they shall mourn and inwardly bleed with bitter sorrow for Him whom they despised and abhorred. The point to mark here is that a seal is set in this case to a prophecy which yet awaits its largest fulfillment and, therefore, we may regard this as a patternand may lay stress upon prophecy, rejoice in it and receive it without doubt, come what may.

I have said this much upon the fulfillment of the Word concerning our Lord. Let us learn, therefore, a lesson of reverence and confidence in reference to Holy Scripture.

II. But now, secondly, and briefly, THE IDENTIFICATION OF OUR LORD AS THE MESSIAH was greatly strengthened by that which befell His body after death. It was necessary that He should conclusively be proven to be the Christ spoken of in the Old Testament. Certain marks and tokens are given and those marks and tokens must be found in Himthey were so found.

The first mark was this Gods Lamb must have a measure of preservation. If Christ is what He professes to be, He is the Lamb of God. Now, Gods lamb could only be dealt with in Gods way. There is the lamb. Kill it, sprinkle its blood, roast it with fire, but break not its bones. It is Gods lamb and not yours, therefore thus far shall you come, but no further. Not a bone of it shall be broken. Roast it, divide it among yourselves and eat itbut break no bone of it. The Lord claims it as His own and this is His reserve. So, in effect, the Lord says concerning the Lord JesusThere is My Son. Bind Him, scourge Him, spit on Him, crucify Him, but He is the Lamb of My Passover and you must not break a bone of Him. The Lords right to Him is declared by the reservation which is made concerning His bones. Do you not see, here, how He is identified as being, the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world? It is a mark of identity upon which faith fixes her eyesand she studies that mark until she sees much more in it than we can, this morning, speak about, for we have other things to dwell upon.

The next mark of identity must be that Jehovah our Lord should be pierced by Israel. So Zechariah said and so must it be fulfilled. Not merely must His hands and feet be nailed, but most conspicuously must He, Himself, be pierced. They shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him. Pierced He must be! His wounds are the marks and tokens of His being the real Christ. When they shall see the sign of the Son of Man in the last days, then shall all the tribes of the earth mournand is not that sign His appearing as a Lamb that has been slain? The wound in His side was a sure mark of His identity to His own disciples, for He said to Thomas, Reach here your hand and thrust it into My side: and be not faithless, but believing. It shall be the convincing token to all IsraelThey shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one that mourns for his only son. To us, the opened way to His heart is in His flesh, the token that this is the Incarnate God of Love, whose heart can be reached by all who seek His Grace.

But I have not finished this identification, for observe, that when that side was pierced, and immediately blood and water came out. You that have your Bibles will have opened them already at Zechariah 12will you kindly read on till you come to the first verse of the 13th Chapter, which ought not to have been divided from the 12th chapter? What do you find there? In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness. They pierced Him and in that day they began to mourn for Him! But more, in that day there was a fountain opened! And what was that fountain but this gush of water and of blood from the split side of our redeeming Lord? The prophecies follow quickly, one upon anotherthey relate to the same Person, to the same dayand we are pleased to see that the facts also follow quickly upon one another, for when the soldier with the spear pierced the side of Jesus, immediately blood and water came out. Jehovah was pierced and men repentedand beheld the cleansing fountain within a brief space! The men who saw the sacred fountain opened rejoiced to see in it the attestation of the finished Sacrifice and the token of its cleansing effect.

The identification is more complete if we add one more remark. Take all the types of the Old Testament together and you will gather this, that the purification of sin was typically set forth by blood and water. Blood was always conspicuous. You have no remission of sin without it. But water was also exceedingly prominent. The priests, before sacrificing, must washand the victim, itself, must be washed with water. Impure things must be washed with running water. Behold how our Lord Jesus came by water and by bloodnot by water, only, but by water and blood. John, who saw the marvelous stream, never forgot the sight, for though he wrote his Epistles, I suppose, far on in life, the recollection of that wondrous scene was fresh with him. Though I suppose he did not write his Gospel until he was a very old man, yet when he came to this passage it impressed him as much as ever and he uttered affirmations which he was not at all accustomed to use! He who has seen has testified, and his record is true: and he knows that he is telling the truth In solemn form he thus, after a manner, gave his affidavit before Gods people that he did really behold this extraordinary sight!

In Jesus we see One who has come to atone and to sanctify. He is that High Priest who cleanses the leprosy of sin by blood and water! This is one part of the sure identification of the great Purifier of Gods people, that He came both by water and by bloodand poured out both from His pierced side. I leave these identifications to you. They are striking to my own mind, but they are only part of the wonderful system of marks and tokens by which it is seen that God attests the Man Christ Jesus as being in very deed the true Messiah!

III. I must close by noticing, thirdly, THE INSTRUCTION INTENDED FOR US in all these things.   
The first instruction intended for us must be only hinted at, like all the rest. See what Christ is to us. He is the Paschal Lamb, not a bone of which was broken. You believe it. Come, then, and act upon your belief by feeding upon Christ! Keep the feast in your own souls this day. That sprinkled blood of His has brought you safetythe Destroying Angel cannot touch you or your house! The Lamb, Himself, has become your food. Feed on Him! Remove your spiritual hunger by receiving Jesus into your heart. This is the food of which, if a man eats, he shall live forever! Be filled with all the fullness of God as you now receive the Lord Jesus as God and Man. You are complete in Him. You are perfect in Jesus Christ. Can you say of HimHe is all my salvation and all my desire? Christ is all and in all. Do not merely learn this lesson as a doctrine, but enjoy it as a personal experience. Jesus our Passover is slain, let Him be eaten! Let us feast on Him and then be ready to journey through the wilderness in the strength of this Divine food, until we come to the promised rest.   
What next do we learn from this lesson but this? See mans treatment of Christ. They have spit on Him; they have cried, Crucify Him, crucify Him. They have nailed Him to the Cross. They have mocked His agonies and He is deadbut mans malice is not yet glutted. The last act of man to Christ must be to pierce Him through! That cruel wound was the concentration of mans ill-treatment of Jesus. His experience at the hands of our race is summed up in the fact that they pierced Him to the heart. That is what men have done to Christthey have so despised and rejected Him that He dies, pierced to the heart! Oh, the depravity of our nature! Some doubt whether it is total depravity. It deserves a worse adjective than that! There is no word in the human language which can express the venom of the enmity of man to his God and Saviorhe would wound Him mortally if He could. Do not expect that men will love either Christ or you, if you are like He? Do not expect that Jesus will find room for Himself in the inn, much less that He will be set on the throne by guilty, unrenewed men. Oh, no! Even when He is dead, they must insult His corpse with a spear thrust. One soldier did it, but he expressed the sentiment of the age. This is what the world of sinners did for Him who came into the world to save it!   
Now, learn, in the next place, what Jesus did for men. Beloved, that was a sweet expression in our hymn just now   
*Even after death His heart   
For us its tribute poured.*   
In His life He had bled for usdrop by drop the bloody sweat had fallen to the ground. Then the cruel scourges drew purple streams from Him. And as a little store of life-blood was left near His heart, He poured it all out before He went His way. It is a materialistic expression, but there is something more in it than mere sentimentthat there remains among the substance of this globe a sacred relic of the Lord Jesus in the form of that blood and water. As no atom of matter ever perishes, that matter remains on earth even now. His body has gone into Glory, but the blood and water are left behind.   
I see much more in this fact than I will now attempt to tell. O world, the Christ has marked you with His blood and He means to have you! Blood and water from the heart of Gods own Son have fallen down upon this dark and defiled planetand thus Jesus has sealed it as His own and, as such, it must be transformed into a new Heaven and a new earth wherein dwells righteousness! Our dear Lord, when He had given us all He had, and even resigned His life on our behalf, then parted with a priceless stream from the fountain of His heartand immediately blood and water came out. Oh, the kindness of the heart of Christ, that did not only, for a blow, return a kiss, but for a spear thrust returned streams of life and healing!   
But I must hurry on. I can also see in this passage the safety of the saints. It is marvelous how full of eyes the things of Jesus are, for His unbroken bones look backward to the Paschal lamb, but they also look forward throughout all the history of the Church to that day when He shall gather all His saints in one body and none shall be missing. Not a bone of His mystical body shall be broken! There is a text in the Psalms which says of the righteous manand all righteous men are conformed unto the image of ChristHe keeps all His bones: not one of them is broken. I rejoice in the safety of Christs elect! He shall not permit a bone of His redeemed body to be broken   
*For all the chosen seed   
Shall meet around the Throne,   
Shall bless the conduct of His Grace,   
And make His glories known.*   
A perfect Christ there shall be in the day of His appearing, when all the members of His body shall be joined to their glorious Head, who shall be crowned forever! Not one living member of Christ shall be absentNot a bone of Him shall be broken. There shall be no lame, maimed Christ, no half-worked redemption! The purpose for which He came to accomplish shall be perfectly achieved to the glory of His name!   
I have not quite done, for I must add another lesson. We see here the salvation of sinners. Jesus Christs side is pierced to give to sinners the double cure of sinthe taking away of its guilt and power and, better than thissinners are to have their hearts broken by a sight of the Crucified. By this means they are also to obtain faith. They shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him. Beloved, our Lord Jesus came not only to save sinners, but to seek them! His death not only saves those who have faith, but it creates faith in those who have it not! The Cross produces the faith and repentance which it demands. If you cannot come to Christ with faith and repentance, come to Christ for faith and repentance, for He can give them to you! He is pierced on purpose that you may be pricked to the heart. His blood, which freely flows, is shed for many for the remission of sins. What you have to do is just look and, as you look, those blessed feelings which are the marks of conversion and regeneration shall be worked in you by a sight of Him!

Oh, blessed lesson! Put it into practice this morning! Oh, that in this great house many may now have done with self and look to the crucified Savior and find eternal life in Him! For this is the main end of Johns writing this record. And this is the chief design of our preaching upon itwe long that you may believe! Come, you guilty! Come and trust the Son of God who died for you! Come, you foul and polluted! Come and wash in this sacred stream poured out for you! There is life in a look at the Crucified One! There is life at this moment for every one of you who will look to Him! God grant you may look and live, for Jesus Christs sake! Amen.

**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE BEFORE SERMONJohn 19:13-42.** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK910, 276, 277.  
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THE PIERCED HEART OF JESUS   
NO. 3559

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, APRIL 12, 1917.   
DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Then came the soldiers and broke the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with Him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was dead already, they broke not His legs, but one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith there came out blood and water. And he that saw it bares record that his record is true: and he knows that he is telling the truth, that you might believe. For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled. A bone of Him shall not be broken. And again another Scripture says, They shall look on Him whom they have pierced. John 19:32-37.**

WHAT a wonderful conjunction of Prophecy and Providence! I want you to behold it, and admire it. Two texts of Scripture predict, the one in Exodus the other in Zechariah (such a long interval having occurred between the distinct records), the former that not a bone of the Paschal Lamb should be brokenthe latter that He should be pierced. How were these two to be fulfilled in the minuteness of one incident? The rough Roman soldier comes with the iron bar to break the bones of the three prisoners who have been crucified. He has orders to break their legs. The well-disciplined soldier acts almost mechanically, according to orders. Roman discipline was of the very sternest kind. Will not the soldier, therefore, break the legs of Jesus? No! Moved by some strange impulse, he marks that one of the three, Jesus, who is called Christ, is already dead. Though commanded to break His legs, he forbearsbut, most likely to clear himself of all doubt on that point, he pierces His side with a spear! The willfulness of the soldier, wavering though wanton, thus fulfilled both the prophecies of which he must have been, himself, totally ignorant! And this was brought about, first, by his not doing what he was ordered to do and, secondly, by doing what he had not been ordered to do! Oh, how inscrutable the mystery of Providence! How marvelously does God rule the sons of men while He leaves them to their own free will! Did not this soldier act altogether as a free agent, whether following the dictates of his reason or the impulse of his temper, when he thus unwittingly, by his singular conduct, verified to the letter the words of Prophecy as precisely and entirely as if he had been a mere puppet moved with wires at the instigation of another mind and another hand than his own? This was not an accidental circumstance, or a singular coincidenceit was Providencea sublime purpose of God brought to pass by simple means. Irregularities among men do not disorganize the ordained purposes of Heaven, and what we think to be chaos is a wellordered system far beyond our imagination, into which we vainly attempt to peer.

I need not detain you with any speculations arising out of the piercing of our Savior by the spear. It has been, I think, very soberly argued that in all probability the physical cause of our Saviors death was a broken heart. In a scientific treatise by one who had studied the anatomy of the subject, and investigated cases which appeared, after death, to bear some resemblance to our Saviors case, it has been shown that when, on the heart being pierced, a small portion of blood and water has flowed, death has been traceable to a broken heart with intense grief. So, if we may assign a physical cause to the death of our Lord, it appears most probable to have been so occasioned. It was anguish that, in the first stage, produced a bloody sweat in Gethsemane, and in the last stage ruptured His heart. Not, however, that I am inclined to attach any importance to such arguments or speculations. For my part I do not see that there is any analogy, or that analogy need be sought between the case of the Savior and the case of any common man. The anatomist would be baffled with an analysis! The body of any ordinary person would exhibit symptoms of corruption. From this, He that hung upon the Cross was exempt. When death comes, and the vital spark quits the human frame, the process of decomposition speedily begins. But our Lord saw no corruption! Overshadowed as was His virgin mother by the Spirit at her conception, His birth was predicted as that holy thing which shall be born of you. Through the entire course of His life on earth, the Spirit rested upon Him in a special manner. And even after His soul had left His body, the Spirit preserved and kept that body so that the prophecy was fulfilled, Neither will You suffer Your Holy One to see corruption. Hence you search in vain for a parallel. The disparity of any instances that might be sought for is so palpable that you really have not any data to start with, or any premises to reason upon in the effort to judge of what happened in the anatomy of the sacred body of our blessed Lord. Instead of following speculations which rather belong to the physician than the theologian, I desire the Spirit of God to conduct us into some spiritual reflections arising out of the piercing of the heart of Jesus Christ by the soldiers spear. One observation, I think, lies upon the very surface of the narrative.

I. EVEN AFTER OUR LORDS DEATH, MEN RUDELY ASSAILED HIM. Was it not enough that they had scourged His back? Did it not suffice that they had put a crown of thorns on His head? Was it not sufficient that they had nailed His feet and His hands to the Cross? And yet after they were satisfied that the life had been forfeited to the law, and the body was already dead, nothing could content human cruelty till His heart was pierced with the lance! Say, now, was not this man who pierced Christs heart a fair, though a foul, sample of our sinful race? His heartless act a type of our headstrong profanity? We, too, after the Saviors death, have pierced Him! Shall I show you how? The crime is so common that you come to condone it. His Godhead is His Glory. Deny His Deity and you not only detract from His dignity, but you make Him unworthy of our confidence! This is to thrust the spear into His very heart! Your tone is treacherous when you say, He is but a Man. Though an admirable Teacher, I can only regard Him as a finite creature. Oh, how many people go up and down among us professing to be members of a Protestant Church and Believers in the Scripture, who yet will not acknowledge the miracles of Christ to be authentic, worked in token of His own Personal authority, bearing the witness of His Father, and conveying a clear proof that He was the Son of God? The Lord have mercy upon those who in this respect pierce our dear Redeemer afresh! If any of us have been guilty of this sin, may we be converted from our dangerous error, and led to avow Him, like Thomas, My Lord and my God.

They pierce Him, too, who attack the Doctrines which He taught, and the testimony which He delivered. The Truth of God was in Christs heartit was written there. Whatever He preached with His lips, He sanctified with His life. His heart was a fountain whence came all those Doctrines which reveal the Father to us. If men attack any Truth revealed to us by Christ, they do in effect what the soldier did in factthey do spiritually as this Roman soldier did literallythey thrust at His heart! If you disparage the words that Jesus spoke, or call in question the Truth that He showed to His disciples and made manifest in the Word of God, what is there left of that mission in which He made known the will of God, the Father? To proclaim this Truth He came! To bear witness to this Truth He died! He witnessed a good confession before Pontius Pilate. If you touch those Doctrines, you touch the apple of His eyeno, you pierce His heart again! How do they also thrust at His heart who persecute His people! And has He not often been wounded thus through all the centuries that have transpired since He ascended up on high to the Fathers right hand? Saul of Tarsus pierced His heart, for Jesus said, Why do you persecute Me? The sufferings of the men and women, hauled to prison, and beaten in the synagogue, and compelled to blaspheme, were injuries wantonly and wickedly done to Christ, Himself! And what shall we say of the martyrs, their groans in the prisons, their cries at the rack, their pangs at the stake, their blood so cruelly shedhave not all these touched the Saviors heart?

So, too, every rude jeer and ribald jest, every hard word and bitter taunt aimed at a follower of Christ is a reproach of the dear Lord and Master for whose sake it is meekly borne. But on their part, who whet their tongue like a sword, it is aimed at the heart of Jesus, on whom they cannot otherwise wreak their vengeance, now, for He cannot henceforth suffer, except in sympathy with the sufferings of His saints!

And there is yet another class of persons who, although Christs sufferings are over, still continue to pierce Him. They are such us pretend to be His disciples, but they lie and practice a foul hypocrisy! Are there any such present? I tremble as I ask the question. As there were false apostles of yore, so there are foul apostates in these days! Their profession is only the prelude to their perfidy. They make solemn pledge to obey Him, but, like Judas, they only wait for a suited opportunity to betray Him. They will sell the Savior for silveronly let the price be high enough their principle is low enough! Their conscience will not hesitate to crucify the Lord afresh, and put Him to an open shame. Oh, you inconsistent professors! Oh, you graceless men and women! How dare you come to the Table of His fellowship? You have a name to live, and yet you are dead! You are crucifying Him! You are piercing Him! The guilt of the Roman soldier clings to you!

I fear, too, there is another class that pierces His heartit includes those who refuse to believe in His willingness to forgive them. When under conviction of sin, it may be difficult to believe that one can be pardoned, but when the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ is revealed to us and His infinite condescension that brought Him to suffer for usit does seem unbelievable that any should doubt Him! Yet there are some who link their chains, sit down in despair, and say, He is not willing to forgive. So unkind, ungenerous a thought as thatthat He is unwilling to forgive pierces Him to the heart and cuts Him to the quick! I know some of you do not mean this. You are startled, now that you think what you are doing. I pray the Lord you may humbly trust Him! Oh, do not doubt Himthe Son of God, who suffered for His enemies, surrendering His life, even for the ungodly! Will you, can you still distrust Him? Will you doubt the testimony which God has given concerning His Son? Were it not far better that you honored Him by casting yourselves at His feet? Angels that sing His praises night and day unceasingly do not honor Him more than you will do, if, all black and defiled as you are, you will come and trust Him that He can wash you and make you whiter than snow! Oh, do this and pierce His heart no more!

Some men pierce the heart of Christ through their carelessness. They trifle and even scoff because they have not known Him, or sought by any means to learn what claims He has upon their homage. They disparage those Divine features of His ministry which they have never properly understood. So they pierce the heart of Christ out of ignorant prejudice! They are unacquainted with the Gospel. All that they have heard or read about it has been from the tongue or pen of opponent or satirist, and then, catching their temper, they have joined in reviling it! Alas, too, there are some who malign the Savior out of mere malice. Though they know better, yet they willfully blaspheme His name. Stop, oh, stop, and pierce Him no more, I pray you, lest He that has meekly endured so long as the Lamb of God, should suddenly stir Himself up as the lion of the tribe of Judah and make you feel the terror of His Power, who will not feel the majesty of His love! So much for our first point. Even after Jesus death, there are those who still pierce Him. Our second thought is such as I am charmed to give you.

II. THESE ATTACKS UPON THE SAVIOR ARE OVERRULED TO DISPLAY HIS GRACE THE BETTER.   
His heart is pierced, it is true, but with what result, my Brothers and Sisters? Does there flash from it fire? Does the peal of thundering wrath roll over the sinners head? Ah, no! It is like the sandal tree that perfumes the axe that wounds it. That spear, no sooner is it withdrawn from the wound, than there gushes a fountain of blood and water. The attacks that are made upon Jesus Christ only display His virtues. Observe how this is brought about. If the Truth of God is attacked, and the Gospel is assailed, what is the immediate consequence? Why, then, the saints search deeper into it, so they come to understand the Doctrine better! They learn the arguments by which it is sustained and they love the Truth of God with fonder, as well as stronger convictions, till they feel moved to sacrifice themselves for it! The heart of Christ was opened by the spear, and often the heart of the Truth of God is revealed by the opposition brought to bear against it. They think to confute our Doctrines they do but confirm our faith in their verity! Where they think they shall prove us fools, they help to make us sages! They drive us to the root of the matter and they rather establish us in the precious Truth! The March wind tears not up the oak, but roots it more firmly in its native soil. So shall it ever be with attacks made upon our Lord and Master! We shall understand Him the better and discover more of the Scriptures that were fulfilled in Him!   
Moreover, it often happens that when Christ is opposed by persecution, the Gospel is proclaimed with more zeal, and diffused with more rapidity. The saints who were, in early days, persecuted in Jerusalem, went everywhere preaching the Word of God. What if I say the spear of persecution does, as it were, set the atoning blood flowing more freely among the sons of men, and make the purifying water of the Saviors Sacrifice to be dispersed over a wider area, and among a larger population? Shall I compare the persecuted Church to an oppressed nation, and remind you that, like Israel in Egypt, the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and grew? The spear let loose the blood and water from the heart of Jesus, and the spear of persecution lets loose the Gospeland compels Christian men who might have rested in inglorious ease to go forward and laboriously dispense the Gospel of salvation, telling the Grace of God to perishing men! So, too (but let no man turn this into evil), the very sin of men which does wound Christ becomes the means of magnifying Gods Grace! Though it is a vile thing to say, Let us sin that Grace may abound, yet is it a most glorious Truth of God that where sin abounds, Grace does much more abound! Thus the cleansing power of the blood becomes more renowned by reason of the sin that made this wondrous Sacrifice necessary. Perhaps we had never known the Savior so well if we had not seen sin so clearly in the lives of the pardoned ones, who afterwards were washed, cleansed and sanctified by His purifying energy. The very opposition that comes forth is overruled for His triumph! The stronger His foes, the louder the shout of victory when He returns from the strife!   
And when the Church is assailed (which is one way of piercing Christ) she gets some immediate benefit from the grievous trial, for persecution acts like a great winnowing fan that drives the chaff away from the floor on which the pure grain is housed. It is to the Church like a refiners fire. The mere dross is separated. The faithless, who are found among the faithful, soon apostatize, while the sterling gold and silver, the genuine lovers of Christ, are purged and purified by the ordeal through which they are compelled to pass! Oh, blessed Savior, they do pierce You, and pierce You they may, but You are honored, for their bitter reviling elicits Your sweet virtue! They may thrust their spears into Your very heart, but by giving forth Your own energy of love and mercy, and greeting them with salvation, You do conquer those who thought to conquer You! Put these two things together Brothers and Sistersman still continuing to wound the Saviorand the more redundant display of the Saviors Grace as the consequence! Then find a total if you can.   
Another thought, which diverges a little from the last, may help us to pursue our meditation. Since the soldier sent His spear into the Saviors heart   
III. THE WAY TO THAT HEART IS OPEN.   
It was always open, in fact, for He always loved the sons of men, but now you can see it open! It was no little wound that was made by the lance, for into it, we read, Thomas put His hand. What a gaping fissure must that have been into which the Apostle might put his palm! Reach here, your hand, and thrust it into My side. He still lives, as no one of us could live, with a passage to the heart always open! In His very flesh He testifies to us today that His heart is ready to receive any message that His children may choose to sendand equally ready to respond with the love that has its fountain there! Behold the open heart of Jesus! It is open that all the Divine Grace that is within it may freely flow to undeserving sinners. Think not, Sinner, that you have need to open Jesus side. The blood has flown freely. Say now, will you come and wash in it? You have not to beg for cleansing, as though it were a gift hardly to be obtained by importunityit flows, it still flows! He is willingas willing as He is able, and as able as He is willingto cleanse you from your guilt! Whatever there may be in the heart of Christ, it all flows out! The precious liquid is kept within, but set loose for every needy, thirsty soul. His heart is open!  
It is open for the doubter to put his hand into it now. Where are you, Thomas? Do you ask some hard thing and say, Except I see this and that, I will not believe? Oh, Trembler, weighed down by your sins and your weakness, do you not see Him this day in Glory, with His heart still open towards you? Put your hand into the wound and say, My Lord and my God. Accept your Savior without hesitation or delay! Come and find rest in Him. His side is open for your hand to reach His heart. It is openthat side is openfor those who pierced Him to look in to see what they have done, and lament it. But see how tender is His heart, and go to Him without fear. You pierced Himlook at Him and mourn because you did so. You sinners, though you did put your Lord to death, His heart is open to you! He invites you to come and receive His mercy that He has treasured up for you. Oh, come, come! He will receive you now. His heart is open to sympathize with the griefs and woes, the prayers and pleadings, the desires and longings of all His people!   
You know we have to get to some mens hearts through their ears, and through their eyes. In not a few of our callous race, these passages are choked up. You show them sorrow, and they see it without emotion. You cannot reach their heart. If you tell them a pitiful tale of deep distress, they hear it with indifference, for somehow the story loses its way in the mazes of the earit does not reach the heart. Far otherwise is it with your Lord. His heart is so accessible that you need not fear He will not hear you, or that He will not heed your faintest cry! You will feel that you can come close, straight, quick to Him, by a near passage you reach His very soul at once. Say not, then, that no one sympathizes with you! Jesus does! He cannot fail to pity, solace, or to cheer. His pierced heart sympathizes far more quickly than the most tender heart that ever lived before or after. His love passes the love of women, tender as that is. There is no love like that of Him with the open heartthe love of Jesus with the opened heartwith the open side!

I cannot express to you what I see in this bare fact, this blessed Truth. I wish I could. But it would be still better if you could see the same. Oh, I can come to Him, now, and put my prayers into His sidecan come and put my desires into His side! Oh, Jesus, all my desire is before You, and my groans are not hid from You. I have but five senses, You have a new oneYou have a new way to Your heart such as we poor mortals have not. I and my Brothers and Sisters may be inattentive, but You never are. You are He of the wounded heartforever sympatheticforever full of gentleness!   
I might linger on this thought, but I prefer leaving it to your meditation, lest I should darken it with words. So let us finish with a last reflection.   
IV. A WOUND IN CHRISTS SIDE REVEALS THE HEART OF JESUS IN ITS PRECIOUSNESS.   
That spear did, as it were, break the alabaster box and let out the sweet perfume. What, then, was there in the Saviors heart? Men carry in their hearts that which is dearest. The true man is what he is at the hearts core. What was our blessed Redeemers life-thoughtthe compelling motive of His life-work? Upon what did He most of all concentrate the desires and affections of His heart? See you not that when pierced, there flowed forth blood and water? Those two things, then, must have been the nearest to the purpose of His heart. Hence I discern that in my Lords heart, there was, first, a strong determination to purge sinners from their guilt by His blood. The atoning Sacrifice is not merely the hand blood of the Saviors work, nor is it merely the foot blood of the Saviors journeying through the vale of tearsit was His hearts blood, indicative of heart-workit was the blood of Redemption shed for us. He loved that work. He was straitened till He could accomplish it. And let me tell you it is Christs joy to wash you from your sin! Start not back because your conscience is troubled. He has opened a fountain for your uncleannessin the very midst of the house of David has He opened it. He delights to take away your guilt   
*Dear, dying Lamb, Your precious blood   
Shall never lose its power,   
Till all the ransomed Church of God   
Is saved to sin no more.*   
It has not lost its power! Then let it plead for me! To me let it be precious! Let me feel its potent virtue. By it may I have boldness. Like the Apostle, may I say, Who shall lay anything to the charge of Gods elect? It is God who justifies; who is he that condemns? It is Christ that died. Oh, to have the blood applied to the conscience! Rest not till you hear it speak peace through your whole nature, till you see the curse removed and are assured that there now is, therefore, no condemnation for you because you are in Christ Jesus! It is Christs heart-work to redeem His people by His blood. Oh, that He may now see of the travail of His soul in your redemption!   
Moreover, Beloved, in Christs heart there was the water as well as the blood. He would have His people sanctified as well as pardoned. He would deliver them from the power as well as from the guilt of sin! I believe this is very near Christs heart. That He may present His Church without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, is His design as well as His desire. His Spirit is working to this end. That He might not allow so much as a single stain to rest upon the nature of His people is alike the pleasure and the purpose of Christ! He has put their guilt away by the Sacrifice of Himself. This is done. Yet He continues to demand their selfsacrifice, that He may put away their evil propensities, the fruit of their first fathers fall. My Soul, glorify the pierced heart of Christ! Give Him to see in yourself the effect of the water that flowed from His heart! Be you holy, He says, as I am holy. Be you perfect, He says again, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect. Deny the flesh with its affections and lusts! Separate yourselves from sinners! Avoid partaking of other mens sins! Like Christ, be you holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. This can only be effected by the Spirits vital application of the Saviors atoning death. Stay at the foot of the Cross. Live under the influence of His Passion. Pray that you may rise out of this worlds fading, failing vanity, into newness of life through His pierced heart! In other words, let us stand in penitence before the Crucified One and mourn that we pierced Him. But let us stand in His Propitiation, rejoicing that His piercing has procured our pardon!  
So let us go on our way, resolved, by His help, that we will glorify Him in all manner of holy conversation and godliness. For, He that saw it bares record, and his record is true, and he knows that he is telling the truth, that you might believe. May you believe, may you all believe the record is true! Believing, you shall have life through His name! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **MATTHEW 27:50-66.**

Verse 50. Jesus, when He had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. Christs strength was not exhaustedHis last word was uttered with a loud voice, like the shout of a conquering warrior! And what a word it was, It is finished! Thousands of sermons have been preached upon that little sentence, but who can tell all the meaning that lies compacted within it? It is a kind of infinite expression for breadth, and depth, and length, and height altogether immeasurable! Christs life being finished, perfected, completedHe yielded up the ghostwillingly dying, laying down His life as He said He would! I lay down My life for the sheep. . .I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again.

51-53. And, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks were split, and the graves were opened; and many of the bodies which slept, arose and came out of the graves after His Resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many. Christs death was the end of JudaismThe veil of the Temple was torn in two from the top to the bottom. As if shocked at the sacrilegious murder of her Lord, the Temple tore her garments, like one stricken with horror at some stupendous crime. The body of Christ being rent, the veil of the Temple was torn in two from the top to the bottom. Now was there an entrance made into the Holiest of All by the blood of Jesusand a way of access to God was opened for every sinner who trusted in Christs atoning Sacrifice!

See what marvels accompanied and followed the death of ChristThe earth did quake, and the rocks were split, and the graves were opened. Thus did the material world pay homage to Him whom man had rejected, while Natures convulsions foretold what will happen when Christs voice once more shakes not the earth only, but also Heaven! These first miracles worked in connection with the death of Christ were typical of spiritual wonders that will be continued till He comes againrocky hearts are split in two, graves of sin are opened, those who have been dead in trespasses and sins, and buried in sepulchers of lust and evil, are quickened and come out from among the dead, and go into the holy city, the New Jerusalem.

54. Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God. These Roman soldiers had never witnessed such scenes in connection with an execution, before, and they could only come to one conclusion about the illustrious Prisoner whom they had put to deathTruly this was the Son of God. It was strange that those men should confess what the chief priests and scribes and elders denied, yet since their day it has often happened that the most abandoned and profane have acknowledged Jesus as the Son of God, while their religious rulers have denied His Divinity.

55-56. And many women were there beholding afar off, which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto Him: Among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the Mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedees children. We have no record of any unkindness to our Lord from any woman, though we have many narratives of the loving ministry of women at various periods in His life. It was meet, therefore, that even at Calvary, many women were there beholding afar off. The ribald crowd and the rough soldiers would not permit these timid, yet brave souls, to come near. But we learn from John 19:25 that some of them edged their way through the throng till they stood by the Cross of Jesus. Love will dare anything.

57, 58. When the evening was come, there came a rich man of Arimathaea, named Joseph, who also, himself, was Jesus disciple. He went to Pilate, and begged for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered. This rich man of Arimathaea, named Joseph, a member of the Jewish Sanhedrim, was Jesus disciple, but secretly for fear of the Jews (John 19:38). Yet when his Lord was actually dead, extraordinary courage nerved his spirit and he boldly went to Pilate and begged for the body of Jesus. Joseph and Nicodemus are types of many more who have been emboldened by the Cross of Christ to do what, without that mighty magnet, they would never have attempted! When night comes, the stars appearso in the night of Christs death, these two bright stars shone forth with blessed radiance! Some flowers bloom only at nightsuch a blossom was the courage of Joseph and Nicodemus.

59, 60. And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulcher, and departed. Our King, even in the grave, must have the best of the bestHis body was wrapped in a clean linen cloth, and laid in Josephs own new tomb, thus completing the fulfillment of Isaiah 53:9. Some see in this linen shroud an allusion to the garments in which priests were to be clothed. Josephs was a virgin sepulcher, wherein up to that time no one had been buried, so that, when Jesus rose, none could say that another came forth from the tomb instead of Him.

That rock-hewn cell in the garden sanctified every part of Gods acre where saints lie buried. Instead of longing to live till Christ comes, as some do, we might rather pray to have fellowship with Jesus in His death and burial.

61. And there was Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulcher. Love and faith were both typified by these two Marys sitting over against the sepulcher. They will be the last to leave their Lords resting place, and the first to return to it when the Sabbath is past! Can we cling to Christ when His cause seems to be dead and buried? When the Truth of God is fallen in the streets, or is even buried in the sepulcher of skepticism or superstition, can we still believe in it and look forward to its resurrection? That is what some of us are doing at the present time. O Lord, keep us faithful!

62-64. Now the next day, that followed the day of preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, Saying, Sir, we remember that that Deceiver said, while He was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the Sepulcher be made sure until the third day, lest His disciples come by night, and steal Him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first. Those punctilious priests and Pharisees, who were so scrupulous about keeping the Sabbath, did not mind profaning the Day of Rest by holding a consultation with the Roman governor! They knew that Christ was dead and buried, but they still stood in dread of His power. They called Him a deceiver, and they even pretended to remember what He said, while He was yet alive. At His trial, their false witnesses gave another meaning to His words, but they knew all the while that He was speaking of His Resurrection, not of the Temple on Mount Zion! Now they are afraid that, even in the sepulcher, He will bring to nothing all their plans for His destruction. They must have known that the disciples of Jesus would not steal Him away and say to the people, He is risen from the deadso they probably feared that he really would come forth from the tomb! Whatever conscience they had, made great cowards of them, so they begged Pilate to do what he could to prevent the rising of their Victim.

65, 66. Pilate said unto them, You have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as you can. So they went and made the sepulcher sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch. The chief priests and Pharisees wanted Pilate to make the sepulcher sure, but he left them to secure it. There seems to have been a grim sort of irony about the governors reply, You have a watch; go your way, make it as sure as you can. Whether he meant it as a taunt, or as a command to secure the sepulcher, they became unconsciously witnesses that Christs Resurrection was a supernatural act! The tomb in the rock could not be entered except by rolling away the stone, and they guarded that by sealing the stone, and setting a watch.

According to the absurd teaching of the Rabbis, rubbing ears of corn was a kind of threshing and, therefore, was unlawful on the Sabbath yet here were these men doing what, by similar reasoning, might be called furnace and foundry work, and calling out a guard of Roman legionaries to assist them in breaking the Sabbath! Unintentionally, they did honor to the sleeping King when they obtained the representatives of the Roman emperor to watch His resting place till the third morning, when He came forth Victor over sin, and death, and the grave! Thus once more was the wrath of man made to praise the King of Glory, and the remainder of that wrath was restrained.

Adapted from the C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software.   
PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #3311 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE WATER AND THE BLOOD   
NO. 3311

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, JULY 18, 1912.   
DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.   
John 19:34.**

IT is with much fear and trembling that I usually stand upon this platformnot that I shrink before the face of the multitude however large, but the weight of the subject which I have continually to bring before your minds fills my own soul with awe. And yet it is with more than usual anxiety I approach my subject this evening, because although it is full of tender interest and touching pathos, I feel that without the unction of the Holy Spirit, it would be insipid and unprofitable. And yet, on the other hand, with that Divine anointing, it is one of the richest topics that can possibly engage our meditation!

Readers of old theology will have remarked how constantly the fathers were accustomed to dwell upon the wounds of Jesus slain. And this fifth wound which penetrated His heart was peculiarly attractive to them. They said a great many things about it. Some, indeed that were fanciful, but other remarks that were truly excellent and well deserve to be treasured up. I would it were more the practice of Believers nowadays than it is to study the very Person of Christ, as well as the Doctrines of the Gospel, and to learn the Divine lessons which are discoverable in the wounds of Jesus as well as the sacred admonitions bequeathed to us by the words of His mouth.

One of these old Divines says that Jesus Christ was typified by our first father, Adam. As Adam fell asleep, and out of his side Eve was taken, so Jesus slept upon the Cross, the sleep of death, and from His side, where the spear was thrust, His Church was taken. He who redeemed us unto God by His blood, formed us as a peculiar people for Himself. The Church is one with Himshe came out of His side, and as He looks upon her, He can sayYou are bone of My bone, and flesh of My flesh. With My blood have I redeemed you. Others have been pleased to compare Christ to the Rock in the wilderness, which was smitten, and this spearthrust is the great cleft in the Rock. You may remember how Toplady puts it

*Rock of Ages, cleft for me! Let me hide myself in Thee.* And he clearly has this in view, for the next lines are

*Let the water and the blood   
From Your riven side which flowed,   
Be of sin the double cure,   
Cleanse me from its guilt and power.*

I do not consider this allusion fanciful, nor can I think it distorts the type. Moses hidden in the cleft of the rock, that he might see Gods Glory, had not a standing place one-half so glorious as you and I have when, sheltered in the wounds of the Savior slain, we see the glorious Justice and the Infinite Love of God reconciled in the Person of the dying Lamb.

In the course of reading, I have met with some remarkable expressions in regard to this great wound of Christ. Some have called it, a gate of Heaven. Why should I object to the title? Do we not enter into Heaven through the wounds of Jesus? It is, of course, a metaphorical expression, yet quite allowable. If the teaching is that there is no other way of access to God except through the torn veil of Christs bodyand that veil was torn in two, indeed, when the soldier with the spear pierced His sidewe may, without straining the thought, call that wound one of the gates of Heaven. Another calls it a celestial window, a window of Paradise, and we have versified that idea in one of our own familiar sonnets

*Look through Jesus wounds on me;   
Him, and then the sinner see.*

Another writer, carried away by the consideration of this spear-thrust, calls it a palace of refuge. A palace! Surely, never kings had such an one! Solomons palace of ivory was nothing like it! And what a refuge it is! When the poor heart, like the dove hunted by the hawk, needs a shelter, if it can fly to Jesus wounds, it is sheltered from all its sins. Well does our song put it

*Come, guilty souls, and flee away   
Like doves to Jesus wounds!   
This is the welcome Gospel Day,   
Wherein free Grace abounds.*

I forget the name of the writer, who, in speaking upon his Masters wounds, seems to get so exalted and carried away by the subject that He calls this wound the sacred wellhead of the rivers of golden sand which cover all the earthtwo rivers, one of water and the other of blood. Two quickening rivers that carry life through the realms of death. Two purifying rivers cleansing the Augean stable of this filthy world. Two mighty rivers which bear the elect vessels onwards towards the sea of everlasting bliss, not one of them suffering shipwreck on the voyage, for this mighty river is too deep to have quicksands, too broad for the mariner to be cast away upon a rock-bound shore! I like the thought, and so let it bethe sacred wellhead of that river of more than golden sandthe streams whereof make glad the multitudes of Gods chosen throughout the earth!

In this wound of Christ, caused by the soldier, I discern four obvious meanings. It has many more, but these four will be enough to occupy our attention this evening.

I. It was THE MARK OF PROPHECY. In order that it might be fully known that Jesus Christ was the Messiah that was to come, the Prophets had given many marks, all of which must be found in the Person of the Man who should be the Great Deliverer. Among the rest was this one that John quotes, A bone of Him shall not be broken. This description concerned the paschal lamb, of which it was expressly said by the Lord, through Moses, that they were never to break a single bone of it. Its joints were to be separated after it had been roasted with fire, but not a bone was to be snapped. Now, if Jesus Christ is the Lamb of Gods Passover, it is necessary that He should never have a broken bone. And yet it looked as if His bones would be broken. The rough soldier brought up a great iron crowbar and, with an awful blow, smashed the legs of the poor thief who hung on one side of our Lord, but half-dead, in order to hasten his dissolution. It was a strange thing that he passed by Christ, who was in the middle. I know not what it was that made him do so whether some flash of majesty beamed from that dead face, or whether some singular instinct checked his arm. But he went and administered the dreadful blow to the thief on the other side. And now he came to Christ and perhaps raised the iron rodwhen he saw that He was already dead! His head was hanging down upon His bosom and the man saw clearly that there was no need to administer the deathblow to Him. It was a strange thing that his hands should be so restrained. The soldiers of that day were wanton enough. They were just as likely as not to have broken the bones even though the man were deadbut Divine Prophecy must have it so and, therefore, not a bone of Jesus can be broken!

And then the Prophet Zechariah had said concerning the Messiah, They shall look upon Him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son. Now up till that moment our Lord had not been pierced, except as to His hands and feet, and this would scarcely have been a carrying out of the word, pierced. Somebody would have said, Well, but He never was pierced so as to cause His deaththere was no such piercing as the text indicates. But now that the soldier, moved by the mysterious impulse, lifts his lance and thrusts it deep into the side of Christnow did Prophecy set its mark upon Christnow did history identify Himthe Man without broken bones yet the Man whose side was pierced! Him for whom Israel should one day mourn! Him whom His enemies should one day confess to be their King!

My dear Brothers and Sisters, has it ever struck you with admiring wonder that Jesus Christ should answer to Prophecies so complicated and types so manifoldshould answer even with coincidences the most minute to them all? It would be almost impossible to count the types of Christ which are given in the Old Testament. It would, perhaps, be easy to count the prophecies, but very difficult for anybody to form a character in which all these should be blended and fulfilled! It has been said that if you were to give all these types and all these prophecies to the wisest of men of all ages, and say to them, You are required to compile a biography of a man who shall answer to all these, they must certainly give up in despair! You can find men who will make a key to fit any lockby diligence of labor, no matter how complicated the mechanism may be, the thing may at last be done. But I will defy all the wisdom that ever was in humanity to form a key that will fit the exceedingly complex words of all the types of the Old Testament and all its prophecies! How palpable then the evidence is. Our Lord Jesus Christ answers to them all. Just as the stamp in the wax answers to the seal that stamped it, the Providence that transpired corresponds with the predictions that forestalled His course! He went as it was written of Him! There He is and He fulfils types that look the most opposite and prophecies which seem to run counter to one another!

If anybody thinks that the stories told by the four Evangelists are spurious, I would suggest to him to go and write a fifthto try to write another that would as much correspond with the Old Testamentand with the other four, as those four do with the Old Testament and with each other! And when that task was done, I would then give him another problem to solve before he could have reasonable ground for suspicion that Jesus of Nazareth was not the Messiah. Account for the incredulity of the Jews in the presence of those evidences that have produced conviction among the Gentiles upon any other hypotheses than that which ratifies their own Scripture! If the Old Testament is the Word of God, it seems marvelous to us that men do not receive Jesus as being the Shiloh that was to come, the promised Messiah, the Prince of the kings of the earth! Jewish unbelief amazes us! Yet I suppose if we judged aright, our own lack of faith in Jesus, notwithstanding the rational credit we give to His mission as a popular creed, is still more amazing! If that is gross unbelief which rejects Christ, while acknowledging the Old Testament, what shall I say of you who refuse allegiance to Him and yet profess to believe both the Old and the New? If they that receive the first yet stumble at the second, what shall I say of those who receive both and yet, over the head of this double belief professed, give not their hearts to the Crucified Son of God, and put not their trust in the merit of His precious blood, but still continue afar off from Him by wicked works?

Some time ago, when in Italy, at a town on the Italian side of the Alps, I saw one Sunday afternoon, in a quiet walk alone, a sight which struck me very much and which remains fixed upon my memory. There was outside the town a mountain and the way up the sides of which were different representations of the progress of our Lord, from the Garden where Judas betrayed Him to the place of His Resurrection. The figures were as large as life, carved in either stone or wood, and painted to imitate nature. When I got to the very summit of the hill, there was a church. There was no one in it and I pushed open the door and went in. All was still. It was a large building and all around it were images of the Prophets and the Apostles. There stood Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and all the restone knew the usual portraits of them. And up in the dome, at the very top of the church, was a large and striking image of the Savior. Now, what struck me about the church was thisthat the images of those Prophets and Apostles who stood there had their fingers all pointed upwards, so that, when I went in, I could not help looking up to the top to see what they were pointing at! All round the church there were the words, in Latin, Moses and the Prophets spoke concerning Him. And there stood Moses and the Prophets, carved in stone, and all pointing to Him! Isaiah had a little scroll in his hand on which was written, The Lord has made to meet on Him the iniquity of us all. Jeremiah had a scroll in his hand, on which was written, Behold, and see if there is any sorrow like unto My sorrow, which is done unto Me. I think the church just represented the Truth in that case. It is even so. All the Prophets stand as a complete circle of distinct testifiers and, with uplifted fingers, they all concur with John the Baptist when he said, Behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world. They all point to Christ. If you read the life of Christ and then read what they said of Him, you will be persuaded that this is He which was to come!

II. But to pass on, we may look upon the spear-thrust in the side of Christ as THE ESCUTCHEON OF SHAME.  
While our Lord lived, He was the subject of every form of scorn. He was scourged as none but a felon might be according to the Roman Law. He was spat upon and mocked, as even a felon ought not to have been. That crown of thorns, that reed scepter and that old scarlet cloakwho could have invented a more shameful insignia for One who was greater than all the kings on the earth but who was brought exceedingly low? And our Lords death, itself, was a great portion of His shame. It was a shame for Him to dieand ignominy for Him to die the death of hanging on the Cross. Heraldry has so emblazoned the symbol that we do not ordinarily apprehend the real shame to which Christ was exposed. Were I to preach to you tonight that a certain man who was hanged was very God, people would begin to say, Why do you preach of one who died on the gallows as a felon? Literally and truly, that is just how Jesus Christ died, according to the customs of His times. Crucifixion was to the Romans what hanging is to us, only it was worse. It was more shameful, for crucifixion was reserved for the very worst of crimes. Not all murderers were so punished, but only the worst and vilest crimes with murder to aggravate them received this opprobrious doom. People hang crosses round their necks and wear them as ornamentsI wonder whether they would make ornaments of gallows? Yet it means that. It is just the same thing and this is the shame of Christ. This is the very shame in which Paul rejoiced and gloried, that Jesus Christ was not ashamed to be ashamed! That He was willing to be made ashamed and a curse for us! That He was content to be treated with all the scorn that human malignity and inhuman cruelty could heap upon Him!   
But, Beloved, when Christ was dead, they might certainly have ceased from their scorn. But no, the brutal Roman soldiers were not very nice as to what they did with living bodies. They would not, therefore, be particular as to what they did with dead bodies! Therefore this soldier, in a mere freak of wanton brutality, thrust his lance into the Saviors heart. It was the last kick of the old enemy. It was, as it were, the last of the spit from the foul mouth of human slander and hatred. It was the last thrust that human malice could give to the Lord of Life and Glory! I see in this the mark, the crowning emblem of the shame which He endured.   
Well, and what then? Why, it should teach us, dear Friends, what a shameful thing sin must be! For, though Christ was no sinner, yet when our sins were laid upon Him, look how God treated Him and permitted Him to be treated as an outcastto be covered with the utmost shame! Ah Sin, what a shameful thing you must be! Blush, Christian, that you should be guilty of it. Blush again, that you do not blush more often! Be ashamed that you are not ashamed of sin, and be offended that your heart should be so stolid over a thing so detestable.   
Another thought springs up, namely, that if Christ was put to so much shame for us, how glad we ought to be if we are sometimes allowed to be put to shame for Him! Oh, there are some people who cannot bear shamethey can endure anything else but ridicule and laughter! As John Bunyan says, of all villains, Shame is the most shameless for he will go and make sport and fun of the Christians virtues and mock at that which he ought to admire. Well, child of God, supposing today you have your face spat upon for Christ? Twere scarcely worthwhile to wipe it off! Ah, if you had to live a dying life, to be thrown in a dungeon, or to live upon the rackas long as it was done for Him who bore all this for youthe thought might sweeten the wormwood and turn the gall into honey, that you were thus honored to have fellowship with Him in His sufferings! I leave that view of this wound of Christ with you, praying that it may nerve your hearts with a glorious courage as you see Jesus thus shamefully wounded for you.   
III. This lance wound was THE SEAL OF DEATH UPON OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. His enemies were so determined to put Him to death that they dragged His life out of its principal organ and then they pierced it, namely, the heart. It was not possible that Jesus Christ could have lived another moment longer, even had He been alive at that timebut when the heart was touched, death must come. Those who understand anatomy tell us that the pericardium around the heart was pierced and they say that from that there flowed the blood and the water. But I am extremely doubtful whether the pericardium in any state whatever could have yielded a sufficient quantity of lymph, for though there is water there, there is only a small quantity. In the state in which our Savior was, blood and water might have been found naturally in His heart, but only in a very small and infinitesimal quantity. The fountain that flowed from there was miraculous, not natural but

supernaturalor if natural, yet so exalted and so increased in quantity as to become in itself supernatural.   
Certainly, however, the piercing of His heart was the indication to all mankind that He was dead already. Now, little as that may seem in the eyes of those of you who do not love Him, it is a most important thing to those who trust Him, for remember, if Jesus Christ had not died, you and I would have perished! It was of no use for our expiation that He sweat great drops of blood unless He had perfected the Sacrifice. The Law required if if Christ had not laid down His life, the Law would have required ours. In due time, our souls would have been cast into the Second Death on account of sin if Jesus had not died, actually and truly died. But we are quite sure about it now, for His heart was pierced. Indeed, I may say that this is the one keystone of the whole Gospel system, for if Jesus did not die then, we have no Resurrection. If He died not then, He did not riseand if we have no evidence of Resurrection, the whole of our religion becomes a lie! But, Brothers and Sisters, He did die. His soul left His body. That corpse that was taken by Joseph of Arimathaea was as lifeless as any that was ever committed to the sepulcher! And He did rise again, in proof to us that we who die and those we have parted with on the confines of this mortal life who are, alas, all truly dead, shall certainly rise again and in their flesh shall see God! This is a simple Truth of God for you to hear, perhaps, but never did angel have such weighty news to tell as I have told you tonightthat God was made fleshthe very God that made Heaven and earth took upon Himself our nature and as such He died, literally died for us! The God-Man, the Mediator, Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God and the Son of Mary, died, was crucified and had His heart pierced for us! And if we depend upon this, we may rest secure. If He died, then we need not die! If He died for us, then we cannot die the Second Death. If Jesus was punished in our place, the sting of death is taken away, the Law is satisfied and every soul that believes in Him shall have eternal life!   
IV. But I cannot tarry longer upon that and, therefore, I come to the fourth point. This heart wound of Christ is also to be called THE SOURCE OF PURITY. The text tells us that there issued from it a double flood of blood and water. We are not at a loss to explain this because the Apostle John, in his Epistle, has told us that our Lord came by water and blood; not by water only, but by water and blood, and he explains it by the connection that Christ came into the world by blood to take away the guilt of sin, and by water to take away the power of sinby blood to remove the punishment, by water to remove the filth. [See Sermon #3252, Vo

lume 57BY WATER AND BLOODRead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.]

Now, dear Friends, let us say that there is no blood and no water that can wash away sin anywhere but in Christ. All the blood of bulls could not take away sin, though offered by Aaron, himself, the father of the Levitical priesthood! And all the water in the world, though consecrated by bishops, cardinals and popes, cannot take away a single spot of iniquity! The only blood that can cleanse us from Gods wrath is the blood of Jesus Christ, Himself, and the only water that can wash out of us the damning stain of sin is the water which came from Jesus Christs heart! If you want to be thus doubly washed, go to the Son of God for the washing! Go nowhere else, I pray you, for every other trust is but a delusion and a lie. Jesus Christ can put away the guilt of every sin. Though you have been a drunk, an adulterer, a whoremonger, a thief, a murderer, yet the blood of Jesus Christ can wash you from the accumulated filth of yearsand the water from Christs side can take away your propensities to sin, change your nature and make you holy instead of filthycan make you pure in heart instead of polluted in spirit! Nothing else can do it. No lie was ever more extraordinary than the lie that baptismal water can regenerate the soul! I marvel more and more that I should find myself living in an age of such idiots and have almost come to think that Carlyle was right when he spoke of our nation as Consisting of twenty million people, mostly fools. So it seems to be, or else such a dogma as this would have been kicked out of the universe years sinceand banished once and forever to the limbo of lunacy as an outrage on common sense! Is God the Holy Spirit confined to water, as that the priests dropping it on the childs brow can work regeneration in the childs soul? Believe it not, it is a foul lie! But hold you to thisthat which alone can work regeneration is the water from the side of Christand when faith can get that, and trust that, the matter is done! Faith relies upon the sacred double flood! Then the heart is renewed, the man is changed, the soul is saved by Jesus Christ!

Remember, too, that the water and the blood flowed from the same place and flowed together. And, therefore, if a man would be saved, He must have the two. Tens of thousands would like to escape from Hell, but they have no wish to escape from sin. Are there not multitudes who are very anxious to get rid of the punishment, but are not at all concerned to be delivered from the habit of iniquity? Oh, yes, the drunk would gladly be forgiven, but he would like to keep to his tippling. Yes, the lecherous man would gladly have his constitution restored and his iniquity blotted out, but he must go to his dens of infamy again! Such is not the religion of Christ. The religion of Christ demands of us that if we take Christ, we should take Him for the double purposepardon for past sins and to deliver from sins to come. I think it was Celsus, the ancient philosopher, who jeered at the great Christian advocates, saying, Your Master, Christ, receives all the filth of the universe into His Church! He tells you to go about to find out thieves, drunks, harlots and such like, and to tell them to come to Him! Your religion is nothing better than a hospital into which you thrust lepers. Yes, said he who argued with him, you have spoken well. We do receive them as into a hospital, but we heal them, Sir, we heal them! And while into the one door the spiritually and morally blind, cripples, and maimed come in as they are, the Great Physician touches them with His Grace and cleanses them with the water and the bloodand they are not what they were any longer.

Now, am I addressing one man who feels that he is saved by faith, and yet he is sinning as he used to do? Give up that belief, Sir, or it will ruin you! I pray you do not indulge in it, for it is a delusion of Satan! Do I address one man who has a hope that perhaps he can so trust Christ as to be saved, and yet continue to live in his own wicked way? If anyone has told you that, he has told you a lie! Rest assured that you are mistaken! Christ never came to be the minister of sin. He came to save us, not in our sins, but from our sins. He will forgive us all manner of iniquities, but not if we love the iniquity and continue in it! If you hug sin to your bosom, the viper will sting youand no power, either human or Divine can extract the poison unless the viper, itself, is taken away. You must have both the water and the bloodand I pray that you may have both.

Now, Christians, I have done when I have put to you one question. Answer it and answer it truthfully. It is thisBeloved Friends, have you got such a hold of Christ as you should have in His double capacity as your Pardoner and your Sanctifier? I know you plead the blood for your remission. I know that is all your hope. I know that the blood of Christ is your comfort and your hope, but have you got the water quite as fully? You have a bad temper, perhaps. Well, it is a pitiable circumstance, but surely, if Christ can forgive a bad temper, He can remove a bad temper, too! Did you ever bring your bad temper to Christ to have it washed away with the water? You should have done so, for He can do it. Perhaps you have got an envious spirita murmuring spirit? Naturally so, you are generally depressed and downhearted. Did you ever believe in the power of Christ to kill envy and to lift you up above murmuring? You should do so. You believe that Christ can forgive this sin. Well, that is through the power of the bloodbut do you think that the water is less potent than the bloodthat Christ can forgive what He cannot subdue? Oh, think not so! Think as well of the Spirit and His sanctifying power as of Christ and His justifying righteousness!

Well, says one, I have a besetting sin which I do not think I shall ever quite overcome, My dear Brother, why not? It strikes me that the Christian ought to get his greatest victories from his weakest pointsand if you have a besetting sin, I think you ought to be distinguished by its opposite virtue! I do not know that it was so, but I always have a notion that Moses was, by his natural constitution, a thoroughly quicktempered man. I think so from the fact that when he saw the Egyptian smiting the Israelite, he did not stop a minute, but he slew him at once and hid him in the sand. That looks to me to be the breaking out of the real Moses. But what did he become by the Grace of God? Why, after his spirit was subdued, he became the meekest of men and often was quiet where you and I would have spoken! Now, why should it not be so with us? It strikes me that the worst-tempered man who becomes a Christian ought to make this a strong point and to strive to become the besttempered. There are some Christians who naturally have a little weakness in their hand and cannot open it well. If they get a little money in it, they are very apt to get their joints tied together very tightly! But, when Divine Grace comes in, I think they should try to defeat the devil by being more than ordinarily generousso that, whereas other Christians might be content to give less, they say to SatanO my enemy, you have held me in bondage in this way, but in wherever else you may get the upper hand of me, you never shall in this, for I will take care that whenever you tell me not to give a shilling, I will give two in order to let you see that you are no master of mine and that I have got rid of the foul sin of stinginess! Do let us, each one, act upon this great Truth of God, that as Christ has the power to forgive us our sin, so He also has the power to cleanse it away!

And, my dear Brothers and Sisters, let us get closer to Christ! Let us be bedewed more often than we have been before with the water and with the blood! Let us live in the spirit of this double purification and be it ours to find this blessed stream lead us right up to the heart of Christ, from which it flowed, that we may understand the everlasting love which dwells there deep in its eternal fountainsand may rejoice and be glad in it all our days!

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 19:23-37.**

Verse 23. Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments. They had already stripped Him, no element of shame was lacking in His substitution for us. He stooped as low as our sins could have thrust us that He might bring us up from the very depths of degradation and shame!

23, 24. And made four parts, to every soldier a part, and also His coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. They said therefore among themselves, Let us not ear it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the Scripture might be fulfilled, which says, They parted My raiment among them, and for My vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did. Quite unaware of the ancient prophecy, yet in complete accord with Divine Predestination, these soldiers did exactly according to the eternal purposes of God! It is very amazing how, in practice, the free agency of man tallies exactly with the Predestination of God. We need not enquire how it is, but we may admire that it is so. These things therefore the soldiers did, yet the motive which swayed them was not the fulfillment of the Divine Will, but simply the common sense thought that it would be a pity to spoil such a garment by tearing it and partly, also, by that innate love of gambling which is found everywhere, in every age, so that often men would sooner run the hazard of winning all than take the safe one fourth which might fall to their lot! Let us reverently adore the whole scheme of Providence by which Gods determinate purpose is carried out in every jot and tittle, while the free agency of man is left unfettered.

25. Now there stood by the Cross of Jesus, His mother, and His mothers sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. These gracious women stood by the Cross. We call them the feebler sex, but we must grant that they are the stronger of the two in anything which has to do with pure disinterested love. Yield the first place to them.

26. When Jesus therefore saw His mother. Here was another pang for HimHe could not be spared anywhere. He must recollect in His death everything that would cause Him griefWhen Jesus therefore saw His mother

26, 27. And the disciple standing by, whom He loved, He said unto His mother. Woman, behold your son! Then said He to the disciple, Behold your mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home. There was no specific direction given to John to entertain Mary. It was quite enough for the Lord to call his attention to her by saying Behold your mother. How I wish we were always in such a state of heart that we did not need specific precepts, but a hint would suffice. Dear Friends, do not need pressing or driving to holy duty! Be not as bulls that must be goaded, but rather have within you such a spring of love that it shall be a delight to do anything that may give joy to the heart of the Well-Beloved! When you see Him on the Cross, is there anything you can deny Him? Will you not think spontaneously of what you can do to please Him?

28. After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, I thirst. There was yet a little more to be doneall the great things were accomplished, but He would keep even the least particles of prophecy, so He cried, I thirst.

29, 30. Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to His mouth. When Jesus therefore had received the vinegarHe did receive that. He had refused the drugged draught which they had first offered to Him to lull His pain, but He accepted this, which was simply weak wine, no doubt a little sour, possibly bitter. When He had received the vinegar

30. He said, It is finished: and He bowed His head, and gave up the  
ghost. [See Sermon #421, Volume 7IT IS FINISHED and #2344, Volume 40CHRISTS DYING WORD FOR HIS CHURCHRead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at

http://www.spurgeongems.org.] Incarnate Love has fulfilled its self-imposed task! Jesus, as the Substitute for sinners, was condemned to die and He died that He might finish the work of our Redemption

*It is Finished.   
Hear the dying Savior cry.*

31. The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day, (for that Sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. To prevent a ceremonial error, they are willing to commit brutal cruelty! Indeed, they had already committed the more brutal cruelty of putting Christ to death. How particular some men are about some merely human rubricyet the Divine precepts of the Law they violate with impunity! God save us from a conscience which will stick at some minute point which is of no consequence, but will allow us to commit great sin! We have heard of a Spanish bandit who confessed to his priest, after having murdered a great many persons, not his robberies and his murders, but the fact that a drop of blood had spurted on his lips on a Friday, and thus he had defiled the feast day by taking animal food! Ah me, conscience is a strange thing, yet some call it the vicegerent of God. I believe it is no such thing, but that it very soon becomes as depraved as any other power of the human mind! We have need of far more than conscience to keep us right.

32. Then came the soldiers, and broke the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with Him. With a huge iron bar smashing the great bones of their legs.

33, 34. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that He was dead already, they broke not His legs: but one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side and forthwith there came out blood and water. See how, even after death, His heart its tribute poured out for us. We have not only the love of Christs heart blessing us while He lives, but after He died there was the stream of blood and water to cleanse us from sins guilt and power!

35-37. And he that saw it bares record, and his record is true: and he knows that he is telling the truth, that you might believe. For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, a bone of Him shall not be broken. And again another Scripture says, They shall look on Him whom

they pierced. [See Sermon #1956, Volume 33ON THE CROSS AFTER DEATHRead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.]  
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A ROYAL FUNERAL   
NO. 2390

**A SERMON INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, DECEMBER 9, 1894.   
DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, OCTOBER 7, 1888.

**And after this, Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came, therefore, and took the body of Jesus. And there came, also, Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pounds weight. Then took they the body of Jesus and wound it in linen strips with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulcher, wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus, therefore, because of the Jews preparation day; for the sepulcher was near at hand. John 19:38-42.**

LET US go to this grave, but not to weep thereno, not to shed so much as a single tear! The stone is rolled away, our Lords precious body is not there, for Christ has risen from the dead! It may be that, like Mary at the sepulcher, we shall see a vision of angels, but if not, we may behold a company of comforting Truths of God which still linger about the empty tomb of our ascended Lord!

We are expressly told, in Holy Scripture, that our Lord was buried. It was evidently not sufficient for us merely to be told that He diedwe must also know that He was buried. Why was this? Was it not, first, that we might have a certificate of His death? We do not bury living men and the Lord Jesus would not have been buried if the Centurion had not certified that He was certainly dead. The Roman officer had probably seen Christs heart pierced by the soldiers spear, when blood and water flowed forth from His side. At any rate, when his men went to execute the coup de grace, which finished the lives of the other two, by the breaking of their legs, they were so certain that He who hung in the middle was really dead that they broke not His legs. Christs being given up for burial was Pilates certificate that He had not merely pretended to die, but that it was a real death and that His body had no life remaining in it. This is an essential point, for if Jesus did not die, He has made no Atonement for sin. If He died not, then He rose notand if He rose not, then your faith is vain, you are yet in your sins! The sepulcher, therefore, occupies a very important place in the story of the death of Jesus.

Again, was He not buried to fulfill a type which He had, Himself, chosen? Like as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the fish, in the heart of the sea, even so was the Son of Man to lie for that time in the heart of the earth. The casting of the runaway Prophet into the sea quieted the angry wavesthe tempest fell asleep when he was given up as a victimand Christs being cast into the sea of death has quieted the storm of almighty wrath! We sail, today, as on a sea of glass because Christ was buried in those awful billows. He must fulfill the type of Jonah, or else He spoke not aright concerning Himself when He said, An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the Prophet Jonah.

Further, was not our Lord buried to make His battle with death and His triumph over it more complete? He has conquered death, but He has also burst open the castle of death, that is the grave. He has bearded the lion in his den, the Douglas in his hall. In this matchless duel, He has set Himself to fight not only with death, but with death and the grave combinedand hence the paean of victory is not merely, O death, where is your sting? but it is also, O grave, where is your victory? Christs victory is altogether complete. He has led captivity captive, because He became a captive. He has vanquished all deaths allies, as well as death, itself, by going down into the grave and rending its bars asunder.

Beside all this, did not our Lord die and condescend to be buried, to sweeten the grave for His people? Rightly did we sing just now concerning the tomb

*There the dear flesh of Jesus lay,   
And left a long perfume.*

Unless the Lord should speedily come, as He mayGod grant that He may!we shall fall asleep and these bodies of ours will be committed to the silence of the grave. We must not dare to dread the sepulcherwhere Christ has been, we may safely and honorably go. As I told you, the other day, He left the fine linen to be the furniture of our last bed. He left the napkin rolled up by itself, that weeping friends might dry their tears thereon. He also left the myrrh and aloes, about one hundred pounds weight, which Nicodemus brought. I never heard that they were taken away from the tombJesus left them there and they still shed their sweet fragrance throughout the graves of all His saints! We are not going to a noisome vault, but to a perfumed chamber hung with the fine linen sheets that encompassed the Christ, and odorous with the spices that shed their sweetness upon Him! To die is now our gainto sleep in Jesus is to be blest, indeed!

I may add, also, that I think our Lord was buried so that, from His tomb, He might leap to His Throne. He goes to the lowest depths that from there He may rise to the loftiest heights! You, too, Believer, may go as low as the grave, but you can never go any lowerand when you are at your lowest, you are then on your way to your highest! Your Lord stooped to conquer, so must you. You will have won the victory over death when you lie, stark and cold, upon your last bed. The adversary may think that he has defeated you

*When silent is your pleading tongue*

*And blind that piercing eye,*   
and inactive that once diligent hand, but it is not soyou shall then have broken loose from everything that hinders you from entering upon

your highest service for your Lordand you shall have entered that Holy Place where you shall see His face and serve Him day and night in His glorious Temple!

I like to think of Jesus as going down into the lowest parts of the earth when I remember that He that descended is the same who also ascended. This should encourage us to feel that, sink as we may, lower and yet still lower, we shall rise all the higher because of that sinkingand shall enter still more completely into fellowship with Christ both in His sufferings and in His Glory! It was necessary, then, my Brothers and Sisters, that there should be a new tomb in the garden close by Golgotha and that our Lord should lie there. It is a very wonderful thing that He, whose face is the light of Heaven, whose hands are sceptered with the government of the universe and whose very feet are sandaled with the stars, should yet bear the image of death upon His pale Countenance and should lie there lifeless, to be handled by others, and to be wrapped as any other dead man might be, in fine linen and sweet spices.

But my subject at this time is concerning the wonderful working of God with regard to the burial of Jesus. The Providence of God began with the body of Christ from the very first, even from His Conception, and it followed Him right to the last, even to His burial. You see the Holy Child in the manger and you notice how all things round about minister strangely to Him. Throughout His life all things worked together for His goodnot to screen Him from suffering, but to cause Him to sufferand to make Him triumphant through those sufferings! And when He came to die, I see the finger of God displayed at every part of that dread tragedy. But now that He is dead, will that kind Providence forsake Him? Ah, no!

I want to stop here and say to you who anxiously ask, What will become of me when I die? I am so very poor and needynever think about that matteryou have enough to do to trust God till you die! As to what is to become of your body when you are dead, never fret about that! It is wonderful how God takes care of the very dust and ashes of His chosen, how, sometimes, they receive in death respect and honor which they never thought would have come to them, and after they have passed away, their children and their household are blessed of God for their sake. The God of the living forsakes not His saints in dying, or after death! As Ruth would cleave to Naomi and said, Where you die, I will die, and there will I be buried, so, with greater faithfulness, does God cleave to His people! He will see them buried and take care of their children after they are gone. This is His comforting promise, Leave your fatherless children, I will preserve them alive; and let your widows trust in Me.

Now let me remind you how God took care of the First-Born among many brethren. Jesus is dead and in the hands of wicked men. The executioners have Him in their charge, those same executioners who just now broke the legs of the two thieves, have hold of Christ! But that precious body must be preserved, not a bone of Him must be broken, no disrespect must be paid to that Immaculate Being. Death and Hell would have reveled in insulting Christs body if they could. As Achilles dragged Hector by the heels round the walls of Troy, so would Satan have liked that men should have mauled the dead body of Christ. He would have cast Him to the dogs or to the vultures if he could have had his way, but so it must not be! Many a man who has been a prince has been buried with the burial of an ass, but this great Savior, whom men despised, must have a royal funeral! How is He to have it? That is the point I wish to bring to your notice and, before I have finished my discourse, I hope I shall be able to prove to you that everything required for Christs burial was supplied.

I. The first requisite was SOMEONE TO OBTAIN THE BODY. The law has executed Jesus, though wrongfully, and His body, therefore, belongs to the executioner, or, at any rate, to the law. Who is to rescue that precious body from the clutches of the law? Ah, you may look your eyes out, but you cannot see the man who can accomplish this taskyet God knows where He is! There is one Joseph, who has an estate at Arimathea, a wealthy man, a member of the Sanhedrim, an honorable counselor. He appears upon the scene and he is the right man to do what is required, for he is a secret disciple. He has great respect for that dead body, for he had great regard for Jesus while He was alive. As we look Joseph up and down, we say, Yes, if he will do his best, he is the very man for this emergency. He is under great arrears of obligation to his Lord, whom he scarcely acknowledged in His lifetimeyet he is a real disciple. Joseph, if you can do anything in this matter, we give you this solemn chargego and get the body of Christ.   
He was, besides, an official and influential. Therefore he could gain an entrance where a private person could not. And, what was still more to the point with such a man as Pilate, he was a rich man, for in those days, in the courts, everything went by favor. The poor mans cause might be just, yet he could not secure a hearing. But the gold in a rich mans hand would speak more loudly than the most convincing arguments upon a poor mans tongue. So this secret disciple is the one to beg the body of Jesus because he is an honorable counselor and also because he is rich. If he is willing to undertake the task, he is the man to accomplish it.   
But my heart misgives me, for Joseph has been secretly a disciple and, therefore, I conclude that he must be very timid. During the last two years or so, he has really been a follower of Christ, and yet he has stayed in the council. He has been a member of the Sanhedrim, yet he has not spoken out against its evil deeds! Ah, me, I am afraid that he will not be able to go and speak to Pilate. But note, Brothers and Sisters, what Mark tells us about himJoseph of Arimathea went in boldly unto Pilate and craved the body of Jesus. God can make a coward bold as a lion in the day when He needs him! And this good man, full of honor and abounding in wealth, said, I will go to Pilate. Why, this cruel vacillating governor will put a man to death if he aggravates him! Who knows how this interview may end?   
But Joseph says, I will go to Pilate. He obtains admittance and he asks for the body of Jesus. Pilate exclaims, Why, He is not dead yet! Yes, He is, answers Joseph, I have seen Him die. When the Centurion comes, he certifies that He is dead. Pilate cannot imagine what Joseph can want with a dead mans bones, but he says, You may have His body. Take Him down, you may have Him. So Joseph comes back to the Cross. He has proven that he was the very man for this work. We would never have thought of him, but God had him in reserve for the hour of need and brought him to the front at the right moment!   
Now you see Joseph hurrying away from Pilates Hall to the hill of Calvary, where the crosses are still standing. He has, in his hand, the order signed by the governor. He shows it to the officer in charge and he is a man of such prominence, so well known as an honorable counselor, an official gentleman and a person of wealth, that everybody is ready to help him. He, himself, is probably first and foremost in raising the ladder, helping to pull out the great nails, and to let down the blessed body. He is the man for this work, for

he is objectionable to nobody. He has been a counselor, so that those on the side of the Sanhedrim do not object to him. The holy women stand watching him, but they have no fears as to his actionthey know him, for he has probably done them many a kindness privately in days gone byand they know that he has been a secret disciple of the Lord. He has brought with him fine white linen which he was well able to buy. He reverently takes the body of Jesus down from the Cross and tenderly wraps it round with the costly winding-sheets which he has purchasedand so this trying business is finished without interference from anyone.   
I hope that these details do not seem trivial to you, for nothing is trivial that concerns our Lord and His cause. In the Tabernacle and the Temple, even the nails had to be duly prepared, and I think that, in this matter of providing a suitable person to go and get the body of Jesus out of the hand of the legal custodian, we ought to admire the wonderful goodness of God! Depend upon it, if, at any other time, there should be some great and terrible task to be accomplished, God will find the man to do it! If one shall be needed, by-and-by, at peril of his life to bear witness for Christ, the right person will be found! And until this chapter of Divine Providence shall come to an end in our Lords eternal Glory, there shall never be a crisis, however crucial, but the man shall be found whom God wants, or the woman who is to occupy the place which the Lord has for her to fill!   
Thus, Joseph has obtained the body of Jesus from the hands of Pilate and he may do what he will with itthat is the first point.   
II. The next requisite is SOMEONE TO BURY THE BODY.   
We do not want one man to carry away that body and lay it in the grave, for such a person as Jesus should have an honorable funeral. Now see what happens! There is another man, also a counselor, a ruler of the Jews, a master of Israel, yet another secret disciple who had come to Jesus by nighthe appears at just this very moment! There came, also, Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night. Now we have two mourners for our Masters funeral. James and Johnwhere are you? They cannot hear my question! Peter and Bartholomew, where are you? They are too far awaythey cannot hear me. Who will follow the body of Jesus to the grave? Who will be chief mourner? There are some gracious women, brave enough to stand afar off, and willing enough, if beckoned, to come and join the sad cortege that attends the corpse to the tomb. But how honorable to Christ was it that the first two and the chief mourners on that sorrowful occasion should be two members of the Sanhedrim Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemustwo men of note, two reputable individuals who were held in honor even among the Jews who crucified Christ!   
First, let me say of these two men who attended the burial of our Lord, that they did Him honor. Thus was fulfilled Isaiahs prophecy, He made His grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death; because He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth. All the while until Christ had paid the dreadful price of our redemption, He was despised and rejected of men, but as soon as He could say, It is finished, and the debt was fully paid, He must not be despised and rejected any more! Now, rich men must come and do Him homage and, accordingly, Joseph and Nicodemus came. It may seem only a little thing, but it indicates the turn of the tide, just as the floating of a straw may do. Jesus is no longer derided, nor even attended only by the poorest and most obscure of Galileans, but Joseph from Arimathea, and Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, attend the funeral of the great Lord and Savior of menand so pay such honor as they can to His dead body!   
While they thus did Him honor, they received from Him much more honor. Ah, my Brothers and Sisters, it was a great privilege that was accorded to these two men! I stand and wonder how it was that this position was allotted to two who had kept so long behind the scenes. They had lostthey had lostI cannot tell you how much they had lost, two, perhaps three years of constant fellowship with Christ and of instruction from His own dear lips! They had lost incalculably! They were in the rear of all Christs disciplesMary Magdalene was in front of them, the woman that was a sinner was far ahead of themthey were right in the rear rank. Yet their Master, in the splendor of His Grace, gives them this privilege even while He, Himself, lies dead! To them is accorded the high honor of handling His blessed flesh and laying Him in the tomb.   
I am afraid that some of you secret Christians who never come out boldly for Christ will not have such an honor as this. If the Lord ever uses you at all, it will be in some sad business such as a funeralbut even that will be an honor to you, if you are permitted to attend Him in His death though you have not shared the glory of His life. You loseoh, you lose incalculable gifts by not acknowledging your discipleship! Yet I pray that there may come a time and that it may come at once, when even you will come out and do what you can for your Lord, saying to yourself, Now is the hour when even I, timid as I am, must acknowledge Him. When soul murder is in your streets, when heresy is in your pulpits, when apostasy is in your churches, you are unfaithful to the last grain of your spiritual manhood if you who love Christ do not come out boldly on His side and declare that you belong to Him! If you never have confessed Him before men and you neglect this opportunity, wherein there is the greatest and most urgent of need, I fear that you will never acknowledge Him at all.   
Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus were both needed for this sad task and though we should never have thought of inviting them to perform it, yet they were the only two men connected with Christ who were exactly fitted for the office. And, as I have said, they thus honored Christ and He thus honored them. I should also say, Brothers and Sisters, that among all the disciples, there were no more sincere mourners for Christ then these two men. I think that I hear Joseph fetch a deep sigh and say, Ah, Nicodemus, how wicked I have been, for I have not been with Christ as I ought to have been! I ought to have gone with Him to prison and to death. Instead of that, I have been among the ungodly, rich and honored. Ah, says Nicodemus, and I went to Him by night and He talked so sweetly to me, but I have been hiding away ever since. I feel ashamed to touch this blessed blood-stained hand. I realize that it is a high honor to be allowed to handle these dear feet and to wrap the linen all about them, but I do not deserve such an honor, I am sure. And they would stop and weep, and sigh again, to think of how they had ill-treated their Lord, by what they may have thought was modesty, but which conscience now tells them was nothing else than shameful cowardice!   
And I do not think that out of all Christs followers, there were any who would be more tender with that blessed body, for they were gentlemen. They were not countrymen or fishermen, used to handling and being handled roughlythey were of a more tender mold, and when they looked on that dear form, how gently would they treat it! Being also men of property, they would have many servants able to help them in all sorts of ways. In His wonderful interment, our Lord Jesus could not have been better attended, nor have been buried by men who would have performed the mournful duty with more solemn feelings, more hushed reverence. They loved Him, yet felt that they had acted in an unloving manner towards Him and, now, they also felt that the best they could possibly do was all too little for the Blessed One who had sealed the forgiveness of their cowardice by permitting Himself to be entrusted to their hands.   
I can see great love about this dead Christ, and great pity, and great kindness, that even His lifeless body would be giving life to the faith and hope of Joseph and Nicodemus and should be firing them with fresh ardor! While they looked upon His corpse, they must have been compelled to resolve that never more would they be ashamed of Him whom they had helped to lay in the grave.   
So far we have, in imagination, brought our Lord Jesus Christ into the hands of two most suitable persons to bury Him.   
III. The next requisite is THE MATERIALS NECESSARY FOR THE BURIAL.   
The manner of the Jews is to bury the body wrapped in strips of fine white linenwhere is that? I do not believe that Peter has a yard of it anywhere. I hardly think that James and John have anything much finer than fishermens coats and so forth. Fine linenlet it be the best that can be bought! Let it be white as snow for wrapping around this perfect body! But where is it to be obtained? Joseph has it! He is a man of wealth, who can get anything that is needed, and he has brought with him the best winding sheets in which to wrap the Saviors body.  
But we must also have mixed spices in abundance, fifty pounds weight at the least. Oh, says Nicodemus, I have brought one hundred pounds weight with me, and if I could have found a conveyance, and more spices had not been superfluous, I would have brought many hundred pounds weight of myrrh and aloes, well mingled according to the art of apothecary, with which to surround that blessed form.   
See, my Brothers, Christ needed for nothing when He was deaddo you think that He will need anything while He is alive? Ah, but our little Church, our poor cause, is needing money badly and we are going to get up a bazaar. What? And you have not thought about going to your Lord for what you lack? The fact is, the Church of God has been looking to the devil to find funds for the Lords work instead of seeking aid from the Lord, Himself! It is a pity that we cannot come back to Him who, even when He was dead, had a hundred pounds weight of myrrh and aloes brought to Him! Cannot we trust Him for all that is required for His service? It will be a better and a brighter day for the Church when she believes that if Christ needs myrrh and aloes, He can get them! Does not the Lord say, The silver is Mine and the gold is Mine...Every beast of the forest is Mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills...If I were hungry, I would not tell you: for the world is Mine, and the fullness thereof? Let us go forth to fight the Lords battles without any doubts concerning the commissariat of His army! He can provide and He

will provideonly let us trust Him and not go down to Egypt for help, nor lean upon an arm of flesh.   
As Nicodemus gave so freely to the dead Christ, how generously ought you and I to give to our living Lord! If we have anything in the world, let us give it all to Christ. Even if we have nothing left but a grave, which we have provided for our own funeral, yet let us surrender that, as Joseph did when he gave up his new tomb that his Lord and Master might lie therein.   
Thus, you see, that all that is needed for Christs burial is there already! So I leave that part of our subject and go on to the next.   
IV. Another requisite is A PLACE WHEREIN TO BURY THE BODY. We have the body, Pilate has given us that. We have the spices and the fine linen and we have the two men ready to bury the body. Now we need a tomb.   
It would be very convenient and also very important, if we could get a sepulcher near at hand because, you see, if the body of Christ had to be carried a long way to be buried, the Jews would say, Ah, they switched it on the road! They took it a mile or two out of the city and the Christ who rose from the dead is not the Christ that was buried. But here, just at the bottom of this rocky hill which is called Golgotha, there is a garden, and in that garden there is a tomb. Hark the Providence of God in this matter, for that tomb belongs to Joseph, and there the Saviors body is lovingly laid! He did not and He could not lack a tomb when it was required! When the time came for Him to be buried, the sepulcher was there already prepared, hewn out of the rock!   
It would also be a great advantage if it could be a new tomb, wherein never was anybody buried, for if they buried Him in an old tomb, the Jews would say that He had touched the bones of some Prophet or other holy man and so came to life. Ah, well, Josephs is a new tombthere are no bones there, for nobody has ever been buried there before!   
It would seem, too, to be the proper thing for our Lord to have a tomb in a rock. You cannot fitly put Him in sand who is, Himself, the Rock of Ages. No, let our Lord Jesus, with that grand Immutable Love and eternal faithfulness of His, let Him lie in the solid rock! There it is, all ready for Him, just the very kind of tomb that is needed for Him who is the Rock of our salvation!   
If it should also be a tomb in a garden, there would be a touch of familiar beauty about that arrangement. One likes that the very surroundings of Christs grave should be instructive. I cannot stop to tell you about all the beauty and the instruction which cluster around a garden the gardens of Scripture, especially, are most fruitful subjects, and our Lords garden-tomb might suggest to us a most profitable theme for meditation.   
Thus, Christs tomb is the very thing we would wish for Him. In no secondhand grave, in no town ditch, in no paupers grave dug out of the earth, but in a rich mans sepulcher, worthy of a kingit is there that the Christ must lie! See how God provides for His Son and learn how He will provide for you. If He provides for His Son when dead, He will provide for you while livingtherefore be comforted whatever your condition may be!   
V. There is one more difficulty and, perhaps, it is the worst of all, for it concerns THE TIME FOR THE BURIAL. You see, it is very late in the afternoon and, besides, it is the preparation for a very important Sabbath, and these good people cannot do any work on the Sabbaththeir consciences will not permit them to do so, for they are strict Jews. But it so happened that they obtained the body just in time to wrap it round about with the spices and with the linen, and then we are told, There laid they Jesus, therefore, because of the Jews preparation day; for the sepulcher was near at hand. To me, it is a very pretty thought that when there was so little time, the place of burial was so near. It would have taken all the lingering twilight to have carried Jesus far, but the right place was near! Providence knew all about the difficulty and provided for

it! Next, they could not take much time with the body and the ceremony

was the more fitting for Christs rising. Beloved, whenever you cannot do anything for your Lord as you would like to do, do the best you can and you may depend upon it, that you have done just what ought to be done! Oh, no! they say, Oh, no! We would have liked to have wrapped Him up much more leisurely and more delicatelywe would have made a finished work of embalming that precious body. Listen! Nothing more was needed. Jesus was not going to be in the sepulcher long. Gods Holy One could not see corruption! He did not need to be embalmed, for He was to be up again so soon and, therefore, a hurried burial was quite sufficient.

Listen againthere is another thing worth mentioning. The incompleteness brought them early to the sepulcher. If they do not finish their task of love on the evening of the Crucifixion, they will be there early in the morning, when the Sabbath is over, to complete it! That was precisely what was needed, that, as soon as the Master was risen, on that first day of the week, they should be there to see Himbut they would not have been there to see Him, perhaps, if they had not come, as the holy women did, with more spices to finish the work which had been, comparatively speaking, so roughly and hurriedly done on that dread evening!

It was all right and I drew much comfort and joy out of this fact when I was thinking it over. I said to myself, Sometimes I am so oppressed with the care of the many things entrusted to me that I cannot study my sermon as I would like. Perhaps it is all the better for thatthe Master does not need studied sermons. It may also be that it suits the hearer all the better. If you cannot bury Christ as you would like to because there is not time, when you have done the best that you could, and sorrowed over it, you have done the very thing that your Lord wants you to do! Rest content with that and just say to yourself, He takes the will for the deed, and all my blundering and mistakes He overlooks because I did it all out of love for His dear name.

I have talked thus to you about Christs dead body. Oh, that I had an opportunity of speaking to you about Him as the living Lord! But as I cannot, for our time is gone, I would ask you to just stoop down and, in faith and love, kiss those wounds, admire that pierced hand, that other hand, that nailed foot, that other foot, that side with the spear gash, that dear face with closed eyes and then say, He bore all this for mewhat have I done for Him? God bless you! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **Mark 15:34-47; John 19:38-42; 1 Corinthians 15:1-9.**

Concerning the death of our Lord Jesus Christ, we shall read in three portions of the New Testament. First, in the Gospel according to Mark, the 15th chapter, beginning at the 34th verse.

Mark 15:34. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, Lama Sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? It is, My El, My strong God, My mighty One, why have You forsaken Me?the most bitter words that were ever uttered by mortal lipsand expressing the quintessence of agony. Alas, that my Savior should ever have had to say as much as this when He hung upon the Cross, suffering and dying for me!

35. And some of them that stood by, when they heard it, said, Behold, He calls Elijah. Did they misunderstand His bitter cry of woe? Could they mistake what He meant? Was it not, on the part of these people that stood by, a willful wicked witticism upon what our Lord Jesus had said? We fear that it was so.

36, 37. And one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave Him to drink, saying, Let Him alone; let us see whether Elijah will come to take Him down. And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost. His last words were, It is finished.

*It is finished!Oh what pleasure   
Do these charming words afford!   
Heavenly blessings without measure   
Flow to us from Christ the Lord   
It is finished!   
Saints, the dying words record.*

38, 39. And the veil of the Temple was rent in two from the top to the bottom. And when the Centurion, who stood over against Him. The officer who had charge of the arrangements for the executionwhen the Centurion, who stood over against Him

39. Saw that He so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this Man was the Son of God. Probably saying a great deal more than he understood! There was something so extraordinary about this central Sufferer that the Centurion could not understand who He could be unless He was truly, the Son of God.

40, 41. There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses and Salome; (Who also, when He was in Galilee, followed Him, and ministered unto Him), and many other women which came up with Him unto Jerusalem. Where was Peter? We know that John was near the Cross, but James and the rest of the Apostles were apparently hiding away. But the holy women were there!

42, 43. And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is the day before the Sabbath, Joseph of Arimathea, an honorable counselor, which also waited for the Kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus. I have no doubt that Pilate was very surprised that a member of the Sanhedrim should come and ask for the body of Jesus, when, a little while before, he had put Him to death, really, by the mandate of that body of men!

44, 45. And Pilate marveled if He were already dead: and calling unto him the Centurion, he asked him whether He had been any while dead. And when he knew it of the Centurion, he gave the body to Joseph. This very Centurion who had declared that Jesus was the Son of God now came forward to bear witness that he had seen Him die. And then Pilate told Joseph that he might go and take the body.

46. And he bought fine linen. This was probably the first time that fine linen had touched the flesh of the Son of ManHe had been accustomed to much coarser stuff in His lifetimebut now Joseph bought fine linen.

46, 47. And took Him down, and wrapped Him in the linen, and laid Him in a sepulcher which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone into the door of the sepulcher. And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses beheld where He was laid. That is Marks account of our Lords death and burial, very terse and very suggestive. Let us now read Johns description of the sad scene.

John 19:38-40. And after this, Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came, therefore, and took the body of Jesus. And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight. Then took they the body of Jesus. Oh, how tenderly and with how many tears, did they take their Lords body from the Cross!

40-42. And wound it in linen strips with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulcher, wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus, therefore, because of the Jews preparation day; for the sepulcher was near at hand. Johns Gospel contains some particulars not mentioned by Mark. And the same may be said of Matthews account and Lukes. Read them all when you are home and ponder the wonderful story! The Apostle Paul, speaking of our Lords Resurrection, mentions His burial. We will now read in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, just a few verses from the 15th chapter.

1 Corinthians 15:1. Moreover, brethren I declare unto you the GospelMark that Paul writes concerning the Gospel. We shall see now what, the Gospel is.

1-3. Which I preached unto you, which also you have received, and wherein you stand, by which also you are saved, if you keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless you have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you, first of all, that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. That is the central Truth of the Gospel.

4. And that He was buried. That is an essential part of the Gospel.   
4. And that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures. This is the bright light of the Gospel, the Resurrection of our Lord from the dead   
5-9. And that He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after that, He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, He was seen of James; then of all the Apostles. And last of all He was seen of me, also, as of one born out of due time. For I am the least of the Apostles, that am not meet to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God. Yet He was one among the many testifiers to the fact that Jesus really died, was buried and rose from the dead, of which we will speak more particularly, by-and-by.

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MAGDALENE AT THE SEPULCHER AN INSTRUCTIVE SCENE   
NO. 2119

INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, DECEMBER 22, 1889.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON THURSDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 24, 1889.

**Then the disciples went away again unto their own homes. But Mary stood without at the sepulcher weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down and looked into the sepulcher and saw two angels in white sitting, the one at the head and the other at the feet, where the Body of Jesus had lain. And they said unto her, Woman, why do you weep? She said unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord and I know not where they have laid Him. And when she had thus said, she turned herself back and saw Jesus standing and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus said unto her, Woman, why do you weep? Whom do you seek? She, supposing Him to be the gardener, said unto Him, Sir, if you have borne Him, therefore, tell me where you have laid Him and I will take Him away. Jesus said unto her, Mary. She turned herself and said unto Him, Rabboni; which   
is to say, Master.   
John 20:10-16**

I WANTED to speak tonight to Believers who have lost the joyful Presence of their Lord and who are saying, Oh, that I knew where I might find Him! But when I thought of that matter, I said to myself, Many will be in the congregation who have never yet found Him. Therefore they will not have known His sweetness by experience, and yet they may be longing to find Him. Is it possible to benefit two classes at once?

Well, well, I said to myself, I can speak to the saint, for she who figures in the text was Mary. But I can also, at the same time, talk to the sinner. For she was Magdalene, and that name has somehow become connected with penitent sinners. I pray, at the beginning, that if there is one here who has long been a Mary, and has followed Christ lovingly and if there is another here who is more like what is commonly but erroneously known as a Magdalene, both the Mary and the Magdalene may find direction and consolation in my discourse.

I shall have no other preface but these remarks. For we have before us a long text to be handled in a short time and I would not perform my task slightingly. We will advance by a series of observations.

I. Our first observation shall be thisA SOUL SEEKING JESUS HAS WAYS OF ITS OWN.   
Read carefully the tenth verseThen the disciples went away again unto their own homes. But Mary, Mary had her own way of proceeding. Mary was seeking Christ more intensely and affectionately than even the choicest of the Apostles. They were more able to wait for events than her eagerness would allow her to do. John was able to go home, because he had seen and believed. Peter went home all the more readily because a cloud darkened his sky.   
Mary was of another order from either of theseshe loved and longed to see Him whom she loved. Whether He was dead or alive, she would find Him. When you are seeking the Lord, it brings out your individuality. Every truly anxious soul must seek the Lord in his own way. Each case is peculiareach seeker feels himself to be one by himself. There are not two Mary Magdalenes. And Mary differs from John and Peter.   
One part of her way was thisthat she would stay at the sepulcher after others had gone to their own homes. So have I seen the lover of the Lord lingering at the Mercy Seat when the prayers of others were ended, and remaining in the use of the means of Divine Grace when others had enjoyed a full portion of them. The meeting is very early in the morning but Mary must be there. And if the meeting was at a distance, she trudges over the miles. One saint is noted for Bible reading and nothing will attract her from it. Another abounds in private prayer and is mighty on her knees. Another feels bound to go where Christ Jesus is earnestly talked about, and therefore he spends many an hour with the Lords people.   
Perhaps Peter and John had other necessary business to attend to and their duty called them away from the tomb. But Mary stood there still, hoping to hear something about her Lord and, at least, to know where they had laid His Body. It is a blessed thing when the heart becomes so resolved to find Christ that it cannot be happy without Him. When it cannot even live without Him. When you are resolved to wait at the posts of Wisdoms doors until the Incarnate Wisdom appears to you, you will not have to wait long.   
Mary had ways of her own beside, for she stood there weeping. I do not read that, upon this occasion, either Peter or John shed a single tear. They may have done so, but the Holy Spirit has not recorded the fact. Yet He has recorded it of this earnest seeker that she, stood without at the sepulcher weeping. She wept as if her heart would break. Where was her Lord? What had they done with that Sacred Body? She had seen it wrapped in spices and fine linen and laid in the tomb of Josephwhere was it now?  
The tomb was evidently quite empty of all but the burial garments where was the Body? What new indignities had the cruel ones put upon it? That dear mangled Bodyto what malicious treatment was it now exposed? She stood, in deep emotion, sorrowing as love, alone, can sorrow when its beloved object is in peril. It is a great thing, dear Soul, when you cannot find Christ, to weep your eyes out till you can. When you cannot live without Him for very heartbreak, when all the joy of life is gone, when existence becomes only another name for grieving after an absent loveand that love the Lord Jesus.   
Then you are not far off from the happy hour of finding Him. Tears may be as the dew of the morning, the sure prophets of the rising sun. At any rate, many search for Jesus with tears in their eyes. Mary did something more, which was according to her own mode of actionshe stooped down and looked into the sepulcher. They that would find Christ must stoop to look for Him. They must not merely wait for Him but look for Him on their knees.   
I have known some people pretend to wait for the Lord and they have kept up the pretense to their souls ruin! They never looked to Him by faith. I have known some weep much but they would not open their eyes to look to Jesus and be saved. True seekers look for Jesus in the Scriptures. They search for Him in the hearing of the Word. They cry after Him in their private room. This is well. If you would be saved, seek Jesus and He will find you. Cry evermore, Oh, that I knew where I might find Him! I would come even to His seat.   
No heart has ever earnestly looked after Jesus but what before long He has been seen. If there is this waiting, this weeping, this stooping, this lookingthere will be an appearing in mercy and a recognition in joy. Mary, who looks for Jesus, shall see Him.  
Note this peculiarityshe looked in the wrong place. She looked into the sepulcher for the living and risen Jesus. Earnest, true-hearted, zealous, was Mary. But she labored under a mistake. Well might the angels say, Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here but is risen. Thus have I known true penitents seek the Lord where He cannot be found. They have expected to undergo a sort of inward purgatory, and they have sought for Jesus in their own feelings. He is not there. They have imagined that they must be carried away with despair before they might lay hold upon the Savior. Yet the Lord is not in the wind of feeling, nor in the fire of despairHis Presence is known by His still small voice.

They have not looked with a simple, childlike trust to Jesus. But they have gone about to this, and that, and to other thingand all in vain. They have sought for Jesus among forms, and ceremonies, but in vain. Possibly they have gone to human priests, or sagesthese are as dead as the tombs. Priest-craft and philosophy are no places for the living Christ to be found.   
Yet I am glad that Mary looked into the tomb. For, though she looked in the wrong place, it was a good thing to be looking for Jesus after any fashion. Better blunder in seeking Christ than be so wise as to go away from Him. I mean, better to be a sincere, but foolish, seeker after Jesus, and fall into a hundred errors of doctrine, than to be highly cultured and all the while to be looking to self, or to the world and forgetting the Lord Jesus. Poor Seekers! You are in trouble. I see it by your tears. There is hope for you, for you have eyes and are looking out for something better than you can find in yourselves, or in your fellow men.   
I am sure of you, for you will not run away to your home. You stay near the place where Jesus was last seen. You are not rolling stones but you abide in earnest hearing, in Apostolic doctrine, and in prayers. Your constancy and your eagerness are cheering signs that Divine Grace is beginning its work in your hearts. Comfort is on the way to you, I can see the light of it reflected in those tears which glisten in your eyes. God grant that we may not be disappointed in you, for His names sake!   
II. But now, going a little further on, I would observe, secondly, that A SOUL SEEKING JESUS MAKES SMALL ACCOUNT OF ANYTHING ELSE.   
Mary, when she looked down, saw the angels sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the Body of Jesus had lain. At any other time, if Mary Magdalene had seen two angels, she would have been astounded, so as to lose her balance, through reverent fear. A vision of angels to a holy womanthere is something overpowering in it. A vision of angels, even to the ungodly soldiers that watched the grave of Christ, had made them faint and become as dead men.   
But if you read the passage attentively, you will see that Mary talked to these angels as if they had been good men whom she had met before. She was not abashed by them. When they say to her, Woman, why do you weep? she answers them, very plainly, Because they have taken away my Lord and I know not where they have laid Him. She is not frightened at spirits and angels. Neither is a soul that is in earnest after Christ to be put away from its search by any sort of diversion.   
The true enquirer would ask of angels, or of the most eminent saints, concerning the Lord Jesus. It will be only too glad to ask of anybody, or to answer a question from anybody, if it may thus hope to find Jesus. Did you ever note the all-subduing power of a great desire? When God makes the heart tender and sets it longing after Jesus, it forgets its own feebleness and ceases to be alarmed by that which once distressed it. A longing soul would break through angels and through devils, through Heaven and through earth to reach Jesus. We must have Him. We must behold the Well-Beloved. Our soul is all on fire for Him, it cannot be restrained, it will burn its way to Him as the flame makes its way across the prairie. We want Jesus and we will not be content with anything short of Him.   
Notice, too, as proof of what I have said, that when a soul is seeking Christ, nothing but Christs own Word will satisfy it. This holy woman was not content with what the angels said. Though they said to her, Woman, why do you weep? those shining ones do not appear to have comforted her at all. She went on weeping. She told them why she wept but she did not, therefore, cease her tears. And, believe me, if the angels of Heaven cannot content a heart which is seeking after Jesus, you may depend upon it that the angels of the Churches cannot do so.   
We may preach as best we can, but the words of man will never satisfy the cravings of the heart. The seeker needs JesusJesus onlyJesus certainly. You read the best of books and heard the most faithful of testimonies when you were seeking, and yet you came away and cried, Alas, I have not found Him. I have not found Him. And I cannot be content till I do so! Beloved, never sit down short of Christ. For short of Christ is short of salvation. Whatever you hear, never be content with hearinglong to find Him of whom you hear.   
However sweetly the story is told, the mere hearing of the Truth of God must never be enough for you. You want for your salvation a personal Christ, to be heard by your own heart and received by your own faith. And I entreat you, never rest until this is your happy possession. Find HIMHim whom your soul lovesHim in whom alone your soul may trust. Let not voices from Heaven, if you could hear them, much less the voices of godly men and women on earth, ever content you, apart from the Lord Jesus Christ, who is All in All.   
Furthermore, a soul seeking Jesus is glad to confess Him. It was aweinspiring to behold angels arrayed in white. It was a rare gift for the Magdalene to gaze upon, those shining ones sitting in solemn state at the head and the foot of the spot where Jesus had once laid! But it did not so overpower Mary as to prevent her open acknowledgment of her Lord. When she spoke to Peter and John, in the second verse, she said, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulcher. But when she addressed the angels, she said, They have taken away my Lord and I know not where they have laid Him.   
It might not be necessary to say, my Lord to the two Apostles, who knew exactly what she was. But she had not seen those angels before, and she would not let them go without their knowing that Jesus was her Lord, her very own. And so she puts it, They have taken away my Lord. I like that amazingly. Are you a seeking saint? Whether you see Him or do not see Him, He is still yours. And you must hold to it that He is still your own. My Beloved is mine and I am His. And if I do not just now behold the smile of His face, yet He is my Lord. I have given myself up to Him. And, if He does not own me as His servant, I will still claim Him as my Master.   
Come what may, if I walk in darkness, I will cleave to Him the more closely, for I will not wander from Him. Where should I go? If all Heaven does not shine upon me, I shall still look up that way. I have fallen into a fog and can scarcely see my way beyond my handbut yet I am my Lords for all that, and I am not ashamed to declare it. Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him. His I am and Him I serve. My ear has been bored to the doorpost, and I am His happy bondman forever. Come death, come life, come darkness of soul, or joy of spirit. Whatever happens, I am my Lords. Such holy constancy will be rewarded.   
In the true seeker, the one cry of the soul is Christ, none but Christ, Christ alone. Mary looks beyond all others. Angels may come and angels may gobut she neither seeks nor fears them. She blushes not to confess her Lord before the white-robed spirits. But she seeks Him and must find Him. O Child of God, keep to the one object of your search! O Sinner, when once you feel your need of Jesus, bend all your desires towards Him and seek Him alone! If all your search is after Jesus, you shall find Him. Let not a Heaven of angels suffice to take you off from searching for your Lord and His salvation.  
O Child of God, when you have lost the light of your Lords face, feel that you must have it back again, or die in the dark. And when you thus feel, He will return to you. He never set a soul longing for Himself, and Himself only, without gratifying the longing which He has created. Hunger and thirst after the Lord Jesus are blessed attributes. For He who created them will satisfy them. Oh, that the Lord would cause us to faint and pine after Himself more and more, and then visit us with that which is our souls only fullness, namely, His precious, priceless Self!   
III. Thus have we handled the second point sufficiently. Let us now make a third observationA SOUL SEEKING JESUS MAY HAVE HIM VERY NEAR, AND NOT KNOW IT.  
Read, When she had thus said, she turned herself back and saw JESUS standing and knew not that it was Jesus. He was behind her while she stood looking into the sepulcher. And though she did not perceive it, His Presence operated upon her. She had been speaking to the angels and answering their question. And suddenly she was conscious that someone was standing just behind her. How came she thus to feel? Some think that, as Mark describes, the angels, as standing up. The Lord had, at that moment, come behind Mary and the holy angels, perceiving their Lord, rose up to do Him honor.   
They had been sitting in contemplation at the place of His sepulcher but as soon as they caught sight of their Lord, they stood up, as if to do His bidding. From their movements Mary concluded that someone was passing behind her. It may have been so. For assuredly the angelic guards would have paid Him instant reverence. But, on the other hand, rising is scarcely so much a method of saluting a superior in the East as it is in the West. Let us suggest something else.   
You have been sitting at your table, writing, and a friend has come behind you with noiseless tread but yet all of a sudden you have been aware of a presence. Before you had heard or seen, you were impressed what if I say overshadowed? Was it not so with Mary Magdalene and the Savior? I am not superstitious if I assert that something very similar happens to me when Jesus is near. Many a Believer will tell you that he has, at times, when he has been in prayer, or hearing the Word, or meditating, felt as if he could be sure that the Lord stood near him.   
There could, of course, be no palpable impression upon the flesh. For now, after the flesh, we know Him no more. But yet His Presence has impressed our souls. There are influences of mind on mind which are beyond the recognition of science. The great spirit of our Lord has means of making itself spiritually known to our spiritsmeans which flesh and blood know nothing ofand which lips could not describe. I have discerned the special Presence of my Lord with me by a consciousness as sure as that by which I know that I live. Jesus has been as real to me, at my side in this pulpit, as though I had beheld Him with my eyes.

I appeal to the experience of many of you. Have you not been moved by a mysterious influence which has overawed, inspired, and impressed you beyond description? A Divine, majestic, delightful and hallowing Presence has been near you. And you have turned to look at a something which was so distinct that you would not have been surprised had it been visible to you. Mary did not discover at first that it was the Lord, but she felt His powerful influence, and then, she turned herself back and saw Jesus.   
The next thing to be noted was that she saw Jesus standing. The word is better rendered beholds, as in the Revised Version. It does not merely mean that she saw Him. But His Presence fixed her gaze. She steadily observed Him. She could not take her eyes off Him. She beheld Him intently. For she seemed to say, I must have seen that face before. Can it be He? It is wonderfully similar. But the thought cannot be entertained.   
She stood, and beheld Jesus with steadfast gaze. Thus would we hold our meditations fixed upon His Person. This may be so. And yet we may not know that the Lord is with us, though we are conscious of more than human company. In the case of a seeking sinner, Jesus has really come to him and has been comforting him and yet he did not know that it was Jesus. He dreamed that He was far away. His soul felt so tender, so melted, so ready to yield, so near to God, that he was sure some holy power was ruling him. But he knew not that it was Jesus.   
Occasionally, you and I have known such secret touches of heart and conscience, with such bright hope and burning love, that we have wondered at ourselves, and yet we have not dared to believe that it was the Lord Himself who was thus at work upon us. And yet it was even so. We were looking for Jesus by His own light. Our hearts burned, and yet we did not perceive from where came the fire. Jesus may be very near, and yet we may fear that He has gone from us in anger.   
What was it, do you think, that prevented her seeing and knowing her Lord? Shall we say that her unbelief and sorrow dimmed her eyes? Was it that, like the disciples on the road to Emmaus, her eyes were held? Very possibly. Was it her tears that blinded her to the Divine vision? Not so likely. For tears full often cleanse the spiritual vision. Weeping for an absent Christ has often made us quit a sin which at some prior time had prevented fellowship with Jesus. What was it, then? I think it was that the sight was   
not what she expected. She was longing to see Jesus. But, perhaps she only hoped to see Him wrapped in grave clothes.   
And so, you notice, that the Evangelist puts it, She saw Jesus standing and knew not that it was Jesus. If she had seen Him lying down, with the image of death upon His face, she would have known Him. But to see Jesus standing was far more than she could have hoped for. She had seen His lifeless Body taken down by Joseph and Nicodemus, and she had helped to wrap Him in spices and fine linen. But to see Him standing, alive, was more than she could have dreamed of. The rapture was too great for her to expect or believe. And we marvel not that it is written she knew not that it was Jesus.   
Beloved, our conceptions of our Lord are so poor and low, that if He were to come to us in even a moderate degree of His Glory, we should fail to apprehend that it was really He. John knew Him, he had laid his head on His bosom, but he says, When I saw Him, I fell at his feet as dead. So overpoweringly beyond all that John could have expected, was the vision of the Lord in His Glory. It is true the Lord Jesus did not manifest Himself in that manner to Mary. But still, the particular posture of standing was beyond what she looked for, and therefore He was not perceived.   
It may be that the Lord Jesus is truly appearing to some sinner here. But as the appearance is not what he expects, he is unable to hope that it is his Savior. You are told simply to trust Him. And this is hardly what you looked foryou thought that you would suffer an experience of amazing sorrow. You looked for an affair which could be put into a biography. Tell me, did you not? But you will not have anything of the sort. You hear a voice which cries, Only trust Him, only trust Him. Obey that voice and enter into immediate rest.   
You thought that you would be driven to the verge of madness, and then be relieved with a joy which would make you dance. But instead, you are led quietly to trust. So long as you are truly saved, what does it matter? The Lord Jesus is present wherever there is humble faith in Him, for that plant never grows except where He sets His pierced foot. Believe and then know that it is Jesus.   
And you, dear Brothers and Sisters, who have lost the Presence of Christ a while, perhaps you expect Him to come tonight and carry you away in a sacred transport. Instead of which, it may be He will calm you and fill you with repose, or He may even rebuke you and send you out to work and suffer for Him. May you have the discernment, however your Lord may come, to know that it is the Lord! Though He comes not in the way in which you looked for Him, yet be not so blind as to mistake Him for another. But if you should even think that your risen Lord is the gardener, you might not be so very wrong. If, under that misapprehension, you should ask Him to dress the garden of your heart and pluck up your weeds and water your plants, it would be well with you.   
Still, He may be near you and yet you may not know Him. Take comfort from this fact. And though you mourn your own dullness of apprehension, do not utterly condemn yourself. Under her misapprehension, Mary did not catch the tone of our Lords voice when He asked her why she wept. Our Lord quoted the question of the angels, as if to show that He would gladly support the word which His servants had spoken. Happy messenger, whose words can be repeated by his Master! But yet Marys ear was heavy and she perceived not her Lord.  
Ah me, we also may be in such a state that we do not discern the blessed Lover of our souls, though He speaks in the language of consolation! We would have ventured to predict that never would Mary Magdalene have forgotten that dear voice. But she did so. And what wonder if we do the same?  
In a word, she was so far from discovering her Lord that she took Him to be her foe rather than her Friend. She imagined that the gardener had borne the Body away. Was he so unwilling to have a corpse within the region of his gardening that he had put it in a corner, that no one might perceive it? She humbles herself to him and offers to carry away the form to which she feared he had such an objection. Tell me where you have laid Him and I will take Him away. He to whom she spoke had not taken away her treasureHe had brought it to heryes, He was Himself that Treasure!   
Beloved, you and I also have reckoned our best Friend to be our enemyso foolish are we and so soon mistaken. In the darkness of our souls we judge unrighteously and complain of our Lord whom alone we ought to praise. He knows our ignorance and He forgives.   
IV. Upon my fourth observation I will be very briefA SOUL SEEKING JESUS WILL DO ANYTHING TO FIND HIM.   
Mary Magdalene was still seeking. And when she saw one standing before her, whom she thought to be the gardener, what did she do? Why, she enquired of that gardener where she might find Him whom she loved. She was willing to learn from anyone. If you are in earnest to find the Lord Jesus, you will not be particular about where you go, or of whom you learn. No matter whether the preacher is a doctor of divinity or a converted coal heaver, so long as he preaches Christ, you will be glad to learn from him.   
She supposed Him to be the gardener. But yet she said to Him, Sir, if you have borne Him, therefore, tell me where you have laid Him. Many have been happy to learn of Jesus from fishermen and cobblers. Does my Friend object to my hearing an illiterate man? Ah, Sir, when I am seeking eternal salvation, I care little about the philosopherI want the experimental Christian. For him I feel a deep respect. And, even if I know him to be only a gardener, I speak to him reverently as, Sir.   
When a man is not truly seeking the Lord, he wants short sermons and these of a high literary order, or else adorned with attractive rhetoric. But when he is, with his whole heart, seeking for the Savior, he is not so concerned about polite phrases and ecclesiastical correctness. He looks eagerly for a practical direction how he may come to Jesus. And he will take that from any man or woman, be their station what it may. Let him be a chimneysweep, if he will lead me to Jesus, I will follow.   
So it was with this holy woman. She desired to find the Lord and she was altogether absorbed in that one pursuit. She speaks as if everybody was equally intent upon the one theme. For instead of mentioning the name Jesus, she says, If you have borne Him, therefore. Why, Mary, what are you talking about? About Him, she says. But who is this of whom you speak? Ah, Friends, to her there was but one Him in all the world, just then! Oh, to be thus absorbed!   
Such was the desire of Magdalene to find the Lord Jesus, that she feared no ghastly sight. Let her know where the Body is laid and she will be there. That Body, which had bled so much from its five wounds, must have been a heart-breaking sight to a tender-hearted woman. But she is not dismayed. Let the Body be how it may, it is the flesh and blood of her dear Lord and she must pay it homage. Wounds or no wounds, she would behold it. A wounded Christ is altogether lovely in the eyes of His redeemed.   
His blood, flowing for me, clothes Him with a royal crimson robe in my eyes. I fear nothing, so long as I may but come to Him. Dear Hearts, if you long for salvation, you will not find fault with those who preach the doctrine of the Cross, the wounds, the blood! You will not kick at the doctrine of a crucified Savior, your Substitute condemned at the bar of justice. You want Jesus who died. You must behold Him for yourself by faith and no ridicule of the vain, or sneer of the proud, or cavil of the doubting, can make Him uncomely in your eyes.

Notice that she dreads no heavy burden. She says, I will take Him away. Why, Mary, you could not bear away so great a load! You would fall beneath the weight of a mans corpse! You are not strong enough for the sad task! Ah, but she thought that she could bear the blessed burden and she meant to try! She would have accomplished it. Faith laughs at impossibility and cries, it shall be done. But love actually performs the deed. A heart that is burning with love has about it a seven-fold energy, whose capacity it would be hard to calculate.   
It would seem a grim and terrible task for a woman, at early morning, to be carrying from its grave the corpse of one who had been hanged upon a tree. But she offers herself for the deed and is even eager for it. To a soul that would gladly find Christ, nothing is too hot or too heavy, nothing is too cold or too sickening. We would do anything, refuse nothing, and suffer everything, if we might but clasp Him in our arms, our Jesus and our All.   
Yet was she wedded to her old mistakeshe continued to seek the living among the dead, for she looked again into the sepulcher. Thus have I seen seeking souls cling to their original mistake and follow up those erroneous but natural hopes which are surely doomed to disappointment. How do I know that Mary began to look again into that sepulcher? Observe that, in the sixteenth verse we read, She turned herself and said unto Him, Rabboni!   
That is the second time she turned herself. The first time she turned and looked at Jesus, whom she supposed to be the gardener. Now, if she had to turn again to see Him, she must, in the meanwhile, have faced in the old direction, and must, therefore, have been peering again into the empty tomb. That is the difficulty which we have with poor seekers when they are in their fits. We persuade them from looking to themselves and their feelings, but they are soon back again at that unprofitable work. We tell them, He is not here, for He is risen. Look not to your own dead self, with its feelings and resolves, for Jesus is not there.   
For a while they listen to us and try to look to the Lord. But they do not know Him, and so their eyes insensibly return to the old place, looking again into the sepulcher of self, to find a living hope in the things of death. Still, even this mistaken persistency shows how anxious they are, and how desperately they are set upon finding salvation. Though they make serious mistakes, and even repeat them, yet they cannot give up. For nothing short of Christ will content them.   
V. And that brings us to our fifth pointA SEEKING SOUL MAY FIND JESUS THROUGH ONE WORD.  
We might be wise to clip our sermons down and make them much shorter. Long discourses have often missed the mark. Our Lords one word gave Mary all she sought. He said to her, Mary. And at once she knew Him and cried, Rabboni. Only one word! Jesus can preach a perfect sermon in one word! O dear Friends, when you cannot say much to an anxious enquirer, say a single word. Who knows what that one word may do? When you cannot repeat a sermon, quote a verse. A verse may hit him whom a sermon flies. Do not think that strength lies in length it is often the reverse.   
Though Mary came to herself by one word, that one word was from Jesus Himself. He and the angels together had not comforted her with a sentence, but one word from His heart went to her heart. That one word of love from His lips, Mary, brought that other word of reverence from her lips, Rabboni.   
Dear Friends, beseech the Lord to speak in His own all-powerful way at this time. In the meeting for prayer, you prayed for me that I might speak and I hope the Lord heard you. But now go yet further and cry, Speak, Lord! Speak Yourself! The angel of the Church has spoken and You have sealed his message, but now, we entreat You, go further and You speak one word Yourself, by Your own Spirit!   
That one word was the Magdalenes own name. It was as though He had said, I have called you by your nameyou are Mine. Words, when they are spoken with a general bearing, may prove feeble. When the angel said, Woman, and Jesus himself said, Woman, that name belonged to a large class of individuals. And Mary did not take it to herself. But when our Lord said, Mary, there was but one Mary present, and therefore it came home to her without fail.   
This is what is neededan assured, personal application of the Word. This our Lord grants when the message comes right home to you, as if you were the only one presentthe preacher looks at you, speaks to you, and gives such personal details that you are sure that not the preacher, but the preachers God is speaking to you. Then it is that you find the Lord and know of a surety that it is He.   
That word from the Masters lips, that wordyour own namethat word shall wake the echoes of your heart by arousing happy memories and recalling hours of sweet delight. When a soul knows that Jesus knows its name, it soon begins to know Jesus for itself. Who but He could have said, Mary with that emphatic accent, with that peculiar intonation? Who but He could have brought all her life to remembrance, not so much by the word itself, as by the meaning which He threw into it, and the vivid flash of His eyes which went with it?   
One glance of His eyes darted the light of God into her spirit. Mary! was the Open Sesame of her heart and mind. Oh, now she has Him! Lord, speak in this fashion to some seeker who is here looking for You! Lord, speak to John and Peter, to Jane and Sarah! Let the message come to many hearers from Your own lips, to Your own glory!   
VI. The last head is thisA SEEKING SOUL WILL RESPOND WITH REVERENCE TO THE WORD OF JESUS.   
Mary said at once, Rabboni. This is a Hebrew word, signifying Master, or, as Parkhurst says, having a Chaldee particle within it, which makes it to mean My Master, or, as I have heard some say, Great Master. At any rate, she meant that He was her Lord and Teacher. He knew her heart, He understood her inmost soul, and therefore she acknowledged Him as her Lord. He had called her by her name and she recognized that all-controlling voice. He was her Master, since He could so divinely know and move her heart.   
Even thus may we each one say, My God, my Savior, convinced by Your knowledge of me and overpowered by Your condescension towards me, I feel that You have the sole right to my love, my trust, my obedience! You are within and about me, nearer to me than hands and feet, nearer to me than even the blood that flows from my heart. And therefore I joyfully submit my whole being to You, to be ruled and instructed by You as my sole Lord and Rabbi!   
In addition to this, she feels that she knows Him. He is no stranger to her. Had He been a stranger, He might have said, Mary, many times. But because He was the Good Shepherd that knows His sheep and calls them by name, therefore Mary, as one of His sheep, responded to His call. Mary knew Himdo you know the Master? Beloved, do you know the Lord Jesus? To know Him is life eternal! Have you this life? Not to know Him is an ignorance dark as death.   
I do not say, do you know about Him? But do you know HIM? Has the Lord ever spoken to you? Has he spoken one almighty syllable which has thrilled your very soul? If so, you will at once take Him to be your Teacher and yield your intellect to His instruction. From now on you will only want to know what He chooses to reveal. But what He reveals will satisfy your reason at once.   
From now on opposing philosophies will go to the wind and you will learn of Him. From now on your own thoughts and speculations will seem as the chaff of the threshing floor, compared with the words which He teaches, which are full of weight and Divine authority, even of light and power eternal. Tonight, from my very heart, I call Jesus, Rabboni. I will have no Rabbi but Christno Master but my Lord Jesus. By all His knowledge of me and all His revelation of Himself to me, I take Him to be to me my Teacher and Lord.   
Rabboni means also Master by way of authority. Mary confessed herself the follower of Jesus. Where He led the way, she was resolved to follow, even as our hymn puts it  
*I am Yours and Yours alone,   
This I gladly, fully own;   
And, in all my works and ways,   
Only now would seek Your praise.*

From that time, even if it had not been so with her before, Mary Magdalene was one of those of whom it could be said, They follow the Lamb wherever He goes.

Happy man and happy woman, who will keep close to every footstep of the Lord. If you are seeking Him at this hour, pray that, at this moment, He may speak the revealing word, so that you may from now on feel that a change has come over you, the likes of which you have never known. May you experience a sacred twist which shall affect your whole character! May Jesus touch your heart so that your whole body, soul and spirit shall never forget that touch in time or in eternity! Amen.

LETTER FROM MR. SPURGEON.   
I hope my readers may have as much enjoyment in reading this sermon, as fell to my lot when preaching and revising it. At this present time I have lost my voice. But I feel especially thankful that this unusual inconvenience has happened to me only when it does not hinder me in the Lords work. Still, I would beg the prayers of my loving readers, that I may soon be able to speak, so as to be heard in the great congregation.

I take this opportunity, on this sermon for the Sunday before Christmas, to send my sincere Christian salutations to all, in every place, who read this discourse. The God of all Grace bless you and your household with the mercies which come of our Lords first advent and with a happy expectation of the high privileges which await Believers at His second and more glorious appearing!

*C. H. S.   
MENTONE, DECEMBER 14, 1889*   
Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307  
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**SUPPOSING HIM TO BE THE GARDENER   
NO. 1699**

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, DECEMBER 31, 1882, BY C. H. SPURGEON.**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Supposing Him to be the gardener.   
John 20:15.**

I WAS sitting, about a fortnight ago, in a very lovely garden, in the midst of all kinds of flowers which were blooming in delightful abundance all around. Screening myself from the heat of the sun under the overhanging boughs of an olive tree, I cast my eyes upon palms and bananas, roses and camellias, oranges and aloes, lavender and heliotrope. The garden was full of color and beauty, perfume and fruitfulness. Surely the gardener, whoever he might be, who had framed, fashioned and kept in order that lovely spot, deserved great commendation. So I thought. And then it came to me to meditate upon the Church of God as a garden, and to suppose the Lord Jesus to be the Gardener, and then to think of what would most assuredly happen if it were so.

Supposing Him to be the Gardener, my mind conceived of a paradise where all sweet things flourish and all evil things are rooted up. If an ordinary worker had produced such beauty, as I then saw and enjoyed on earth, what bounty and glory must surely be brought forth, supposing Him to be the Gardener! You know the Him to whom we referthe everblessed Son or Godwhom Mary Magdalene, in our text, mistook for the gardener. We will, for once, follow a saint in her mistaken trackand yet we shall find ourselves going in a right way! She was mistaken when she fell into supposing Him to be the gardener, but if we are under His Spirits teaching, we shall not make a mistake if now we indulge ourselves in a quiet meditation upon our ever-blessed Lord, supposing Him to be the Gardener.

It is not an unnatural supposition, surely, for if we may truly sing *We are a garden walled around,   
Chosen and made peculiar ground,*

that enclosure needs a Gardener. Are we not all the plants of His right hand planting? Do we not all need watering and tending by His constant and gracious care? He says, I am the true vine: My Father is the vinedresser, and that is one view of it. But we may also sing, My WellBeloved has a vineyard in a very fruitful hill: and He fenced it, and gathered out the stones from it and planted it with the choicest vinethat is to say, He acted as gardener to it. Thus has Isaiah taught us to sing a song of the Well-Beloved touching His vineyard. We read of our Lord just now under these termsYou that dwells in the gardens, the companions hearken to Your voice.

To what purpose does He dwell in the vineyards but that He may see how the vines flourish and care for all the plants? The image, I say, is so far from being unnatural that it is most pregnant with suggestions and full of useful teaching! We are not going against the harmonies of Nature when we are supposing Him to be the Gardener. Neither is the figure unscriptural, for in one of His own parables our Lord makes Himself to be the Dresser of the vineyard. We read just now that parable so full of warning. When the certain man came in and saw the fig tree, that it brought forth no fruit, he said unto the dresser of his vineyard, Cut it down: why does it cumber the ground?

Who was it that intervened between that profitless tree and the axe but our great Intercessor and Interposer? He it is who continually comes forward with, Let it alone this year, also, till I shall dig about it and fertilize it. In this case He Himself takes upon Himself the character of the vinedresser and we are not wrong in supposing Him to be the Gardener. If we would be supported by a type, our Lord takes the name of, the Second Adam, and the first Adam was a gardener. Moses tells us that the Lord God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. Man, in his best estate, was not to live in this world in a paradise of indolent luxury, but in a garden of recompensed toil! Behold, the Church is Christs Eden, watered by the River of Life and so fertilized that all manner of fruits are brought forth unto God! And He, our Second Adam, walks in this spiritual Eden to dress it and to keep itand so, by a type, we see that we are right in supposing Him to be the Gardener.

Thus, also, Solomon thought of Him when he described the royal Bridegroom as going down with His spouse to the garden when the flowers appeared on the earth and the fig tree had put forth her green figs. He went out with His beloved for the reservation of the gardens, saying, Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes. Neither Nature, nor Scripture, nor type, nor song forbids us to think of our adorable Lord Jesus as One that cares for the flowers and fruits of His Church. We err not when we speak of Him, supposing Him to be the Gardener.

And so I sat still and indulged the suggested line of thought, which I now repeat in your hearing, hoping that I may open many roads of meditation for your hearts, also. I shall not attempt to think out such a subject, thoroughly, but only to indicate in which direction you may look for a vein of precious ore.

I. Supposing Him to be the Gardener, we have, here, THE KEY TO MANY WONDERS in the garden of His Church. The first wonder is that there should be a Church at all in the worldthat there should be a garden blooming in the midst of this sterile waste! Upon a hard and flinty rock the Lord has made the Eden of His Church to grow. How came it to bean oasis of life in a desert of death? How came faith in the midst of unbelief, and hope where all is servile fear, and love where hate abounds? You are of God, little children, and the whole world lies in the Wicked One.

Why this being of God where all, besides, are fast shut up in the devil? How came there to be a people for God, separated, sanctified, consecrated and ordained to bring forth fruit unto His name? Assuredly it could not have been so at all if the doing of it had been left to man! We understand its existence, supposing Him to be the Gardener, but nothing else can account for it. He can cause the fir tree to flourish instead of the thornand the myrtle instead of the briarbut no one else can accomplish such a change!

The garden in which I sat was made on the bare face of rock and almost all the earth of which its terraces were composed had been brought up there from the shore, below, by hard labor and so upon the rock a soil had been created. It was not by its own nature that the garden was found in such a place, but it had been formed by skill and labor. Even so, the Church of God has had to be constructed by the Lord Jesus, who is the Author as well as the Perfecter of His garden. Painfully, with wounded hands, He has built each terrace and fashioned each bedand planted each plant. All the flowers have had to be watered with His bloody sweat and watched by His tearful eyes. The nail prints in His hands and the wound in His side are the tokens of what it cost Him to make a new Paradise. He has given His life for the life of every plant that is in the garden! And not one of them had been there on any other theory than supposing Him to be the Gardener.

Besides, there is another wonder. How came the Church of God to flourish in such a clime? This present evil world is very uncongenial to the growth of Divine Grace and the Church is not able, by herself, to resist the evil influences which surround her. The Church contains within itself elements which tend to its own disorder and destruction if left alone. Even as the garden has present in its soil all the germs of a tangled thicket of weeds, the best Church that ever Christ had on earth would, within a few years, apostatize from the Truth of God if deserted by the Spirit of God! The world never helps the Churchit is all in arms against it! There is nothing in the worlds air or soil that can fertilize the Church even to the least degree.

How is it, then, that notwithstanding all this, the Church is a fair garden unto God, and there are sweet spices grown in its beds and lovely flowers are gathered by the Divine hand from its borders? The continuance and prosperity of the Church can only be accounted for by supposing Him to be the Gardener. Almighty strength is put to the otherwise impossible work of sustaining a holy people among men! Almighty wisdom exercises itself upon this otherwise insuperable difficulty. Hear the word of the Lord and learn the reason for the growth of His Church below. I, the Lord, do keep it: I will water it every moment, lest any hurt it. I will keep it night and day. That is the reason for the existence of a spiritual people in the midst of a godless and perverse generation! This is the reason for an election of Grace in the midst of surrounding vice, worldliness and unbelief! Supposing Him to be the Gardener, I can see why there should be fruitfulness, beauty and sweetness, even, in the center of the wilderness of sin!

Another mystery is also cleared up by this supposition. The wonder is that ever you and I should have been placed among the plants of the Lord! Why are we allowed to grow in the garden of His Grace? Why me, Lord? Why me? How is it that we have been kept and tolerate in our barrenness, when He might, long ago, have said, Cut it down: why does it cumber the ground? Who else would have borne with such waywardness as ours? Who could have manifested such infinite patience? Who could have tended us with such careand when the care was so ill-rewarded, who would have renewed it so long, day after day, and persisted in designs of boundless love? Who could have done more for His vineyard? Who could or would have done so much? A mere man would have repented of his good intent, provoked by our ingratitude!

None but God could have had patience with some of us! That we have not long ago been slipped off as fruitless branches of the vinethat we are still left upon the stem, in the hope that we may ultimately bring forth fruitis a great marvel! I know not how it is that we have been spared, except upon this groundsupposing Him to be the Gardenerfor Jesus is all gentleness and Grace, so slow with His knife, so tardy with His axe, so hopeful if we do but show a bud or two, or, perhaps, yield a little sour berry! So hopeful, I say, that these may be hopeful prognostics of something better, by-and-by. Infinite patience! Immeasurable long-suffering! Where are they to be found, except in the breast of the Well-Beloved? Surely the hoe has spared many of us simply and only because He who is meek and lowly in heart is the Gardener!

Dear Friends, there is one mercy with regard to this Church which I have often had to thank God for, namely, that evils should have been shut out for so long a time. During the period in which we have been together as pastor and people, and that is now some 29 years, we have enjoyed uninterrupted prosperity, going from strength to strength in the work of the Lord. Alas, we have seen many other Churches that were quite as hopeful as our own torn with strife, brought low by declension, or overthrown by heresy. I hope we have not been apt to judge their faults severely, but we must be thankful for our own deliverance from the evils which have afflicted them. I do not know how it is that we have been kept together in love, helped to abound in labor and enabled to be firm in the faith, unless it is that special Grace has watched over us.

We are full of faults! We have nothing to boast of! And yet no Church has been more Divinely favored! I marvel that the blessing should have lasted so long and I cannot figure it out except when I fall into supposing Him to be the Gardener. I cannot trace our prosperity to the pastor, certainly. Nor even to my beloved friends, the elders and deacons, nor even to the best of you with your fervent love and holy zeal. I think it must be that Jesus has been the Gardener and He has shut the gate when I am afraid I have left it open. And He has driven out the wild boar of the woods just when he had entered to root up the weaker plants. He must have been about at nights to keep off the prowling thievesand He must have been here, too, in the noontide heat to guard those of you who have prospered in worldly goodsfrom the glare of too bright a sun.

Yes, He has been with us, blessed be His name! And that is why all this peace, unity and enthusiasm! May we never grieve Him so that He shall turn away from us, but rather let us entreat Him, saying, Abide with us. You that dwells in the gardens, let this be one of the gardens in which You deign to dwell until the day breaks and the shadows flee away. Thus our supposition is a key to many wonders.   
II. Let your imaginations run along with mine while I say that supposing Him to be the Gardener should be A SPUR TO MANY DUTIES. One of the duties of a Christian is joy. That is a blessed religion which, among its precepts, commands men to be happy! When joy becomes a duty, who would wish to neglect it? Surely it must help every little plant to drink in the sunlight when it is whispered among the flowers that Jesus is the Gardener! Oh, you say, I am such a little plant! I do not grow well! I do not put forth much foliage, nor are there so many flowers on me as on many round about me! It is quite right that you should think little of yourselfperhaps to droop your head is a part of your beautymany flowers had not been half so lovely if they had not practiced the art of hanging their heads.

But supposing Him to be the Gardener, then He is as much the Gardener to you as He is to the most lordly palm in the whole domain! In the Mentone garden, right before me grew the orange and the aloe, and others of the finer and more noticeable plants. But on a wall to my left grew common wallflowers and saxifrages, and tiny herbs such as we find on our own rocky places. Now, the gardener had cared for all of these, little as well as great! In fact, there were hundreds of specimens of the most insignificant growths, all duly labeled and described. The smallest saxifrage could say, He is my gardener just as surely as he is the gardener of the Gloire de Dijon or Marechal Neil.

Oh feeble child of God, the Lord takes care of you! Your heavenly Father feeds ravens and guides the flight of sparrowsshould He not much more care for you, oh you of little faith? Oh, little plants, you will grow rightly enough! Perhaps you are growing downward, just now, rather than upward. Remember that there are plants of which we value the underground root much more than we do the hull above ground. Perhaps it is not yours to grow very fast. You may be a slow-growing shrub, by nature, and you would not be healthy if you were to run to wood. Anyway, be this your joyyou are in the garden of the Lord and, supposing Him to be the Gardener, He will make the best of you! You cannot be in better hands!

Another duty is that of valuing the Lords Presence and praying for it. We ought, whenever the Sabbath morning dawns, to pray our WellBeloved to come into His garden and eat His pleasant fruits. What can we do without Him? All day long our cry should go up to Him, O Lord, behold and visit this vine and the vineyard which Your right hand has planted. We ought to agonize with Him that He would come and manifest Himself to us as He does not unto the world! For what is a garden if the gardener never comes near it? What is the difference between it and the wilderness if he to whom it belongs never lifts up spade or pruning-hook upon it? So that it is our necessitythat we have Christ with us supposing Him to be the gardener.

And it is our bliss that we have Christ walking between our beds and borders, watching every plant, training, tending, maturing all. Supposing Him to be the gardener, it is well, for from Him is our fruit found. Divided from Him we are nothing! Only as He watches over us can we bring forth fruit. Let us have done with confidence in man! let us forego all attempts to supply facts of His spiritual Presence by routine or rant, ritualism or rowdyismbut let us pray our Lord to be always present with usand by that Presence to make our garden grow!

Supposing Him to be the Gardener, there is another duty and that is, let each one of us yield himself up entirely to Him. A plant does not know how it ought to be treatedit knows not when it should be watered or when it should be kept dry! A fruit tree is no judge of when it needs to be pruned, or dug, or fertilized. The wit and wisdom of the garden lies not in the flowers and shrubs, but in the gardener. Now, then, if you and I are here, today, with any self-will and carnal judgment about us, let us seek to lay it all aside that we may be absolutely at our Lords disposal. You might not be willing to put yourself implicitly into the hands of any mere man, (pity that you should), but surely, you plant of the Lords right-hand planting, you may put yourself without a question into His dear hands!

Supposing Him to be the Gardener, you may well say, I would neither have will, nor wish, nor wit, nor whim, nor way, but I would be as nothing in the Gardeners hands, that He may be to me my wisdom and my all. Here, kind Gardener, Your poor plant bows itself to Your hands train me as You will. Depend upon it, happiness lives next door to the spirit of complete acquiescence in the will of God! And it will be easy to exercise that perfect acquiescence when we suppose the Lord Jesus to be the Gardener. If the Lord has done it, what has a saint to say? Oh you afflicted one, the Lord has done itwould you have it otherwise? No, are you not thankful that it is so, because so is the will of Him in whose hands your life is and whose are all your ways? The duty of submission is very plain, supposing Him to be the Gardener.

One more duty I would mention, though others suggest themselves. Supposing Him to be the Gardener, then let us bring forth fruit to Him. I do not address a people, this morning, who feel no care as to whether they serve God or not. I believe that most of you desire to glorify God, for being saved by Grace, you feel a holy ambition to show forth His praises who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. You wish to bring others to Christ because you, yourselves, have been brought to life and liberty in Him. Now, let this be a stimulus to your fruit-bearing, that Jesus is the Gardener. Where you have brought forth a single cluster, bring forth a hundred, supposing Him to be the Gardener!

If He is to have the honor of it, then labor to do that which will give Him great renown. If our spiritual state were to be attributed to ourselves, or to our minister, or to some of our fellow Christians, we might not feel that we were under a great necessity to be fruitful. But if Jesus is the Gardener and is to bear the blame or the honor of what we produce, then let us use up every drop of sap and strain every fiber that, to the utmost of which our manhood is capable, we may produce a fair reward for our Lords travail! Under such tutorship and care we ought to become eminent scholars. Does Christ train us? Oh let us never cause the world to think less of our Master!

Students feel that their alma mater deserves great things of them, so they labor to make their university renowned. And so, since Jesus is Tutor and University to us, let us feel that we are bound to reflect credit upon so great a Teacher, upon so Divine a name! I do not know how to put it, but surely we ought to do something worthy of such a Lord! Each little flower in the garden of the Lord should wear its brightest hues and poor forth its rarest perfume because Jesus cares for it. The best of all possible good should be yielded by every plant in our Fathers Garden, supposing Jesus to the Gardener!

Thus much, then, on those two pointsa key to many wonders and a spur to many duties.   
III. Thirdly, I have found in this supposition A RELIEF FROM CRUSHING RESPONSIBILITY. One has a work given Him of God to do and, if he does it rightly, he cannot do it carelessly. The first thing when he wakes he asks, How is the work prospering? And the last thought at night is, What can I do to fulfill my calling? Sometimes the anxiety even troubles his dreams and he sighs, O Lord, send now prosperity! How is the garden prospering which we are set to tend? Are we broken-hearted because nothing appears to flourish? Is it a bad season? Or is the soil lean and hungry? It is a very blessed relief to an excess of care if we can fall into the habit of supposing Him to be the Gardener.   
If Jesus is the Master and Lord in all things, it is not

mine to keep all the Church in order. I am not responsible for the growth of every Christian, nor for every backsliders errors, nor for every professors faults of life. This burden must not lie on me so that I shall be crushed by it. Supposing Him to be the Gardener, then, the Church enjoys a better oversight than mine! Better care is taken of the garden than could be taken by the most vigilant watchers, even though by night the frost devoured them and by day the heat! Supposing Him to be the Gardener, then all must go well in the long run. He that keeps Israel does neither slumber nor sleepwe need not fret and despond.   
I beg you earnest workers who are becoming depressed, to think this out a little! You see it is yours to work under the Lord Jesusbut it is not yours to take the anxiety of His office into your souls as though you were to bear His burdens! The under-gardener, the workman in the garden, needs not fret about the whole garden as though it were all left to him. No, no! Let him not take too much upon himself. I pray you, bound your anxiety by the facts of the case. So you have a number of young people around you and you are watching for their souls as they that must give account. This is well, but do not be worried and wearied, for, after all, the saving and the keeping of those souls is not in your hands, but it rests with One far more able than yourself! Just think that the Lord is the Gardener.   
I know it is so in matters of Providence. A certain man of God in troublous times became quite unable to do his duty because he laid to heart so much the ills of the age. He became depressed and disturbed and he went on board a vessel, wanting to leave the country which was getting into such a state that he could no longer endure it. Then one said to him, Mr. Whitelock, are you the manager of the world? No, he was not quite that. Did not God get on pretty well with it before you were born and dont you think He will do very well with it when you are dead? That reflection helped to relieve the good mans mind and he went back to do his duty! I want you, thus, to perceive the limit of your responsibilityyou are not the Gardeneryou are only one of the Gardeners boys, set to run errands, or to do a bit of digging, or to sweep the paths. The garden is well enough managed even though you are not head manager in it!   
While this relieves us of anxiety it makes labor for Christ very sweet because if the garden does not seem to repay us for our trouble, we say to ourselves, It is not my garden, after all. Supposing Him to be the Gardener, I am quite willing to work on a barren piece of rock, or tie up an old withered bough, or dig worthless sod, for, if it only pleases Jesus, the work is, for that one sole reason, profitable to the last degree! It is not mine to question the wisdom of my task, but to set about it in the name of my Master and Lord. Supposing Him to be the Gardener, lifts the ponderous responsibility of it from me and my work becomes pleasant and delightful.   
In dealing with the souls of men, we meet with cases which are extremely difficult. Some persons are so timid and fearful that you do not know how to comfort them. Others are so fast and presumptuous that you hardly know how to help them. A few are so double-faced that you cannot understand them and others so fickle that you cannot hold them. Some flowers puzzle the ordinary gardenerwe meet with plants which are covered with thorns and when you try to train them, they wound the hands that would help them. These strange growths would make a great muddle for you if you were the gardenerbut, supposing Him to be the Gardeneryou have the happiness of being able to go to Him constantly, saying, Good Lord, I do not understand this singular creature. It is as odd a plant as I am, myself. Oh, that You would manage it, or tell me how! I have come to tell You of it.   
Constantly our trouble is that we have so many plants to look after that we have not time to cultivate any one in the best manner because we have 50 more all needing attention at the same time! And then, before we have done with the watering-pot, we have to fetch the hoe and the rake and the spade! These multitudinous cares puzzle us, even as Paul was, when he said, That which comes upon me daily, the care of all the Churches. Ah, then, it is a blessed thing to do the little we can do and leave the rest to Jesus, supposing Him to be the Gardener.   
In the Church of God there is a discipline which we cannot exercise. I do not think it is half so hard to exercise discipline as it is not to be able to exercise it when you feel that it ought to be done. The servants of the householder were perplexed when they might not root up the tares. Did you not sow good seed in your field? Why, then, has it tares? An enemy has done this. Would you, then, that we go and gather them up? Not so, said he, lest you root up the wheat with them. This afflicts the Christian minister when he must not remove a pestilent, hindering weed. Yes, but supposing Him to be the Gardener, and it is His will to let that weed remain, what have you and I to do but to hold our peace? He has a discipline more sure and safe than ours and, in due time, the tares shall know it! In patience let us possess our souls.   
And then, again, there is that succession in the garden which we can not keep up. Plants will die down and others must be put into their places or the garden will grow bare, but we know not where to find fresh flowers! We say, When yonder good man dies, who will succeed him? That is a question I have heard many a time, till I am rather weary of it! Who is to follow such a man? Let us wait till he is gone and needs following! Why sell the mans coat when he can wear it, himself? We are apt to think, when this race of good Brethren shall die, that none will arise worthy to unloose the laces of their shoes! Well, Friend, I could suppose a great many things, but this morning my text is, Supposing Him to be the Gardener, and on that supposition I expect that the Lord has other plants in reserve which you have not yet seenand these will fit exactly into our places when they become emptyand the Lord will keep up the true Apostolic succession till the day of His Second Advent!   
In every time of darkness and dismay, when the heart sinks and the spirits decline, and we think it is all over with the Church of God, let us fall back on this, Supposing Him to be the Gardener, and expect to see greater and better things than these! We are at the end of our wits, but He is not at the beginning of His! We are nonplussed, but He never will be! Therefore let us wait and be tranquil, supposing Him to be the Gardener.   
IV. Fourthly, I want you to notice that this supposition will give you A DELIVERANCE FROM MANY GLOOMY FEARS. I walked down the garden and I saw a place where all the path was strewn with leaves, broken branches, stonesand I saw the earth upon the flower beds tossed about and roots lying quite out of the groundall was in disorder! Had a dog been amusing himself? Or had a mischievous child been at work? If so, it was a great pity. But noin a minute or two I saw the gardener come back and I perceived that he had been making all this disarrangement! He had been cutting, digging, hacking and making a messand all for the good of the garden!   
It may be it has happened to some of you, that you have been a good deal pruned, lately, and in your domestic affairs things have not been in so fair a state as you could have wished. It may be in the Church we have seen ill weeds plucked up and barren branches lopped, so that everything is in disarray. Well, if the Lord has done it, gloomy fears are idle! Supposing Him to be the Gardener, all is well! As I was talking this over with my friend, I said to himSupposing Him to be the Gardener, then the serpent will have a bad time of it. Supposing Adam to be the gardener, then the serpent gets in and has a chat with his wife, and mischief comes of it. But supposing Jesus to be the Gardener, woe to you, Serpentthere is a blow for your head within half a minute if you do but show yourself within the boundary! So, if we are afraid that the devil should get in among us, let us always, in prayer, entreat that there may be no space for the devil because the Lord Jesus Christ fills all and keeps out the adversary.   
Other creatures besides serpents intrude into gardenscaterpillars, palmerworms and all sorts of destroying creatures are apt to devour our Churches. How can we keep them out? The highest wall cannot exclude them! There is no protection except oneand that is, supposing Him to be the Gardener. Thus it is written, I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, says the Lord of hosts. I am sometimes troubled by the question, What if roots of bitterness should spring up among us to trouble us? We are all such fallible creatures, supposing some Brother should permit the seed of discord to grow in his bosom? Then there may be a Sister in whose heart the seeds will also spring up, and from her they will fly to another Sister and be blown about till Brothers and Sisters are all bearing rue and wormwood in their hearts. Who is to prevent this?   
Only the Lord, Jesus by His Spirit! He can keep out this evil, supposing Him to the Gardener. The root which bears wormwood will grow but little where Jesus is! Dwell with us, Lord, as a Church and people! By Your Holy Spirit reside with us and in us, and never depart from us, and then no root of bitterness shall spring up to trouble us! Then comes another fear. Suppose the Living Waters of Gods Spirit should not come to water the garden, what then? We cannot make them flow, for the Spirit is a Sovereign and He flows where He pleases. Ah, but the Spirit of God will be in our garden, supposing our Lord to be the Gardener. There is no fear of our not being watered when Jesus undertakes to do it! He will pour water on him that is thirsty and floods upon the dry ground.

But what if the sunlight of His love should not shine on the garden? If the fruit should never ripen; if there should be no peace; no joy in the Lord? That cannot happen supposing Him to be the Gardener, for His face is the sun and His Countenance scatters health-giving beams, nurturing warmth and perfecting influences which are necessary for maturing the saints in all the sweetness of Grace to the Glory of God! So, supposing Him to be the Gardener at this, the close of the year, I fling away my doubts and fears and invite you who bear the Church upon your heart to do the same! It is all well with Christs cause because it is in His own hands! He shall not fail nor be discouraged! The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hands!   
V. Fifthly, here is A WARNING FOR THE CARELESS, supposing Him to be the Gardener. In this great congregation many are to the Church what weeds are to a garden. They are not planted by God! They are not growing under His nurture. They are bringing forth no fruit to His Glory. My dear Friend, I have tried often to get at you, to impress you, but I cannot. Take heed, for one of these days, supposing Him to be the Gardener, He will reach you and you shall know what that Word of God means, Every plant which My heavenly Father has not planted shall be rooted up. Take heed to yourselves, I pray!   
Others among us are like the branches of the vine which bear no fruit. We have often spoken very sharply to these, speaking honest truth in unmistakable languageand yet we have not touched their consciences. Ah, but supposing Him to be the Gardener, He will fulfill that sentence Every branch in Me that bears not fruit He takes away. He will get at you, if we cannot. Would God, before this old year were quite dead, you would turn unto the Lord with full purpose of heart so that, instead of being a weed, you might become a choice flower! That instead of a dry stick, you might be a sappy, fruit-bearing branch of the vine! The Lord make it to be so!   
But if any here need the caution, I pray them to take it to heart at once. Supposing Him to be the Gardener, there will be no escaping from His eyes! There will be no deliverance from His hands. As He will thoroughly purge His floor and burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire, so He will thoroughly cleanse His garden and cast out every worthless thing!   
VI. Another set of thoughts may well arise as A QUIETUS TO THOSE WHO COMPLAIN, Supposing Him to be the Gardener. Certain of us have been made to suffer much physical pain, which often bites into the spirits and makes the heart stoop. Others have suffered heavy temporal losses, having had no success in business, but, on the contrary, having had to endure privation, perhaps even to penury. Are you ready to complain against the Lord for all this? I pray you, do not do it! Take the supposition of the text into your mind this morning. The Lord has been pruning you sharply, cutting off your best branches and you seem to be like a thing despised that is constantly tormented with the knife.   
Yes, but supposing Him to be the Gardener, suppose that your loving Lord has worked it all, that from His own hands all your grief has come every cut, every gash and every slipdoes not this alter the case? Has not the Lord done it? Well, then, if it is so, put your finger to your lips and be quiet until you are able, from your heart, to say, The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord. I am persuaded that the Lord has done nothing amiss to any of His people! I am persuaded that no child of His can rightly complain that he has been whipped with too much severityand that no one branch of the vine can truthfully declare that it has been pruned with too sharp an edge!   
No, what the Lord has done is the best that could have been done! The very thing that you and I, if we could have possessed infinite wisdom and love, would have wished to have done! Therefore let us stop each thought of murmuring and say, The Lord has done it, and be glad. Especially I speak to those who have suffered bereavement. I can hardly express to you how strange I feel, at this moment, when my sermon revives a memory so sweet dashed with such exceeding bitterness. I sat with my friend and secretary in that garden some 15 days ago and we were, then, in perfect health, rejoicing in the goodness of the Lord. We returned home and within five days I was struck with disabling pain. And worse, far worse than that, he was called upon to lose his wife.   
We said to one another, as we sat there reading the Word of God and meditating, How happy we are! Dare we think of being so happy? Must it not speedily end? I little thought I should have to say for him, Alas, my Brother, you are brought very low, for the delight of your eyes is taken from you. But here is our comfortthe Lord has done it! The best rose in the garden is gone. Who has taken it? The Gardener came this way and gathered it! He planted it and watched over it, and now He has taken it. Is not this most natural? Does anybody weep because of that? No, everybody knows that it is right and according to the order of Nature that He should come and gather the best in the garden!   
If you are sorely troubled by the loss of your beloved, yet dry your grief by supposing Him to be the Gardener. Kiss the hand that has wrought you such grief? Beloved Brothers and Sisters, remember, the next time the Lord comes to your part of the gardenand He may do so within the next weekHe will only gather His own flowers, and would you prevent His doing so even if you could?   
VII. Supposing Him to be the Gardener, then, there is AN OUTLOOK FOR THE HOPEFUL. Supposing Him to be the Gardener, then, I expect to see, in the garden where He works, the best possible prosperity! I expect to see no flower dried up, no tree without fruit! I expect to see the richest, rarest fruit, with the daintiest bloom upon it, daily presented to the great Owner of the garden. Let us expect that in this Church and pray for it! Oh, if we have but faith, we shall see great things! It is our unbelief that straitens God. Let us believe great things from the work of Christ by His Spirit in the midst of His peoples hearts and we shall not be disappointed!   
Supposing Him to be the Gardener, then, dear Friends, we may expect Divine union of unspeakable preciousness! Go back to Eden for a minute. When Adam was the gardener, what happened? The Lord God walked in the garden in the cool of the day. But supposing Him to be the Gardener, we shall have the Lord God dwelling among us and revealing Himself in all the Glory of His power and the plenitude or His Fatherly heartmaking us to know Himthat we may be filled with all the fullness of God. What joy is this!   
One other thought. Supposing Him to be the Gardener, and God to come and walk among the trees of the garden, then I expect He will remove the whole of the garden upward with Himself to fairer skies, for He rose and His people must rise with Him! I expect a blessed transplantation of all these flowers below to a clearer atmosphere aboveaway from all this smoke and fog and dampup where the sun is never clouded, where flowers never wither, where fruits never decay! Oh, the glory we shall then enjoy up yonder, on the hills of spices in the Garden of God! Supposing Him to be the Gardener what a garden will He form above and how shall you and I grow there, developing beyond imagination!  
It does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like He is, for we shall see Him as He is. Since He is the Author and Finisher or our faith, to what perfection will He conduct us! And to what Glory will He bring us! Oh, to be found in Him! God grant we may be! To be plants in His garden, Supposing Him to be the Gardener, is all the Heaven we can desire!

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A HANDKERCHIEF   
NO. 2956

A SERMON   
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**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
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**Jesus said to her, Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking? John 20:15.**

IN the Garden of Eden, immediately after the Fall, the sentence of sorrow and of sorrow multiplied, fell upon the woman. In the garden where Christ had been buried, after His Resurrection, the news of comfortcomfort rich and Divinecame to a woman through the womans promised Seed, the Lord Jesus Christ. If the sentence must fall heavily upon the woman, so must the comfort come most sweetly to her. I will not say that the Resurrection reversed the curse of the Fall, but, at any rate, it took the sting out of it, lifted it up and sanctified it! There was reason enough for the woman to weep after the sentence had been pronounced upon her, but there is no reason for her to weep now that Jesus Christ has fulfilled the promise which followed upon mans disobedience, namely, that the Seed of the woman should bruise the serpents head.

Observe the wise method followed by the Divine Consoler. In order to comfort Mary Magdalene, our Lord put a question to her. It is often the wisest way to relieve minds that are swollen through grief to allow them to find the natural end of their sorrow by asking them why they are weeping. We have to do this with ourselves sometimes. We enquire, Why are you cast down, O my Soul? And why are you disquieted within me? The soul begins to ask for the reason of its grief and often finds that it is insufficient to justify so bitter a sorrow and, perhaps, it even discovers that the sources of its sorrow have been misunderstood and that, if they had been rightly comprehended, they would have been sources of joy instead! He who would be wise in dealing with the daughters of grief, must let them tell their own story and, almost without a single sentence from you, their own story will be blessed by God to the relieving of their grief.

Moreover, it is always wise, before we attempt to comfort anyone, to know what is the peculiar form and fashion which grief has taken. The physician who without investigation should at once proceed to apply a remedy to his patient, might be giving the wrong medicine for the disease. He has to make his diagnosis of the malady, to see whence it came, what are its symptoms, and how it worksand then the physician adapts his medicine to the case. Sit down with your sorrow, my Friend, and let us hear what ails you. What causes you to fret? What causes your soul to travail? Possibly the sorrowing ones will themselves direct you to the right remedy for their malady and so you shall be able to speak a word in season and, a word spoken in due season, how good it is! You are at present like a man groping in the dark and you will be as one pouring vinegar upon niter if you sing songs to a heavy heart! And you will make matters worse which you had hoped to make better unless you find out the cause of the mourners tears.

My one objective at this time is to take this question of our Lord to Mary and apply it to all who are sorrowing here. And although I shall keep to the text and repeat the question, Woman, why are you weeping? I shall hope that other sorrowers besides the women here will find comfort from the words which the Holy Spirit will teach me to speak. I shall ask, first, is it natural sorrow? And secondly, is it spiritual sorrow?

I. We will first enquire about that which is common to us all without exception, IS IT NATURAL SORROW? Is it sorrow which springs from our human nature and is common to all who are born of woman, to whom sorrow comes as a portion of our heritage?

Well, my Friend, what is the cause of your grief? What ails you? Is it because you are bereaved? Have you lost someone who was very dear to you? Then your grief is not unusual and your weeping is not unpardonable, for Jesus wept as He stood at the grave of His friend Lazarus. But let not your weeping go beyond due bounds. Your tears are right enough so far, but they may be wrong if they go any further. There is a weeping of regret and of a lacerated spirit, upon which God looks with pity, but there may come a weeping of rebelliousness upon which even our Heavenly Father may feel that He must look with anger. Why are you weeping? Will you look into your heart, Beloved, and see whether the cause of your grief is such as does fully justify it, or see whether you have already carried it too far? You have lost a childa lovely child, but, my Sister, you have not really lost your child. Do you count that lost which is in Christs keeping? Do you count that baby lost which is up among the angels? If your child had been taken to be a prince in a palace, you would not have said that he was lost! Inasmuch as he has been caught away to be with Jesus, say not that he is lost. You are the mother of one who can see the face of God and thus says the Lord unto you, Refrain your eyes from weeping, for your children shall come again from the land of their captivity.

Have you lost your husband? It is a heavy blow and well may you weep, but still, who took him from you? Was it not He who lent him to you? Bless the Lord that you have had all those years of comfort and joy! And say with Job, The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. The loss of your husband has made a great void in your life, but the Lord will fill that void. Do you know Him? Then He will be a Husband unto you and a Father to your fatherless children. He has said, Leave your fatherless children, I will preserve them alive; and let your widows trust in Me. You are a widow. Then trust in the Lord. If you are a widow without faith in God, then yours is a sorrow, indeed, but if the widows sorrow shall drive her to trust in Christ as her Savior, if she shall look up and in her deep sorrow trust herself with the great Helper of the helpless, she shall find her loss to be a gain!

Woman, why are you weeping? Whatever relative or friend you have lost, your God will be more to you than the loved one could ever be! The Well-Beloved, the Lord Jesus Christ, is better to us than all earthly friends. And when they are taken away from us, He more than fills the space which once they occupied, so that, if we have less of human love, we have more of the Divineand thus we are gainers rather than losers! Look forward to the Resurrection and be comforted. Remember that the worm has not consumed the beauty forever, neither has the precious temple of the body been given up to everlasting ruin. If they fell asleep in Christ, as surely as they were buried they shall rise again in beauty, in the image of Jesus Christ! So let us not sorrow as those who are without hope. Brush away your tears, or, if they must fall, smile through them in sweet resignation to the Divine will and be still.

Why are you weeping? Is there another reason for your sorrow? Do you weep because you are very poor? There are some who do not know the sorrow of poverty, who will, perhaps, blame you. But I know that there are some of you who have a hard task to find a livelihooda task at which a slave might be pitied. In this great city many toil till they wear themselves almost to skeletonsand even then scarcely find food enough to keep body and soul together! There are some of the choicest sons and daughters of the Lord who seem to be the lowest of all in the scale of this worlds possessions! And their lot, from morning to night, is one of incessant drudgery. Were it not for these sweet Sabbaths, to live on earth would be to them altogether a bondage! But weep not, my poor Sister. Weep not, my poor Brother. There is One who was poorer than you are who will bear your burdens for you! Jesus Christ was poorer than poverty because He had once been so exceedingly richand none are so poor as those who come down from wealth to poverty. You know that though He was rich, yet, for our sakes, He became poor, that we, through His poverty, might become rich. Poor mourner, remember the promise to him that walks righteously and speaks uprightlyBread shall be given him, his waters shall be sure. Remember, also, how the Lord Jesus said to His disciples, Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Why, if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Behold the fowls of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your Heavenly Father feeds them. So, will He not feed you, also? Wipe away your tears! Bend your back to the burden which God has laid upon you, and be content with such things as you have, for He has said, I will never leave you, nor forsake you.

Woman, why are you weeping? Suppose that neither of these causes account for your sorrow, have you a beloved sick one at home? Yes, and you may well weep if that sickness has been longand if it wears away the beauty from the cheeks and the brightness from the eyes and if it costs innumerable pains and anguish only to be understood by those who suffer it and those who watch, hour by hour, by the sufferer. I can understand your weeping and yet, Beloved, your case is in Christs hands and you may safely leave your dear ones in His hands. He never sent a trial to any child of His unless it was so necessary that to have withheld it would have been unkind! Accept it as the Lords love-token. Besides, remember that He can recover our loved ones if He deems it wise, or He can sustain them in their sickness if He does not see fit to recover them. And he can give them a joyful exit from this world and an abundant entrance into His everlasting Kingdom. So do not weep too much, but say, It is the Lord. Let Him do what seems good to Him.

Possibly, however, the weeping may come to us because we have sickness in our own bodies. While we are sitting or standing here, some of us little know the amount of suffering that may be felt by the person who is sitting next to us. I have often wondered how some of my beloved hearers ever manage to get here at allyet they are here, although full of pain. They find a sweet forgetfulness, at least for a little time, while the Word is being preached and they cannot forego the pleasure of mingling with the people of God, even though it costs them many a sharp pang. Yet I would urge even such sufferers to dry their tears. It may be that the dreaded disease of consumption is gradually wearing away the life, but, my Sister, it is no ill thing to just swoon away into Heaven and to gently pass from this life to another and a brighter day! Perhaps you are suffering from some painful disease which is known to be fatal. Well, that is only another way of bringing a Kings messenger to take you swiftly Home. If you have no Christ, you may well weep if you have received your death-wound, for after death comes judgment. This disease is a messenger sent to bid you prepare to meet your God. Suppose you were smitten down today? God has given you a timely warning. Take it, I pray you, and, instead of weeping over your sickness, may the Holy Spirit enable you to weep over your sin and to trust in Christ as your Savior, for then all shall be well! If we have believed in Jesus, we need not weep, even though the dread archer may have lodged the fatal shaft quite near our heart. What is there to weep about? When a Christian has received an intimation that he is soon to be with his Savior in Glory, we may congratulate him that he is the sooner to be out of the strife and the sinand to forever wear the crown of victory and glory! So we will not weep about that.

Perhaps I am addressing one who says, My sorrow is neither bereavement, nor personal sickness, nor the sickness of friends, nor povertyI sometimes think I could bear any or all of those trials. I have been the victim of a treacherous friend

I trusted and have been deceived. I gave my hearts best affections and have been betrayed. You, too, dear Friend, are not alone in that trial. There was One, far better than you, on whose cheek came the hot kiss from the betrayers lips, so that Jesus said to Judas, Do you betray the Son of Man with a kiss? Many have had so-called friends who, in the time of testing, have been more cruel than avowed foes. They have been as the cunning fowler who spreads his net so warily that he may catch the little birds. Well, if your case is like that of the birds, fly away to Jesus! Trust Him, for He will never deceive you. If Jesus shall fill that vacancy in your heart, it will have been a blessed vacancy! A broken heart is best healed by a touch of the pierced hand of Jesus! Get away to Him, you Hannah, you woman of a sorrowful spiritgo to the Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with grief, and He will find a balm for your spirit.

I cannot go further into these natural sorrowsthey are so many and the river of grief is so deep and rapid. But, whatever your sorrow may be, one piece of advice I have to give to every weeping onefind the Divine Comforter and, whatever your griefs may be, they shall be relieved!

II. Now I come to our main question, which is this, IS IT SPIRITUAL SORROW? If so, is it sorrow for others, or sorrow for yourselves?   
I will begin with the nobler form. Woman, why are you weeping? Do you weep for others? Are there some whom you love and for whom you have often prayed who remain in the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquity? This is a suitable subject for mourning. Weep not for those who have gone to be forever with the Lord, for all is well with them! But weep for those who are living in sinfor the young man in his unbridled lust who has dishonored his fathers namefor the daughter who, in her willfulness, has gone astray into the paths of transgression. Weep for the heart that will not break. Weep for the eyes that will not weep. Weep for the sinners who will not confess their sins, but are resolutely seeking their own damnation! Ah, my dear Friends, when you are weeping like that, you are weeping as your Savior did when He wept over Jerusalem and God will put your tears into His bottle. Be comforted, for those tears of yours are omens of good to the souls you pity, for, as surely as you groan and sigh and cry over these beloved ones, you are doing what you can to bring them the blessing! And I think that is a token that the blessing of God is on its way to them. You remember that it is written that the power of the Lord was present to heal on a certain occasion? Why was it more present, then, than at any other time? Was it not because there were four men who were breaking up the roof to let down a sick one into the room where Christ was? Wherever there is real concern for souls, although it is only in four persons, there is about the ministry a power of an unusual kind! Go on, then, and still weep, but not hopelessly, not with the bitterness of despair. The Lord will see your tears and will hear your prayers, and will grant your petition, even though you may not live to see it! Perhaps when you are in Heaven, your son, your husband, your sisterover whom you now are weeping, shall be brought to Christ.   
Possibly, however, the sorrow for others relates to the church with which this mourner is connected. It is often my lot to meet with Brothers and Sisters coming from country towns who say to me, What are we to do? The place of worship where we attend might almost as well be pulled down, for there is no life, no energy, no power there. Oh, it is wretched work, indeed, when that is the case! Many towns and villages would be all the better if the meeting house and the parish church, too, were utterly demobilizedbecause then they would feel that they had not any religious means at all and would, perhaps, be stirred up to seek them! But now there is dead formalism in both places. There is nothing worse than sluggishness in the pastors and members of a church. What is the use of a dead church? It is no use at all! The fact is, the better a church is, the sooner it rots when it is dead. The man who is very stout is the very worst person to keep in the house when once he is deadand the church that seems to be most packed with Divine Truth is the most obnoxious to all when once the life goes out of it.   
Well, my dear Friends, if you are sorrowing over the low condition of the church to which you belong and the state of religion in general in the neighborhood where you live, I would not stop your tears, yet I would try to comfort you, and I would advise you to take the case to your Lord. He is the Head of the Church, so carry that burden to Him. Do not go about finding fault. Do not try to sow dissension and dissatisfaction, or you will do hurt instead of good. But lay the matter before your Lord and Master and give Him no rest till once again He puts forth His almighty power and raises His Church to life!   
Now I must leave this point, but I think that it is a grand thing to sorrow and weep for others. We ought to make it a rule of our life to bear the sorrows of other people. If sinners will not repent, we cannot repent for them. If they will not believe, we cannot believe for them. True religion can never be a matter of sponsorship, but we can do this for sinnerswe can say to the Lord, O Lord, these sinners will not feel their sin, but we feel it! It grieves us and cuts us to the heart! O Lord, will You not give them repentance? Will You not cause these sinners to believe in You? We confess their iniquity before You, for we know the guiltiness of their hearts in rejecting You. We weep and mourn that they will not admire Your beauty and will not yield their hearts to You, but, dear Savior, do win their hearts in answer to our prayer. They are far away from God by their wicked worksbring them nearby Your precious blood. That is what I mean. And if you can do this, appropriating, as it were, the sins and sorrows of mankind to yourself, you will be showing your sympathy with them in the best possible way. Woman, if you weep thus for others, blessed are you among women!  
But, now, why are you weeping? Is it for yourself? Are these spiritual sorrows on your own account? Are you a sorrowing child of God? Do you know yourself to be a Christian and yet do you weep? Then, what is the cause of your grief? Do you miss your Lords Presence? If so, there is reason enough for your weeping, yet why should you weep? He is present even nowyou have not seen Him, but He has seen you and is gazing upon you at this very moment. Beloved mourner, do not say, I am out of fellowship with Christ and I am afraid I cannot return to that blessed experience for months. Listen to this textBehold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hears My voice and opens the doorthat is all I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me. It was to the angel of the Church of the Laodiceans, the lukewarm Laodiceans, that these words were written! And they are also written to you, my Sister, and to you, my Brother if you have grown lukewarm. Be willing for Christ to come to you and, before you are aware, your soul shall make you like the chariots of Amminadib! Do not imagine that restoration to communion with Christ need occupy a longer time than conversionand remember, conversion is often worked instantaneously! So you may be lifted up from the depths of despondency to the heights of sacred fellowship with your Lord before this present service closes. Be of good cheer and let your joy be renewed this very hour!   
But perhaps you say, I weep because I have grieved my Lord. Those are blessed tears, although the offense which caused them is grievous. Well may we be grieved when Christ has been grieved by us, but, mourning Soul, though He is rightly grieved with you, remember this gracious declaration, He will not always chide: neither will He keep His anger forever. And this comforting promise, For a small moment have I forsaken you; but with great mercies will I gather you. In a little wrath I hid My face from you for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on you, says the Lord your Redeemer. Only confess that you have transgressed against the Lord, your Redeemer, and you may come back to Him at once! No, even now He comes to meet with you and He brings with Him the basin and the towel, that He may wash your soiled feet, for He has washed you once in His blood and now He will again wash your feet and you shall be clean, every whit, and shall walk with cleansed feet in renewed fellowship with your Lord!   
Possibly some of you say that your sorrow is that you are not as holy as you wish to be. Ah, that is a sorrow which I share with you, for I can say with the Apostle Paul, When I would do good, evil is present with me. And though I hear of some who do not find that evil is present with them, I suspect that the reason is because they do not know themselves as they really are, or they would find that it was so with them, at least at times. If I could, I would be without one sinful thought, or word, or deed, or imagination, or wishand so would youand because you cannot be so at present, you weep. It is well that such tears should fall, only do not let these tears dim your view of Christ! Do not let those longings prevent your knowing that you are perfect and complete in Christ Jesus! Do not let your struggles hinder you from believing that Christ has conquered sin for you and that He will yet conquer sin in you. Do not let anything take away from you the full conviction that sin shall be altogether destroyed in you and that Christ will present you to His Father, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, holy and unblameable and unreprovable in His sight.   
Perhaps you say that your sorrow is because you can do so little for Christ. Ah, there again I have sympathy with you, but do not fret about that. Those of us who have the largest opportunities, are often those who most regret that we can so little avail ourselves of them. But I know some godly women who are confined to the house with the care of a numerous family, or, worse still, are confined to their bed in constant painand one of their greatest griefs is that they can do so little for Christ. But, Brother, Sister, do you not know the rule of David and the rule of Davids Lord? They that abide by the supplies shall have the same portion as they who go out to the battle! You are like the soldiers who have to keep in the rear and guard the baggage. But when the King comes back with all the active troops who have been doing the fighting, you will share the victory with them! You who are at home keeping the camp preserve many things which might be forgotten if we were all on active service. Be you comforted, then, if you are called to suffer or to be in obscurityyou shall be equal to the man and woman who are called to labor more prominently. Do what you can! I do not know that Christ Himself ever praised anybody more than He did that woman of whom He said, She has done what she could. I daresay she wanted to do a great deal more, but she did what she could. And if you have done what you could, it is well.

Ah, says another, but I am conscious of a great deal of weakness. What I do is done so badly. Even in prayer, I do not always prevail. My petitions often seem to come back to me unanswered. Well, dear Friend, do not altogether regret your weakness, for there was one who said that when he was weak, he was strong. If you have many infirmities which make you weak, there is a way of glorying in infirmities because the power of Christ rests upon you! Suppose that you are not only weak, but that you are weakness itselfthat you are nothing and nobody? When you have reached that point, the cause of your weeping will have vanished because where you end, there God begins! And when you have done with self, then Christ will be All-in-All to you and you will lift up your voice in praise of Him who has done such great things for you!   
Many strange things happen to young Christians between the time of their conversion and their entrance into Heaven. Their program of life is seldom carried out. The map which they make of the route is not according to the true geography of it. They reckon that as soon as they have believed in Jesus they will enter into sweet peace and rest, which is probably correct, but they also suppose that this peace and rest will always continue and probably increasethat they will go to Heaven singing all the way, along pleasant roads and paths of peaceand that the light upon their way will get brighter and brighter till it comes to the perfect day! They feel so happy and they sing so sweetly that they imagine it will always be with them just as it was in the first hours of their Christian experience. They are like persons who have, for the first time in their lives, come into the bright light of day after having lived in a deep mine, or been immured in a dark dungeon! They ask what season of the year it is and they are told that it is springtime, that the flowers have begun to bloom, but that there are more to follow. They hear the birds singing, but they are told that there are brighter days to come, that May is a fairer month than April and June still brighter, and then will come the months of harvest when the sickle shall be thrust in among the golden grain.   
All this is very cheering, so this new beginner plans that tomorrow he will be out all day upon the green grass, or in the gardens admiring the bursting buds and gathering for himself many a delightful garland of flowers! But, perhaps, when he gets up tomorrow morning, the Heavens are black with clouds and a torrent of rain is falling. Oh, he says, I never reckoned upon this! Then, perhaps, in June, there comes such a hurry-burly in the sky as he never thought offlames of fire and loud thunders out of the Heavens and dreadful drenching showers intermixed with rattling hail. Oh, he says, I never calculated upon this! I thought the months were to grow brighter and brighter and that, at last, there would come the golden harvest. We tell him that these rains and storms all conduce to the very result which we promised him and that they are by no means contrary to our statement. We were only giving him a brief outline of the years history and these things are by no menus contrary to our outlinenor need he fear but that the month of harvest will come in due season. It is true, young Christian, that you will have a light upon your road and that it will grow more and more bright unto the perfect day! It is true that the ways of wisdom are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. Your highest conception of the joy to be found in Christ is not an exaggerated one. However much delight you may anticipate, you shall have all that and you shall also have even more, as you are able to bear it! But intermittent times will comestrange times to youin which your joy will seem to be dead and your peace will be fearfully disturbed. Your soul will be tossed with tempest and not comforted. You will sorrowfully sit in sackcloth and ashes and you will not go to the table of feasting, but to the house of mourning. There will you be made to drink the water of tears and have your bread salted with grief. Be not surprised, then, when this comes to pass, as though some strange things had happened to you. Remember that we have told you of it. We who have gone further on the road to Heaven than you have gone, tell you that there will come dark times and stormy timesand we bid you prepare for them.   
Now I must turn to others in our assembly. Woman, why are you weeping? Perhaps you say, O Sir, I dare not put myself down among the saints! Well, then, will you put yourself down among the sinners? Yes, I am a sinner, you reply, yet I thinkI hope I am not altogether without some little faith in Christ. I sometimes feel myself inclined to love Him but, oftentimes, I am of another mind, averse to all that is good. Ah, my Friend, I know you and I have met with many like your class. I said once to one of your sort, You say that you are not a Christian. No, she said, I fear I am not. Then, I asked, why do you go to the House of God on the Sabbath? Why dont you stay at home, or go where sinners go? Oh, no, Sir, she answered, I could not do that! When I hear people blaspheme the name of Christ it cuts me to the quick. And I am never as happy as when I am with the people of God. I enjoy the hymns that they sing and while I am with them, my heart gets so warm that I feel as if I must praise the Lord. I think it is a great mercy that I cannot help blessing and praising God. Well, then, I said, I think that you must really have some faith in Christ or you would not feel and act as you do.   
I remember hearing of a minister who wrote down these words, I do not believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and asked a person who was full of doubt to sign her name to that declaration, but she would not do that! She did believe in Christ though she did not think that she believed. I once offered a person who said she had no faith, a five pound note if she would give up her faith, but she said that she would not take a thousand worlds for it! Mrs. Much-Afraid, and Mr. Despondency, and Mr. FeebleMind, and Mr. Ready-to-Haltthere are plenty of that family still living! And I know why you weep, good woman, for you also belong to that tribe! Well, then, if you cannot come to Christ as a saint, come to Him as a sinner! If you have made a mistake and have really never trusted in Christdo it now! If you really have not repented and have not believed and have not been renewed in heart, remember that it is still written, Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out. And, whoever will, let him take the water of life freely. If the title-deeds of your spiritual estate are not genuine, but forgeries, do not dispute the question with one who is wiser than yourselfcome straight away to Jesus Christ, emptyhanded, in the manner in which He bids all sinners come to Himand then I shall not have to ask, Why are you weeping?   
But, last of all, is this person who is weeping, a seeking sinner? Christ not only said to Mary Magdalene, Why are you weeping? but also, Whom are you seeking? for He knew that she was seeking HIM. I would give all I possess if I might always preach to weeping sinners who are seeking Christ. I sometimes think that I would like to be always weeping on account of sin, if I might be always sure that I was seeking Jesus. It is possible that there has come into this place someone who is seeking a Savior. Ah, weeping woman! Do you weep because sin burdens you? Do you weep because sweet sin has become bitter to you? Do you weep because the things wherein your soul once delighted have now become your torment and your grief? Then I rejoice over your tears for they are precious in Gods sight! They are more valuable than the finest diamonds in the world! Blessed is the soul that can repent of sin!   
But, possibly, your weeping is because you are afraid of being rejected by Christ. Put every tear of that kind away for there is no fear of one sinner who comes to Christ being rejected by Him! As I reminded you just now, He has said, Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out. Come, then, you burdened sinner! Come, you heavy-laden soul and trust yourself with Jesus! And then He cannotunless He can completely change, and that is impossibleHe cannot reject you! Come and trust Him even now and you shall be saved this very hour!   
But, perhaps, your weeping is for this reason. You say, Alas, I have been awakened before this and I thought that I would seek the Lord. I did get some hope and I fancied that I was relieved of sin, but I have gone back and my last end has been worse than the first. Well may you weep if that is really the case and I cannot forbid you to do so. But, my dear Friend, if you came falsely once, that is only one more reason why you should now come truly! If you once built on the sand and that house is gone, it is but another argument for building on the rock! If you were excited and mistook a transient emotion for the work of the Spirit of Godif you put presumption in the place of faith, do not do it again, but come, just as you now are, and rest your weary soul on Christs atoning Sacrifice and you shall find peaceimmediate and permanent peace!   
But possibly you weep because you say, If I came to Christ, I fear I should not hold on to Him to the end. I know you would not by yourself, but I also know that He will hold you on if you will but come and trust Him! It is not you who has to keep Christit is Christ who has to keep you! I should not wonder if your former failure arose from your having so much to do with it. So, have nothing to do with it this time! If you are very weak, lean all the more heavily on your Beloved. No, if you are nothing, let Christ be all the more to you because of your nothingness! If you are black with sin, give all the more praise to the blood that can make you whiter than snow! If you realize that you are lost and fear that you will be found among the damned, flee the more eagerly to those bleeding wounds which give life, not merely to perishing sinners, but to sinners dead in trespasses and sins!

Ah, says one, I think you have invited me, but I feel as though I cannot come and I weep because I cannot come for I do not properly understand the matter. Well, then, dry your tears and listen while I tell you the story again. And we who believe in Jesus will pray the Holy Spirit to lead you to understand the Truth of God. The Father, whom you have offended, does not ask you to do anything to make Him pleased with you. He does not wish you to contribute either good works or right feelings in order to make an atonement for your sin. His dear Son, Jesus Christ, has made the only Atonement for sin that can ever be made! What the Father bids you do is to accept what His Son has done and trust alone to that. Can you not do this? What more do you need, you doubting, sorrowing seekers, but that you trust in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who was nailed to Calvarys Cross, but is now risen from the dead and gone back to His Glory with the Father? We sometimes sing, in one of our hymns  
And I say the same to you who are seeking Christ! What more can He say to you? What sort of a promise would you like Him to make to you? Shall it be one like this, Though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow? You say that you would like such a promise as that well, there is that very one in the Bible! Or would this one suit you, Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon? Or would this one meet your case, The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanses us from all sin? Surely this one must suit you, Whoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. Or this message, If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Or this, Seek you the Lord while He may be found, call you upon Him while He is near.   
If these do not meet your case, I do not know what you would wish to have. My Lord, by His blessed Spirit, seems to have put the Gospel into all sorts of lights to suit all sorts of eyes, and He tells us, His ministers, to labor for this end, to get you to look at Jesus Christ. I have tried to do this and I beseech you not to be content with your weeping, or your feelings, or your Bible searchingdo not be content even with prayer! This way of salvation is, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ! So, rest in Himthat is believing! Trust in Him, depend upon Himthat is another way of believing in Him. And when you have done that, you are saved saved the moment you believe in Jesus! The great work of salvation then commences in you, as the work of salvation for you is already complete and you shall be saved from your sins, made new creatures, and made holy creatures through the power of that blessed Spirit whom Jesus Christ bestows upon those who believe in Him!   
May God bless the words I have spoken to the comfort of some! I believe He will. I expect He will. I know He will! And He shall have the Glory. Amen.

*What more can He say than to you He has said, You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?*   
Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307  
PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #2561 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

NOLI ME TANGERE (TOUCH ME NOT) NO. 2561

A SERMON   
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, MARCH 20, 1898.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 4, 1888.

**Jesus said unto her, Touch Me not, for I am not yet ascended to My Father: but go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God.   
John 20:17.**

I COMMENCE my discourse by remarking that it was very amazing that our Lord Jesus Christ, after His Resurrection, should give so early and so clear a manifestation of Himself to Mary Magdalene. Out of her He had cast seven devils. I suppose it was literally so and that there had been in her a great deal of spiritual as well as moral defilement. It may not really be so, but it certainly was the current notion of the early Church that Mary Magdalene was not only a great sufferer who had been relieved, but a great sinner who had been purified. Yet she is the first to hear a word from the risen Christ and to behold Him face to face! I may be addressing some great sinner at this moment. Dear Friend, the greatness of your sin may not prevent you from yet occupying a first place among the saints! If you seem to be sorely beset by Satan, as though seven devils were in you, there is no reason why you should not be filled with the seven spirits of God and become even a leader in the Church of Christ! There are first that shall be last, but there are also last that shall be first. Such a case as that of Mary Magdalene should give great encouragement to those of you who seem to be far away from Christif He calls you to humble penitence and childlike confidence in Himself, you may yet be one of the nearest and dearest of His disciplesand His manifestation of Himself to you may be even clearer and sweeter than to some of the more publicly known among His people.

The special thing to be noted about Mary Magdalene is that she had gone to the grave to find Christ. She had made a mistake about the condition in which she would find Him, but she had made no mistake about this point, that she must somehow find Himand when the other disciples, having repaired to the sepulcher and not seen Him, had gone their wayshe still remained. There she stands, to weep if she cannot find her Lord, for she feels that nothing else will content her. She must wait at the sepulcher until she finds Him. And, my dear Friends, if there is anyone here who will find Christ, it is the one who must find Him! When you are at such an extremity that you say, Give me Christ, or else I die, you shall have Christ! And when, as a child of God, your heart and your flesh cry out for Him. When you have a hungering and a thirsting after Him that cannot be stopped, then He will manifest Himself to you as He does not to the world. It will be a happy thing for you, if, having come into this place seeking the Lord, you should, all of a sudden, discover Him to be here and would even hear Him speak your name as he said, Mary, and she responded at once, Rabboni, my dear Master. Oh, that your eyes might be opened, my Brother, if they are shut! My Sister, may you have given to you the spiritual perception which will discern the Presence of the spiritual Christ who is in the midst of His people even now! May you, on the seat where you are sitting, feel as you have not felt of late ravished, carried away into a holy ecstasy with this thought, My Lord has come to me! He has spoken to me! He has revealed Himself to me! I perceive Him and I rejoice in Him!

We1l then, if you are in that happy state, my text is addressed to you, for no Scripture is of any private interpretation. If true to Mary Magdalene, it is also true to all who are in the same condition as Mary Magdalene was. Right down these 18 or 19 centuries, the voice of Christ comes sounding to persons who are like her to whom that message was first uttered! He who said to Mary, Touch Me not, but go to My brethren, says the same thing to every Mary and every John who has suddenly discovered Him to be present with them! As far as the language of Christ on that occasion is capable of adaptation to anyones case, so far does the Spirit of God speak it to that person now.

I. The first thing that I see in my text deserving of notice is THE CAUTION. There stands the Lord Jesus Christ and Mary perceives that it is the Lord. And the first impulse of her being is to grasp Him and hold Him lest He should vanish. Yet the Master keeps her from too near an approach, saying, Touch Me not, for I am not yet ascended. What does this caution teach us?

Well, first, it teaches that we may make mistakes even when we are nearest to our Lord and enjoying the most rapturous fellowship with Him. There are things which we may try to do which we are not allowed to do. O Brothers and Sisters, where will not sin follow us? If we lay our hands upon the horns of the altar, sin will follow us even there! We cannot shut our door so fast as to shut out Satanneither can we be so engrossed in prayer as to be sinless even then. Our very prayers need to be prayed over! Our tears need to be wept over! Our repentance has something in it that needs to be repented of! Our faith is mixed with unbelief and our spiritual life, itself, often has much of death about it. Sin penetrates our holy things and however near we may get to Christ, we may still make blunders and mistakesand the Master may have to say to us, as He said to Mary, Touch Me not.

The kind of mistake into which we may fall is indicated by the text, for we are very apt to carnalize spiritual things. When our Lord gave to His disciples the ordinance of bread and wine to be an emblem of His body and His blood, very soon even good men began to talk as if there were some kind of witchcraft or black magic about it, so that the bread did actually become His flesh and the cup did literally become His blood. That was carnalizing a great spiritual Truth of God. The most of us are so unspiritualwe are so affected by our sensesthat we soon bring down pure spiritual Truth into the groveling regions of flesh and sense. It is very possible for you to do this even when you are in communion with Christ. You may get to think of Christ according to some picture you have seenyou may even have before your minds eye some image of Him, though you would abhor with all your heart all image worship and picture worship! Yet it is easily done by the mind and so you may be carnalizingmaking into flesh, as it werematerializing what should be pure spiritual worship!

It is easy to make your love of Christ to be no longer spiritual, but sensuous, until even your enjoyment of Christs Presence may come to be no true devotion at all. I have no doubt that many a man feels very pious in the dim religious light of some old cathedral when the organ peals forth and tender tones are heardwhen the choir, or, if you will, the whole body of the people sing, there is a feeling all over the audience which is mistaken for true religionyet it is often precisely the same feeling which is produced by an orchestra and by good music anywhere! It would be produced if the song was in Italian and if not a word of it was understood! And to imagine that this is true worship is a mistake, indeed! It is simply that the ear is pleased, the taste is gratifiedthere is a mysterious influence in the solemn aisle and vaulted roofbut that is all. Never make that blunder, dear Friends, for if you do, the Savior will have to say to you, Do not give Me material things in the place of spiritual communion. It is not to be a matter of the body of Christ grasped by the handssoul must commune with soul and spirit with spirit, and our fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ must be through the Holy Spiritand not after any carnal method.

We may blunder, again, when we are very near to Christ, by seeking after that which we really do not need. Was it wrong for Mary to try to touch the Lord? Certainly not, for He permitted Thomas to put his finger into the print of the nails and to thrust his hand into His side. He also said to all His disciples, Handle Me, and see, for a spirit has not flesh and bones as you see I have. It would have been wrong if Thomas and the other Apostles had not touched the Master, yet the Lord refused that touch to Mary. She did not need itshe knew that He was the Christ and that He was risen from the dead! Thomas doubted it and the other disciples had some lingering questions, hence they were allowed to have certain signs which Mary did not need and which the Savior did not let her have.

I have known some very feeble-minded Christians who have been cheered by a dream. It seems to me the most absurd thing in the world is to be encouraged by a dream, yet it encouraged them. Why have not I had such a dream? Because I do not need it and it would be of no use to me. I believe there are some minds so feeble that they would scarcely get any faith at all if there were not some touch of the supernatural about them. And the Lord may permit it to them, but do not you ordinary Christians begin to crave anything of that kind, for you do not need it and you will not have it! You should rise to the far loftier dignity of those of whom Christ said, Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. Cast yourself on Christ! Spiritually believe in Him and so realize Himdo not ask for what you really do not needfor these signs and tokens are not meant for you.

Once more, in our Lords Presence, we may sometimes make a mistake by asking to have, now, what it will be better for us to have, by-and-by. See how Jesus puts it to Mary, Touch Me notthat is, not nowfor I am not yet ascended. There will be opportunity for all that in good time. Did you go up into your little room, the other night, and pray, Lord, if I am, indeed, Your child, give me now such raptures as I have heard your servant Rutherford had? Yet you have not had them. Well, do not worry about thatyou are not yet fit for them. Touch Me not, says Christ. Ask not this of Me just yetanother day this experience will be more appropriate, less dangerous and more useful. Do you not see that you may make a mistake, even when you are with your Master, by asking what is not good for you, or at least what is not good for you just then?

I think also that the Lord said to Mary, Touch Me not, because He meant to add, but go to My brethren. This teaches us that it is very easy for spiritually-minded people to get to be selfish in their enjoyments. I have known some who spent a great part of their lives in a meditative, contemplative enjoyment of Christ. And God forbid that we should altogether blame them! But there is a more excellent wayit is sometimes better to go and tell our Brethren good news from Christ than it is for us to have fellowship with Him. I have often known what it is to be enjoying my Masters Presence when the time has come for preachingand I have been inclined to wish that I might stay with Himbut it is wrong to think so. There is an old Romish story which has a good lesson in it. A monk was in his cell and he thought he saw a vision of Christ, but just as he was looking with rapture upon his Lord, the bell rang and he knew that it was his turn to take his place at the monastery gate to feed the poor that were standing there. As he left his cell, he heaved a deep sigh, and said, Ah, me, that I should have this work to do and lose the company of my Lord! He took his turn of an hour or two at waiting on the poor and when he went back to his cell, with a heavy heart, thinking that he should never see that blissful sight again, there was his Master waiting for him and a voice said to him, If you had stayed, I would have gone. But as you went, I have stayed to manifest Myself to you.

Take the meaning out of that legend and you will learn that if you shut yourself up in your room rather than go down to the Sunday school, you will make a great mistake. I am persuaded that there are some good Christian people who have two spiritual meals every Sabbathand do not get very fat, even thenwho would be much stronger in soul if, after they have had their one meal, they went out among the poor and needy, seeking the lost ones for Christ and telling them of His love. If this hint shall reach some living, loving heart and make it a little wiser in its course of action, it will bring great glory to God.

II. I have taken up so much time with the caution, that I must be very brief upon the second head which is THE MISSIONGo to My brethren. Mary Magdalene, instead of remaining in solitary communion with Christ, was sent upon a mission and that was for two reasons.

First, it was better for herself. Hear this, dear Friends, it is better for you to do good to others than to have all the enjoyment of Christ to yourselfbetter for you to be turned out into the cold to go and comfort the distressed, than for you to stay in the warmth of your Masters Countenance and not do good to others!

Secondly, it was better for the disciples. However bright and happy Mary might be with Christ, that would not help Peter and James and John and the other disciples. They were all sorrowing, for they were all doubting. They thought their Master dead. They did not yet understand the saying that He had risen from the grave. Surely Mary must not be selfishshe has seen the Lord, so she must remember that others have not seen Himand she is therefore bid to go and deliver to them a message from Christ.

It is very interesting to notice that Mary did not stay a minute after the Master said to her, Go. As soon as the Lord commissioned her, away she went! The next verse says, Mary Magdalene wentwith swift feet she hastened to the place where the disciples wereMary Magdalene went and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord and that He had spoken these things to her. Come, my Brothers, come, my Sisters leave, for a while, the happy quiet nook where you met with Jesus! Come out and tell others what you have seen. Who knows but that they, also, will be led to see Jesus? And when you have told what you have seen, do what is still bettertell what He has said! What you have seen is good, but there may be a mistake in it. What Christ has spoken is perfection and there is no error in that. Relate your own experience and tell the Gospel, too, to all with whom you come into contactand cease not to do so. To see Christ is blessed, but unless we tell what we have seen, the blessing may be like a talent in a napkin, or a candle under a bushel. I would like to come round to each one of you and to say, Dear Brother, dear Sister, do you live in the light of Gods Countenance? Has Jesus Christ shone upon you? Is He your Beloved and are you His beloved? Then come and let Him have the use of your tongue! Let Him have the use of those bright eyes of yours to tell with beaming countenance what the Lord has done for you and what He has said that He will do for others!

III. Now, thirdly, we have to consider THE TITLEGo to My brethren. Do you hear that? Go to My brethren. I do not remember that the Lord Jesus ever called His disciples His brethren till that time. He called them servants. He called them, friends. But now that He has risen from the dead, He says, My brethren.

Notice then, first, they were His brethren, though He was about to ascend to His Throne. The fact that Christ had risen from the dead did not take Him further away from His peopleit brought Him nearer, for He goes onand say to them, I ascend unto My Father, and your Father. It is clear that there is no greater distance between us and Christ, now that He has ascended, than there was when He had not ascendedno, that inasmuch as He did not call them brethren while He was yet among them before His death and did call them brethren when He said, I ascend unto My Father, and your Fatherif there is any difference, Christ ascended is nearer to us than Christ on the earth!

*Now though He reigns exalted high,   
His love is still as great!   
Well He remembers Calvary,   
Nor let His saints forget.*

This is a very blessed Truth of God, but it is a great mystery. I can understand that Christ is my Brother when I see Him weary, sitting on the well at Sychar. When I see Him in the garden, agonizing even unto sweat of blood, I know that He is my Brother. But if my eyes could see Him as John saw Him, when, His head and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and His eyes were as a flame of fire; and His Countenance was as the sun shines in its strength, I think I would need great help to call Him, Brother, then! And I might not need to do so, for it is not said that the disciples called Christ, Brother, but that He called them, brethren. Oh, for Grace to believe that the crowned, reigning, exalted Christ is the Brother of our soul! His Nature in Heaven is our nature! He has a sympathy in Glory with His people still in tribulation. He is pleading our cause in Heaven as much as ever He did on earth and He is as truly our Covenant Headas really one with usnow, as ever He was when He was here. And hence, when He had risen and was about to ascend, He said, Go to My brethren.

There is another side of this Truth of God that is worth noticing they were His brethren, though they had forsaken Him in His shame. I was reading, in the life of the famous Thomas Boston, the author of The Fourfold State, that one day he was very burdened and depressed in spirit, and was walking up and down his room in great trouble about his own standing before God, for, mark you, they who lead others to Christ and help others to confidence in Him, often have trembling in their own soulas Boston had at that time. It happened that his little daughter was in the room and she said to him, Father, Jesus said, Go to My brethren. They were His brethren, still, though they had forsaken Him. Boston said, In a moment, I caught at that. They were still His brethren, although there was one of them who had denied Him with oaths and curses! Yet that very one was especially mentioned by the angel who said, Tell His disciples

and Peter. All the rest forsook Him and fled yet Jesus said, Go to My brethren. This is a tie which you cannot break!

If you had a brother who had misbehaved himself. And if you had been obliged to advise him to flee the country and he had gone far awayand you knew that he was living an evil lifeyet he would still be your brother. Born of the same parents, the bond between you two must last on. I believe in the final perseverance of the saints and I cannot make out how those get on who do not believe it. If Christ was my Brother yesterday, He will be my Brother to all eternity. I do not believe in these relationships coming to an endthey seem to me to be fixed. My child is my child forever, let him be what he may. And if I am Christs brother, and Christ is my Brother, we are joined together by a bond which cannot be broken. Quis separabit? Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?

Come, Brothers and Sisters, listen to me! Have you been getting cold in heart? Still, Christ is your Brother and He acknowledges it. As I have reminded you, the Master did not call His disciples, brethren, till after they had all forsaken Him. What? Does His Grace seem to grow as our sin grows? It seems soWhere sin abounded, Grace did much more abound. This wondrous love ought to break your hearts. If any of you have been false to Christ. If you have been ungrateful, cold, unspiritual will not this bring you back? He still acknowledges you as His! He still calls you brethren. Come along back to Himlet there be no time lost! Come weeping to His feet and say, My Brother, I confess my transgressions and ask pardon of You because You change not and You still call me Your brother. I will not enlarge upon this theme, though it is a very sweet one. It is a sort of cluster of Eshcol. I should have liked to press and squeeze it till it filled the cup with its generous juice, but I hand it over to you. Take it home and rejoice that your Lord still says, Go to My brethren.

IV. Lastly, we have to consider the message, THE TIDINGS. Go to My brethren, and say to them, I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God.

Notice that this message was far above their fears. They thought that He was dead. Oh, no, He says, I ascend. They thought His body had been taken away and they should never have the mournful pleasure of knowing where it was. Surely the guards or somebody had broken the seal and stolen away that blessed form! But He shows how vain were their fears, for He says, I ascend. Now, child of God, whatever your fears are, throw them all out! You have no need of any of them! If Christ is yours and you are trusting in Him, fear not! The Lord says to you, Fear not, and will you keep on fearing when He bids you not to fear? I pray you, do not! What you dread will never come to pass. There is something infinitely better than that in store for you!

In the next place, this message was above their hopes, for all that they hoped for was that they might find the dead body of Christ. But He talks about ascending, so He is alive and their hopes are far exceeded! What are your hopes, dear Brothers and Sisters? Are you hoping to have some good thing from the Lord? There is something better than that laid up for you! He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.

Further, this message was beyond their wishes, for I am sure that when they knew that Christ was alive, they wanted Him to stay with them. It would have cheered them very much if Christ had said, Go tell My brethren that I am going to stay with them for the next hundred years. No, no, no! They were to have more than they wished forit was expedient for them that Christ should not stay with them. It was to their advantage that He should go to be with the Fatherit would bring them greater blessings to have Him gone than to have Him tarryso that the message sent to them was above their wishes. And the Lord will do for you more than you wish for. He will be better to you than your highest desiretherefore be of good cheer!

But what Mary had to say to them was also beyond their knowledge, their comprehension, beyond the grasp of their understanding. As yet they knew not that Christ must rise from the dead, so I am sure that they did not know what He meant by ascending. But it was true, though they did not understand it. Blessed be God, there are thousands of blessings true to you although you cannot yet get a grip of them! God will do more for you than you can understand. Your imagination may enlarge itself, yet He will go beyond that. I quoted, just now, Pauls words, He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. Now think some great thought, like one who lay dying and said, Oh, for big thoughts! We shall not need big thoughts, then, for we shall come into the region of great realities. But however great your thoughts, Christ can exceed them. He said to His disciples, I am going up into Glory to plead for you. They did not know what He meant, yet His words brought them incalculable blessings.

I think I hear somebody say, Well , I am so glad I can get as far as that, I can feel comfort in Christs ascending to my Father. Yes, but I want you to go further than that, for I am to tell you that He is coming again! There is always to be something yet beyondwhatever you attain to, there is something more to be reached. That same Jesus who went up from us into Heaven, will so come in like manner as they saw Him go up into Heaven. With the trumpet of the archangel and with the voice of God, He shall descend a second time upon the earth, no more to suffer, no more to invite disobedient and rebellious men who shall reject Him but He shall come to rule the nations with a rod of iron and to gather together His own people that He may be admired in them that believe. This is the great hope of the Church! Reach forward to it and be not satisfied with anything that as yet you have received, or that as yet you understand. O heirs of immortality, infinite bliss opens before you! Unspeakable glory awaits you! Be of good courage and if, for the present, you may not have all the fellowship with Christ you really wish for, because He says, Touch Me not, yet wait till you shall be taken up, or He shall come again to receive you unto Himself, for then, where He is, you shall also be, with all the godly company that has gone before!

As for you who have no part nor lot in this matter, I am very sorry for you. I would God that you had. Whoever believes in the Lord Jesus Christ shall have all this and much more than tongue can tell. Oh, that you would believe in Him, now, and live forever! God grant it, for Jesus Christs sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **PSALMS 20 AND 21.**

The 20th Psalm is a prayer for the king going forth to the conflicta prayer for David. Better still, a prayer for great Davids greater Son. The 21st Psalm is a song of victory for the returning conqueror, it is a Te Deum, as the King has triumphed and has returned from the conflict to enjoy the congratulations of His loyal subjects.

Psalm 20:1. The LORD hear you in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob defend you. This is a prayer for David, a prayer for Jesus and a prayer for every child of God. Jehovah hear you in the day of trouble. What do you need? Remember that the Lord gives you this promise, Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me. The name of the God of Jacob defend you. The God that took care of Jacob when he slept with a stone for his pillow. The God that guarded him when he was a stranger in a strange land and brought him home again. The God that wrestled with him at Jabbok, the God that made all things work for him, instead of against him, as he feared the namethe Character, the Attributes, the Gloryof the God of Jacob defend you.

2 *.* Send you help from the sanctuary. Help from the holy place, help from the sprinkled blood, help from the Mercy Seat, help from the golden pot that had the manna, help from Aarons rod that budded, help from Him that shone between the cherubimsend you help from the Holy of Holies.

2*.* And strengthen you out of Zion. That is to say, with His own power, His own Glory, which He manifests in the midst of His people.

3 *.* Remember all your offerings, and accept your burnt sacrifice. Selah. This God did to His dear Son and this He is prepared to do to all His people. Whenever we give anything to the cause of God, we ought to do it with all that solemnity and all that willingness which was seen in Gods own people in the olden time, remembering that it is to Him we bring it, and the chief point for our consideration is, Will He accept it?

4 *.* Grant you according to your own heart, and fulfill all your counsel. We cannot pray this for everybody. We pray it for Christ and we pray it for the Lords sanctified people, that He may grant them the desire of their heart and fulfill their counsel.

5 *.* We will rejoice in Your salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners: the LORD fulfill all your petitions. What a wonderful prayer this is! May it be granted to each of you!

**The Lord fulfill all your petitions.**   
6-9. Now know that the LORD saves His anointed; He will hear him from His holy Heaven with the saving strength of His right hand. Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God. They are brought down and fallen: but we are risen, and stand upright. Save, LORD. Or, Hosanna.

9 *.* Let the King hear us when we call. Now turn to the Psalm of victory. It corresponds very beautifully with the litany which we have just been reading.

Psalm 21:1. The King shall joy in Your strength, O LORD; and in Your salvation how greatly shall He rejoice! See how greatly Christ rejoices, how full His heart is of gladness as He sees Gods power put forth, and Gods salvation accomplished among men.

2 **,** 3*.* You have given Him His hearts desire, and have not withheld the request of His lips. Selah. For You present Him with the blessings of goodness. That is to say, You go before Him, as you have seen, in pictures, some great conqueror preceded by those who strewn his path with roses, so has God strewn the pathway of Christ with innumerable blessings.

3 *.* You set a crown of pure gold on His head. Is He not of royal race? Has He not achieved a mighty conquest? Is He not King of kings and Lord of lords?

4 *.* He asked life of You and You gave it to Him, even length of days forever and ever. You gave Him a resurrection from the dead as our Mediator, and as such He lives.

5 *.* His Glory is great in Your salvation. It is the distinguishing mark of Gods salvation that Christs Glory is great in it. In the beginning, in the middle and the end of it, everywhere you see the name of Jesus written in large letters of light. In His salvation, the Father has glorified His Son.

5 **-**8*.* Honor and majesty have You laid upon Him. For you have made Him most blessed forever: You have made Him exceedingly glad with Your countenance. For the king trusts in the LORD, and through the mercy of the Most High He shall not be moved. Your hand shall find out all your enemies. That very hand that was nailed to the tree shall find out all the adversaries of the Cross.

8 *.* Your right hand shall find out those that hate You. Hide wherever they may, You will find them. They may stand in the high places and defy You; but You will hurl them down.

9 *.* You shall make them as a fiery oven in the time of Your anger. Not only shall they be cast into the fire, but they shall, themselves, be as a fiery oven in the time of Your anger. They shall torment themselves and shall be their own destruction.

9-11. The LORD shall swallow them up in His wrath, and the fire shall devour them. Their fruit shall You destroy from the earth, and their seed from among the children of men. For they intended evil against You: they imagined a mischievous device which they are not able to perform. But that did not diminish their sin. When a man has devised an evil tiring, even if he cannot carry it out, he is guilty of it!

12. Therefore shall You make them turn their back, when You shall make ready Your arrows upon Your strings against the face of them. As if God would single out the enemies of Christ to be targets for His arrows and fill them with the darts of His displeasure. Who would wish to be in such a plight as this?

13. Be You exalted, LORD, in Your own strength: so will we sing and praise Your power.   
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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #2733 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

CHRISTS MANIFESTATION TO MARY MAGDALENE   
NO. 2733

A SERMON   
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, JUNE 30, 1901.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT NEW PARK STREET CHAPEL, SOUTHWARK, ON A LORDS-DAY EVENING, IN THE SUMMER OF 1859.

**Jesus said unto her, Touch Me not; for I am not yet ascended to My Father: but go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God.   
John 20:17.**

THIS was the first appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ after His Resurrection. In sundry places and at divers times, during the ensuing 40 days, He appeared to different disciples, showing Himself openly to them when they were assembled for worship and at other times. But this was the first occasion of His being seen by any of His followers after He had risen from the dead. The whole incident is full of consolation and we who are poor weary pilgrims through this earthly wilderness need some words of comfort every now and then to cheer us on the road. May the Holy Spirit sweetly assist us in meditating now upon the things of Christand may our hearts burn within us as He speaks to us by the way!

I. First, IT IS PECULIARLY ENCOURAGING TO REMEMBER THAT THE FIRST PERSON TO WHOM OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST APPEARED AFTER HIS RESURRECTION WAS MARY MAGDALENE.

Mark expressly says, Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven devils. Romanists will have it that Jesus Christ first of all appeared to the Virgin Mary, His mother, and they have invented some curious stories in order to give her this peculiar honor. This shows that, in their opinion, there was a special favor conferred upon the person who first beheld the risen Saviorand I need not say that their assertion that it was the Virgin Mary is just another instance of their common practice of perverting the Truth of God. Undoubtedly, Mary Magdalene was the first person who saw the Savior after His Resurrectionat least, if the Roman guards saw Him when they shook and became as dead men through fear of the angel who rolled away the stone from the sepulcher, they were not Christs disciplesso I mean that Mary Magdalene was the first of His faithful followers who had the honor of seeing Him after He rose from the dead!

It was a woman, then, who first beheld the risen Savior. It was a woman who was first in sin. It had, therefore, to be a woman who should first behold Jesus Christ when He rose from the grave. If there isand there certainly is some degree of opprobrium connected with womanhood, because Eve first of all touched the forbidden fruit, there is a far greater degree of glory now connected with it, because Mary Magdalene first of all beheld the Savior after His rising from the tomb!

Not only was it a woman to whom Christ first manifested Himself after His Resurrection, but it was a woman out of whom He had cast seven devils. I am inclined to think that there were other devils in Mary Magdalene beside those that made her a demoniac. Luther used to say of her, So many devils, so many sins. She had been first a sinner, then she became a demoniac and afterwards Christ changed her into a saint. How strange it was that Jesus should appear first to her! What? Give the highest honor to her who had the most of sin! Sweet thought! Then, if

*I, the chief of sinners, am*   
if I have an interest in the blood of Christ, there is no reason why I should not climb to the greatest heights of fellowship and enjoy the best of the good things which the Lord has prepared for them that love Him! When Jesus takes a sinner to Himself, his pardon is so completeso totally does God, for Christs sake, overlook all previous sinsthat, although he may not be as great a saint as the very chief of the Apostles who did most grievously rebel, so that he only obtained mercy because he did it ignorantly in unbelief, he may be the most highly-favored of the servants of the Lord and may have very special Revelations made to him. The experience of Mary Magdalene should be a great source of comfort to you who, after years of sin, have lately found the Savior. Think not that those years that you spent in folly, though they must always make you weep, will be the means of robbing you of fellowship with Him. Oh, no! He will restore to you the years that the locusts have eaten and He will not take away from you the pleasure of enjoying the bliss of God on earthand certainly He will not diminish your glorious happiness when you shall stand before His Throne above!

In thinking over this subject, I have come to the conclusion that Mary Magdalene was selected to see Christ first because she loved Him most. John loved Jesus much, but Mary loved Him more. John looked into the empty sepulcher and then went home. But Mary stood there and wept until her risen Lord appeared to her! Love, you know, is a keen-eyed Grace. People usually say that love is blind. In one sense, the saying is true, but, in another sense there never were such good eyes anywhere as those which love carries in her head. Love will look for Jesus and discover Him where none else can! If I set the unloving to read a Chapter in the Bible, they will find no Savior there. But if I ask the gracious Robert Hawker to read that same portion of Scripture, he finds in it the name of Jesus from beginning to end! If I beg one who is simply a critical scholar, to study a Psalm, he sees no Messiah therebut if I set an enthusiastic lover of the Savior to read it, he sees Him, if not in every verse, still, here and there he has glimpses of His Glory!

If you want to see Jesus and to have sweet Revelations of His Glory, you must love Him. I must add to that remark, that you must weep for Him much, you must seek Him diligently, seek Him in the darkness and the twilight, seek Him when the sun has risen, seek Him at the sepulcher before the stone is rolled awayyou must seek Him when you behold that the stone is gone, you must seek Him in the hollow tomb, you must seek Him in the garden, you must seek Him in life, you must seek Him in death and thenthe more diligent you are in seeking, the greater is the probability that Christ will manifest Himself to you and that you shall rejoice in finding Him!

Mary Magdalene was one of those who went forth bearing precious seed. She went forth weeping, but she returned to the disciples rejoicing, bringing her sheaves with her, for she had a joyous message for them. She had sown in tears when she went to seek her Lord, but she wept with joy when she found Him in the garden! Happy was that woman who found Jesus and who believedtruly she might rejoice in Him, for she was highly favored among women!

You see, then, that there is much sweetness, far more than I can tell you, in the thought that Mary Magdalene was the first person who was chosen to see the Lord Jesus Christ after His Resurrection.

II. Secondly, we will notice SOME REASONS FOR THE PROHIBITION GIVEN IN THE TEXT. Why was it that Jesus said to Mary, Touch Me not? And why was it that He gave this very strange reason for the prohibition, for I am not yet ascended to My Father?

There seems to me to be great comfort in this message. I know it has comforted me, so I think I understand it aright. When Mary Magdalene had recognized her risen Redeemer and had called Him, Rabboni, that is to say, Master, her next impulse was to cast herself upon Him and embrace Him. But Jesus said to her, No! Embrace Me notfor that is the real meaning of the wordI have something for you to do for Me, so I cannot allow you to stop to manifest your affection. There will be plenty of time to do that another day. I want to send you to My disciples at once with a messagetherefore, cling not to Me. The strengthening of My disciples is preferable even to the embracing of your Lord. Cling not to Me, for I am not yet ascended.

It strikes me that Mary was half afraid that her Master would go away, directly, and she thought, That is my Master, for I know His voice, but I fear that He will vanishthe Spirit of God will take Him away. She thought concerning Christ just as Obadiah did concerning Elijah. When Obadiah found the Prophet, Elijah said to him, Go, tell your lord, Behold, Elijah is here. And he said, What? Have I sinned, that you would deliver your servant into the hands of Ahab, to slay me? As the Lord your God lives, there is no nation or kingdom where my lord has not sent to seek you: and when they said, he is not there; he took an oath of the kingdom and nation, that they found you not. And now you say, Go, tell your lord, Behold, Elijah is here. And it shall come to pass, as soon as I am gone from you, that the Spirit of the Lord shall carry you where I know not; and so when I come and tell Ahab, and he cannot find you, he shall slay me.

Obadiah expected that Elijah would be spirited awayand Mary thought the same concerning Christ. So she said to herself, I will hold Him fast. This may be my only opportunity, so I will not let Him go. But Jesus said, I am not going away; I shall be here a little while longer; there will yet be time enough for embraces. The first thing I want you to do is to go to My disciples and tell them that I have risen from the grave, and that I am about to ascend to Heaven.

If you ask, Why did Jesus speak thus to Mary Magdalene? I think it is not difficult to explain the reason. Let me suppose that one of you have said, I will have an hour for quiet meditation. I will cast myself upon my knees, I will open the Word of GodI will seek the Spirit to rest upon me and I will hope that I shall be able to see Jesus and to clasp Him in my arms. Just as you have formed this resolve, a friend calls and says that he has an important engagement for you to fulfill. Perhaps he wants you to attend a Prayer Meeting, or to visit the sick, or to see some enquirer, or to do something for the Lords cause, and you say, There now, I expected to have had this evening for contemplation. Oh, I wish I had not so much to do with the Church, for it robs me of my quiet hours! I love those sweet seasons of retirement when I can embrace the Savior and clasp Him to my heart. Why is it that I am to go out and feed the flock and not find time for fellowship and communion so long and frequent as I desire? Whenever you feel inclined to talk like that, think that you hear your Master saying to you, Embrace Me not! There will be time in Heaven for that. Go you to My brethren and carry to them some words of consolation, for while it is sweet for you to embrace Me, it is sweeter to Me for you to go and embrace My poor brother and show him the way into My Kingdom.

God forbid that we should say one word against the high joys of contemplation! It is a blessed employment, but, sometimes work is better than worshipor rather, work is worship in its best form. Sometimes it is a higher service to go to see the sick than to be at home on your knees. Sometimes it is a more devout way of serving God to be busy for the Church, even in what seems to be temporal matters, than to be seated at home, like Mary of old, at the feet of the Savior, listening to His words, but doing nothing for His cause. I believe Martha is, at times, a great deal more than Mary. If Mary had always sat at the Saviors feet, she would have deserved no commendation. It was well that she sat there, then, for it was a proper occasion, but if she had always sat there and left Martha to attend to the serving, alone, then it would have been an abuse of her privileges! There are times when the Master must say, Embrace Me not; but go to My brethren, and tell them that I ascend to My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God.

III. Now, having noticed these two portions of our text, which I think are full of comfortif not to you, they certainly have been to meI will now endeavor to dilate upon THE MESSAGE OF OUR LORD TO MARY MAGDALENE.

Jesus said to her, Go to My brethren. It is a remarkable fact that, the higher Jesus Christ gets in Glory, the more sweet are His expressions of love. You know that before His death He said to His disciples, Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knows not what his lord does: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you. Yet now that He had risen from the dead, He called them by a still higher name! Possibly some of them thought, If He should rise from the dead, He will be ashamed of us poor fishermen. He called us friends when He was in His povertywill He not return to that word, servants, when He rises in majesty from the tomb? No, when He had risen in dignity, it was just the reverse! The higher His dignity, the lower His condescension. Go to My brethren.

There is another thing to be noted about that sweet word, brethren, as Christ then used it, for His disciples were never in a more sinful condition than they were at that time or, rather, they had never so grossly sinned as they had done a little before the Saviors Resurrection. They were with Him every daythey were, all of them, in a measure faithful, and never forsook their Master and never denied Himtill He came to die. Yet, all the time they were true and faithful, He called them friends. You would have thought that when three of them slept in the garden during His awful agony, when all forsook Him and fled and when especially Peter denied Him, the Savior would have said, I called you friends when you were faithful. I will now see whether I can stretch a point, even to call you servants. But we see that the blacker their sin was, the stronger was His lovethe more defiled they were, the more sweetly did He talk to them! He said to them, in deeds though not in words, Henceforth, I call you not friends, for a mere friend is no relation, but I call you brethren, for My Father is your Father, and My God is your God.

Carry those two sweet thoughts away with you, for sweet, indeed, they will be to you if the Holy Spirit shall teach you the full meaning of them that the higher the Savior gets, the more free is He in the expression of His love. And that other thought, that the farther the disciples ran away from their Master, the more lovingly did He call them back again! This is marvelous and strange, but it is nevertheless truewho cannot derive comfort from such thoughts as these? I know, you feeble followers of Jesus, you have sometimes thought that He loved His people when He was on earth, but that now He reigns exalted on high, He has forgotten such of them as you are, but, be assured that inasmuch as He has reached the summit of His Glory, He does now manifest the summit of His love! The more He is exalted, the more does He manifest Himself.

Possibly, some of you are thinking that you have so greatly sinned that you cannot expect Him to love you. If so, you can appropriate this thought that the sweetest promises in the Bible are for the very people who deserve them the least. There are promises for those who follow close to their Savior, and very sweet ones, too, but some of the most tender promises in the Word of God are for those who have wandered furthest away from Him. Take, for instance, this gracious message, Return, you backsliding Israel, says the Lord; and I will not cause My anger to fall upon you: for I am merciful, says the Lord, and I will not keep anger forever. Only acknowledge your iniquity, that you have transgressed against the Lord your God, and have scattered your ways to the strangers under every green tree, and you have not obeyed My voice, says the Lord. Turn, O backsliding children, says the Lord; for I am married unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion. Blessed Jesus, when we should have thought that our sins would cause You to speak most harshly against us, we find that You have the softest words for those who have most erredthat our sins, which must make You angryalso seem to make You invite us back again with sweeter words than You use to those who have not grieved You as much as we have done!

Note again, every time our Lord Jesus Christ says anything to His brethren, it is something that requires faith on their part. Why did He not say, Go and tell My brethren that I have risen from the grave? Because they did not need any faith for that. He had risenthat was a fact that they could discover by their eyesightand some of them by their touch. No, He says, I will make large drafts upon my peoples faith. Go and tell them that I am about to ascend to My Fatherthat is something great for them to believe. Do you know, Christian Friends, that the more you have of the manifest Presence of Christ, the more faith you require? Have you not often asked to have a promise brought home to your heart by the special influences of the Spirit? Now, remember, the more promises you have, the more faith you will require. The words of Christ demand faith on our part. A manifestation from Christ is as truly a demand upon our faith as when He hides His face from us. When He hides His face, He requires us to still believe in Him even when He says nothing. But when He speaks, He requires us to believe something that He says. The more manifestations Christ grants to you, the more is your need of faith.

I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God. Luther was right when he said that all the pith of divinity lay in the pronouns. My Father and your Father. He is My Father by eternal generation. I was begotten of My Father before any of the worlds were made. He is your Father by regeneration. He has begotten you again unto a lively hope by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. He is My Father, as I am the Head of the ChurchI call Him Father in my Christhood, as God and Man. And as I am your Representative, and you are all gathered up in Me, He is your Father, tooMy Father, and your Father. How sweet is the word, Father, in such a connection! He is our Father because He has the deepest love to protect usand if we doubt whether His power is equal to His love, let us notice what Jesus next says, I ascend to My God, and your God. And inasmuch as God is Omnipotent, and the Father is Love, you have all the love you need and all the power equal to that love! It seems sweet to hear Christ calling His Father, His God. As He was a Man, the Father was His God. As He was Christ, the God-Man, the Father was God over Him and, speaking as a Man, He could say, My Father is greater than I. God the Father being greater than the Mediator, who said, in effect, As Man, I worship Him even as you worship Him. As Man, I look up to Him as My Father the same as you do. He is My Father as He is your Father.

I have only to make one other remark, how beautifully the Savior refers to the Believers union with Himself! The whole Bible, when it is rightly understood, points to the Believers union with Christ, and this sweet verse is full of that blessed Truth of God. Christ and His people have united interests. When Christ calls God His Father, we may call God our Father, too. In His inheritance we have a joint interestHe is Heir of all things, and we are joint-heirs with Him. In relationship, Christ and His people are closely united. His brethren are our brethrenHis Father is our Father. Even in service, as Christ was Man, as He was the Servant of God for our sakes, so the Master whom He served is the Master whom we serveand we together take the same service upon ourselves, believing that we together shall have the same Kingdom conferred upon us and shall reign with Christ forever and ever.

An old divine calls Mary Magdalene apostola apostolorum, that is, the Apostle to the Apostles. An Apostle is one who is sentand Mary Magdalene was sent to those whom Christ, afterwards, sent to the ends of the earth. In like manner, a poor humble woman may be an Apostle to one who shall afterwards be a great divine. Let us hear, then, what this great Apostle to the Apostles has to say to us. She does not now tell us that Jesus Christ is about to ascend, she tells us that He has ascended and whenever we draw around the Table of our Lord, let us derive sweet influence from the fact that Jesus Christ has ascended! He ascended as a Conqueror, leading captivity captive. He ascended as a Forerunner for us, entering within the veil. He has ascended to make preparation for His people, according to His promise, I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. He has ascended as our Intercessorthere He stands forever interceding before the Throne of God for us, His children, His friends, His brethren!

Oh, that we may now put our unfeigned and constant trust in Him who died, putting equal trust in Him who rose again, making this our glory, both in His dying and in His rising, that He has ascended up on high and taken His lawful place at the right hand of God, where He also makes intercession for us!

Oh, that those who are dead in sin were quickened by Gods Spirit that they might know something of the preciousness of having a Father in Heaven, the same Father that Jesus Christ had! Sinner, I pray the Lord to teach you to believe in Jesus Christ. And if you have sinned with Mary Magdalene, may He help you to believe, with her, that you may share in her sweet manifestations and have a gracious message like hers to tell some day to the rest of your brethren!

EXPOSITIONS BY C. H. SPURGEON: **ISAIAH 40; MATTHEW 16:21-23.**

Isaiah 40:1, 2. Comfort you, comfort you My people, says your God. Speak you comfortably to Jerusalem. The loss of comfort is no small loss. God would have His people happy. They are in the best condition for serving Him and less likely to be overcome by the temptations of the world when the joy of the Lord is their strength. Therefore, three times over He bids His ministers comfort His people. O Triune Jehovah, help Your servant to now fulfill this commission!

*2.* And cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, After all, Beloved, you have not to fight your own battles. Under one aspect, you may have to do so, but the great fight is already overthat fight which is so much greater than all othersthat the lesser ones are scarcely worthy of the name of warfare. You have but to scatter the foes whom your great Captain has vanquishedand to march boldly onward because He has cleared the way before you.

*2.* That her iniquity is pardoned. Oh, when that is the case, what does it matter about the warfare? Brothers and Sisters, if you have a sense of forgiven sin, you may well bear the trials of the way. The sting is gone from death itself when sin is pardoned and, therefore, it is certainly gone from life as well

*2.* For she has received of the LORDS hand double for all her sins. If the Lords ancient people could thus be comforted in their seasons of sorrow, how much more may we be cheered when we think of all the blessing which has come to us through the sorrows of our great Covenant Head! All is settled now. It is finished, was our Saviors cry from the Cross. Our debts are all paid, so we may well be comforted.

*3.* The voice of him that cries in the wilderness, Prepare you the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. You have not to turn the wilderness into a gardenyou have only to make a highway for our God. It is the Presence of God that you need, O sorrowing Soul, O mourning Church! Let the Lord but come to you, and then all shall be well. Your business is to give heed to the cry, Prepare you the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

*4.* Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low That is what must happen to you who are very great and highly exaltedyou will have to be made low. But as for the lowly ones, they shall be exalted. It is in this way that God comes to His people, marching over hills that have been overthrown, and over valleys that have been filled up and leveled to make a highway for the King.

4, *5.* And the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough plain, and the Glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the LORD has spoken it. That is the great purpose and end of nature, of Providence and of Gracethat the Glory of the Lord may be revealed. It is already revealedbut many men do not see it. Yet it is Gods purpose that all flesh shall see it together. Do we all see it, dear Friends? Are we not far too apt to take glory to ourselves and to make out that we are strong, that we are wise? Ah, too often that is the case, so it is the Lords work to put an end to all that folly, so that nothing shall remain but the Glory of the Lord, that all flesh may see it, and see nothing else.

6-8. The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass withers, the flower fades: because the spirit of the LORD blows upon it: surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades: but the Word of our God shall stand forever. So, you see, there is a withering work to be done by the Spirit of Godwithering up all the glory of the flesh to the intent and purpose that the Glory of Gods Word may be revealed and that Jehovah, Himself, may be seen in His majesty and might! This is the great battle of all the ages. Sometimes men have set up a golden calf to be worshipped. At other times, blocks of wood and stone. But idolatry is universal wherever man is found. We are all far too prone to trust in something else instead of in Godand God is always jealous of these rivals of Histhese Dagons that dare impiously to stand in the Presence of the Ark of the Lord.

9. O Zion, that spreads good tidings, get you up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that spreads good tidings, lift up your voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! That is the point which we need to reach, where we may see Godwhere we may be conscious of His Presencewhere we may trust in His Gracewhere we may lean on His arm. And, oh, we need to have the voice very much lifted up before we can hear this cry, Behold your God! We run after this sight, and that, and the other, and forget Him who alone is worth seeing. Behold your God, you who are sorrowing, you who are perplexed, you who are sorely burdened! Behold your God and you shall be strengthened and comforted.

10, 11. Behold, the Lord GOD will come with strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him: behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him. He shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young. This is what the Good Shepherd is constantly doing. Nobody else can do it. He alone can protect the weak, who are His lambs, and succor those whose inward sorrows bring them into deep distress. And there is nothing which He cannot do, for He is Omnipotent. Then why do you not trust Him? You remember what the Lord Himself says, by the mouth of JeremiahCursed is the man that trusts in man, and makes flesh his arm, and whose heart departs from the Lord. For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good comes; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited. Blessed is the man that trusts in the Lord, and whose hope is the Lord. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreads out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat comes, but her leaf shall be green: and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit. Now comes a verse by which we are taught the greatness of God

12. Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, and meted out Heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who has done all this but God? Then, after that, is there anything too hard for Him to do? And who is so worthy of your confidence as this Omnipotent One? Oh, let the thunder of His power make you ashamed of the weakness of your unbelief!

13, 14. Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD, or being His counselor has taught Him? With whom took He counsel, and who instructed Him, and taught Him in the path of judgment, and taught Him knowledge, and showed to Him the way of understanding? Do you want greater wisdom than His? Are you perplexed because you cannot understand all mysteries? What would your wisdom and understanding be if they were placed side by side with His? A single drop of water, compared with all seas and oceans, has a larger magnitude than all your powers have compared with the greatness of your God and all His glorious attributes! Trust Him, then, and let Him lead you wherever He wills.

15. Behold, the nations are as a drop in a bucket, All the nations Jews and Gentiles, the vast multitudes of China, and India, and all other nationsall these are but as a drop in a bucketthe one drop that trembles on the buckets brim when all the rest of the water is gone!

15. And are counted as the small dust of the balance. That little imperceptible dust that does not turn the scale of an ordinary balance and for which you would need the most sensitive scales in order to discover its presence! That is all that the whole of the nations of the earth are in comparison with God! Yet, sometimes we fancy that one man is so great that all must give way to him. Whereas, if we trust in God, and think as God thinks, a whole nation will be to us as a drop in a bucket, or as the unseen dust of the balance. Well did Dr. Watts sing:

*Great God! How infinite are You!   
What worthless worms are we!   
Let the whole race of creatures bow,   
And pay their praise to Thee.   
Your Throne eternal ages stood,   
Ere seas or stars were made!   
You are the ever-living God,   
Were all the nations dead.*

15, 16. Behold, He takes up the isles as a very little thing. And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering. Set Libanus itself on firelet all its forests of cedar be the wood to burn the sacrifice, and all its cattle the victims upon the altaryet are they but as a childs toy in the sight of the All-Glorious Jehovah. There is nothing in them that can satisfy His infinite heart!

17, 18. All nations before Him are as nothing; and they are counted to Him less than nothing, and vanity. To whom then will you liken God? Or what likeness will you compare unto Him? Now, children of God, do not miss the meaning of this passage by saying that it relates to the heathen. True, it does, but not to them alone. When the heathen liken God to sticks and stones, they scarcely act worse than some of His people do, for, sometimes, we do not even think as well of our God as we do of ourselves. You, being evil, are constantly supplying your childrens needs, yet you doubt whether God will supply yours! You liken Him to an ungenerous father, or to a forgetful and faithless friend, one who changes with the wind. Oh, dear Friends, have you not so likened Him? If so, let the rebuke to the heathen be also a rebuke to you. This is what the heathen do

19, 20. The workman melts a graven image, and the goldsmith spreads it over with gold, and casts silver chains. He that is so impoverished that he has no oblationNo precious metal

20-26. Chooses a tree that will not rot; he seeks unto him a cunning workman to prepare a graven image that shall not be moved. Have you known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth? It is He that sits upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretches out the heavens as a curtain, and spreads them out as a tent to dwell in: that brings the princes to nothing! He makes the judges of the earth as vanity. Yes, they shall not be planted; yes, they shall not be sown: yes, their stock shall not take root in the earth: and He shall also blow upon them, and they shall wither, and the whirlwind shall take them away as stubble. To whom, then, will you liken Me, or shall I be equal? says the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high. Look at the stars.

26, 27. And behold who has created these things, that brings out their host by number: He calls them all by names by the greatness of His might, for that He is strong in power; not one fails. Why say you, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel, My way is hid from the LORD, and my judgment is passed over from my God? You see, it is another form of that same sin of forgetting God, or thinking little of God. It does not matter much whether it takes the form of atheism or of idolatry, it is the same kind of evilit is getting away from God, or neglecting Him and, in our case, when we get depressed in spirit and fancy that God forgets us, it is the same sinful nature working in the same sinful manner. May God help us to forsake every form of evil!

28, 29. Have you not known? Have you not heard that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, faints not, neither is weary? There is no searching of His understanding. He gives power to the faint. Come now, faint heart, and swoon away at His feet! Come to Him in all your weakness! Do not try to conceal it, but trust Him to remove it. He gives power to the faint.

29. And to them that have no might He increases strength. What a mercy it is to have no might that God may increase our strength! What a curse it is to be so strong in yourself that you do not go to the Strong for strength!

30. Even the youths. With all their vigor. Even the youths.   
30. Shall faint and be weary, and the young men. Though more confirmed in strength. The young men.  
30, 31. Shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles. That is their first mode of progression, in which, perhaps, there is more flight than is good for them! They shall mount up with wings as eagles.   
31. They shall run, and not be weary. That is an improvement upon the flying, but they shall still further improve their pace, for running is not the best pace at which a man can go. Enoch did not run with God, but he walked with Him. And so, as we grow in Grace, we shall advance, from flying to running, and from running to walking. This is the wise, sober, steady mode of going to Heaven!   
31. And they shall walk, and not faint. The Lord help us to attain to that blessed rate of progression in which we shall walk, and not faint, for His dear Sons sake!   
Matthew 16:21. From that time forth began Jesus to show unto His disciples, how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. He had previously spoken somewhat darkly concerning His death, but it was so sad and so strange a Revelation to His disciples that they could not think He really meant quite what He said. But now He began definitely and plainly to tell them about the future, and even to enter into details concerning His death and Resurrection. He knew all that the work of redemption would involve for Him. He had counted the cost, but

*When the Savior knew   
The price of pardon was His blood,   
His pity neer withdrew.*

It must have been very saddening, but, at the same time, very profitable to the minds of the Apostles to be led by their Lord in this direction.

22. Then Peter took Him, and began to rebuke Him, saying, Be it far from You, Lord: this shall not be unto You. The margin reads, Pity Yourself, Lord, as though Peter meant to say, God grant, of His infinite mercy, that this may not be true! How can it be that such an One as You are should die? He probably thought that Christs death would be the end of His Kingdom, the ruin of all His peoples hopes, the quenching of the Light of Israel. So, in his zeal for his Masters cause, he cried, This shall not be unto You.

23. But He turned, and said unto Peter, Get you behind Me, Satan: you are an offense unto Me: for you savor not the things that are of God, but those that are of men. Notice the contrast between the 18th verse and the 23rd . In the 18th verse, Christ had said, You are Peter, and upon this rock will I build My Church. And here He is saying, Get you behind Me, Satan. I do not understand our Lord to have called Peter, Satan, but to have looked right through Peter and to have seen Satan standing behind him, and making use of the Apostle to be His spokesman. The best of men may sometimes serve the devils turn better than a bad man would. He may speak through those who love the Lord, words which are contrary to the mind of Christ. So Christ sees Satan lurking, as in an entrenchment, behind Peter, and He says, Get you behind Me: you are an offense unto Me.

The idea of pitying Himselfthe thought of shirking the task upon which He had enteredwas offensive to Him. There was a savor about it of the things of menof self and of self-saving, instead of self-denial and generous, disinterested, Godlike self-sacrifice. Oh, that we would always speak as Christ did on this occasionwhenever anything is proposed to us by which we would avoid the cross that He intends us to carry! When anyone wants us to moderate our zeal, or to tone down our opinions, less we should have to suffer for our faithfulness, let us reply, Get you behind me, Satan. What has a soldier of the Cross to do with avoiding the battle with evil? He should be always ready for the good fight of faith. What has an heir of Heaven to do with the saving of himself? Let him say with the Apostle Paul, I count all things but loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #1254 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

JESUS IN OUR MIDST   
NO. 1254

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, SEPTEMBER 12, 1875, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst, and said unto them, Peace be with you.   
John 20:19.**

WE do not wonder that when certain devout Greeks came up to keep the feast at Jerusalem they said to Philip, Sir, we would see Jesus. Who would not want to see Him? Who that has been redeemed by His precious blood does not long to behold Him? As a child pines for its mother, so have we been sick with strong desire to behold our Lord! Yet to see the King in His beauty with these eyes of ours is denied to us for the present. But the reasons for delay are so gracious that we are well content to tarry. It is better for us that the bodily Presence of our Lord should be withdrawn, for otherwise the Comforter would not come unto us and the Comforter, even the blessed Spirit, brings us richer gifts than even the personal Presence of Christ could have conferred!

Still, reasons cannot utterly remove longings, and we would still be glad to behold our Lord. Is it not natural that a soldier should wish to hear his Captains voice? At least there is something excusable about it, if, every now and then, we dare to wish that we could have a glimpse, even if it were ever so short, of our own Well-Beloved, altogether lovely Lord. If we could but catch a glimpse of that face whose brightness outshines the sun, how it would stimulate us! But, Brothers and Sisters, it must not be. Until He, Himself, shall come, or till He shall take us up to be with Him where He is, we must be content with faith and postpone our desires for sight.

So far as the needs of the Gospel kingdom are concerned, the need for eye-witnesses is over. Apostles who had seen the Lord are required no more. Forty days of our Saviors tarrying here below sufficed to let a sufficient number of persons fully assure themselves that He had actually risen from the dead. And Jesus took great care that there should be left behind a body of evidence concerning the actual resurrection of His body which would render that fact indisputably certain to all candid minds. Probably there is no statement of human history which is better sustained by evidence than this factthat Jesus of Nazareth who hung upon the Cross and died, did afterwards rise again from the dead!

The time of eye-witnesses is now over. More evidence would be superfluous and we are now in the mid-ocean of faith. The Lord knows that sight interferes with faith, and, therefore, He does not give us a mixture of the two. We do not walk by sight and faith, but, we walk by faith, not by sight. To let us occasionally see, would, in fact, remove us out of the

realm of faith and bring us down from the high position of Believers to the low platform of sightseers. Adieu, therefore, for a while, O Sight! Yet, dear Brothers and Sisters, there are spiritual visits from Jesus which are more than sufficient substitutes for His bodily Presence and these we may still desire and expect.

Christ may be really present where He is not materially present! There is a discerning of the Presence of Christ which we must all have, especially when we come to the communion table, for we are told that he who there discerns not the Lords body eats and drinks unworthily. There is a discerning of the Lords Presence in the midst of His people which is essential to the power of our assemblies. I pray that we may have this, even now, and if we do, we shall not be a whit behind those who saw Jesus with their eyes and heard Him with their ears! I do not think there is any privilege which the actual bodily Presence of Christ could bestow which we may not obtain at this moment by the actual spiritual Presence of Christ, if we do but exercise faith in Him as being in the midst of us.

He has said, Lo, I am with you always, and this is the pledge of every conceivable good. Concerning this Presence I shall speak, using the story as told by the Evangelists as a sort of type of that spiritual communion which I hope we may now realize.

I. Our first point this morning shall be, THERE IS A PECULIAR MANNER IN OUR LORDS COMING TO HIS DISCIPLES. You will see, first, that He comes gladly to them. I am sure He came gladly, for He came so soon and so often. First, He appeared to Mary Magdalene, then to Simon, then to the two at Emmaus and then to the 11 at Jerusalem. There are at least four times in a day in which the Risen One seeks His Brethren. These visits of His were in different places, somewhat remote from each other. It was a busy day with Him, this first day after He had risen from the dead! How true it was after His Resurrection, even as it was in ages long ago, that His delights were with the sons of men.

He evidently loved to be where His people were. He might have gone away and spent the 40 days in the desert, triumphing on the scene of His former conflict. Or He might have surveyed the earth in lonely travel, but instead He spent His sacred leisure with His people. And on the first day after He had risen from the grave we have record of no less than four interviews which He had with His disciples. Remember that on each occasion He came right willingly and showed Himself freely. Magdalene, it is true, went to the tomb seeking Him, but He might readily have remained unknown had He so desired.

I know not where Simon was when his Lord met him, but he, also, did not find Him as the result of search. As for the two disciples at Emmaus, they were going away from Jerusalem and evidently were not seeking Him, yet He joined Himself to their company. And the 11 had met to console each other, but not to meet with Jesusthat was a matter beyond their expectation. The doors were shut. No sentinel stood ready to look for the appearing of the Lord Jesus, but He came to them all of a sudden, an uninvited guest! I gather from this, Beloved, that our blessed Lord delights to manifest Himself to His people even now, for we know that He is the same as always.

After a spiritual manner He is glad to come and sup with us that we may sup with Him. He is not reluctant to visit the places where His people assemble. It is the joy of His soul to look those in the face for whom He shed His blood and to hear their prayers and praises and accept their offerings. You have not, today, therefore, in the prayer which I trust you are breathing to Him, to urge an unwilling guest to come where He cares not to be. You have not to lay hold of Him and constrain Him, saying, Abide with us. He will be glad to reveal Himself to you as He does not unto the world. Jesus comes cheerfully where He is cheerfully received. He even comes to those who invite Him not and, therefore, He will surely turn aside and tarry with you who are longing for fellowship with Him.

He came on that occasion, also, to those who were quite unworthy of so great a privilegefor who were those eleven? God forbid we should say a hard word against those honored men, but in reference to their Master they had not behaved as they should have done. It is written, Then all the disciples forsook Him and fled. Among that 11 there was not one who had stood up in his Lords defense, not even the man who had leaned his head upon His bosom. No, one who was not the least among them had, with oaths and cursing, denied Him! They had not forgotten Him or renounced His cause, or else they would not have met as they were doing. But they had all disbelieved the promise of His return, or else they had not met in fear and trembling as they did that night.

I think some leaders would have refused to acknowledge such followers, or at best would have sent them cold commands and denied them their company till they were in a better spirit. Our Master came to His cowardly, faithless disciples and stood in the midst of them uttering the cheering salutation, Peace be with you! My Soul, why should He not come to you, though you are the most unworthy of all whom He has bought with His blood? Though you assuredly have been unfaithful, cowardly and unbelieving, yet even upon you may His light arise and into your ears may He speak the peaceful benediction, even as He did unto the eleven. This ought to be a point of great comfort to you, this morning, and great incitement to hope that you will obtain the Lords spiritual Presence, unworthy though you are.

Note again, the manner of His coming. He came to the full assembly of the Apostles and their companions, after He had been seen by the few. That is to say, first one had seen Him, then another one. And then two and then the full quorum of the 11 and they that were with them were favored with His company. I am glad, my Brothers and Sisters, to know that this morning early, soon after break of day, a few of the household of faith met under this roof and found their Master among them displaying His love. I know, also, that a second time, before we assembled in this upper room for worship, there was in the basement below another company gathered together, who sought and found our Lord. And, moreover, one at least is here who saw Jesus early this morning in his own chamber while privately worshipping.   
These are good tokens, my Brethren, for now that we have all come together, many more than 11, and now that all our hearts are eager after Him, we shall surely meet with Him! Since the Brothers and the Sisters say, We have seen Him this morning. We saw Him in our chambers. We saw Him as we walled to the house of prayer. We met Him in the early morning Prayer Meeting, this is good news to us and confirms our hope that He will come to us, also. Yes, Beloved, He will come to the feast! Even now I see Him and His Presence makes my heart burn within me!

Our Lord came to His disciples when they were met together quietly, secluded from the world, shut in as much as they could be from its cares and distractions. The 11 and the more trustworthy Brethren had appointed this midnight rendezvous for no purpose but that of quietly considering their condition, cheering each others hearts and waiting upon God. They had nothing to buy or sell, or debate upon. They had laid aside business cares and domestic troubles and then their Master came. It is a good thing for the saints to be shut in and the world shut out. I hope we are in that position now. You must not expect Jesus to show Himself to you if your heart is at home with the children, or away at the workshop, or traveling to and fro through the earth, seeking after vanity!

But with the doors all shut about us, even in this great Tabernacle we shall see our Beloved. If we can but shut the world out we may expect to feel His Presence and to have Him breathe upon us as He did upon those of old. Not in the noisy street, but in the quiet chamber, Jesus comes. Not at the market, but in the meeting. Not in the street, but in the sanctuary will His gathered people have their clearest sights of Him.

Having all met together, the next noticeable point as to the Lords coming was that

they were all thinking about Him and talking about Him. The uppermost subject was Jesus whom they had followed as their Master and whom they had seen dieand of whom it was said that He had risen from the dead. I suppose they prayed together, but I am sure their prayers all had reference to Him. I do not think they sang, but if they did, I think they must have selected a Psalm which had an evident allusion to Him. Some of them may have spoken. I have no doubt Simon Peter did, but it must have been to tell how the Lord had revealed Himself to Him and was risen, indeed!

And Magdalene in that quiet assembly may have, again, told of the vision of angels which she saw and how she met the Master and mistook Him for a gardener. And now there come in two Brothers, sweating from their rapid journey from Emmaus, who are just in time before the assembly breaks up to repeat the same gladsome tidings! Everything that night was about Jesus, directly and distinctly about Him. There were no discussions as to doctrines and no questions about ordinances. They spoke wholly of Jesus who died, Jesus who was said to have risen, and they said one to another, is it, indeed, so? Thus while all their hearts and tongues were taken up with Him, Jesus manifested Himself to them.

Now I hope our Lord will come this morning, for I know some who think less and less every day of everything but Jesus. They now account a sermon to be precious or to be vile in proportion as it is full of Him, and reckon a day well spent or ill just in proportion as they have spent it with Him. He is the Alpha and Omega, head, front, chief, Lord, all, yes, All in All to us! And if there are many such present today, you may depend upon it, Jesus will not stay away and we shall feel the delights of His fellowship! Still, someone will say, Perhaps He will not come here, for there are many barriers and we, ourselves, are not, perhaps, in the very best condition to receive Him.

Stop, Brothers and Sisters, and ask yourselveswere there no difficulties then? The doors were shut and the disciples were in fear. I do not know how Jesus came into the room! Some think He passed through the closed door by miracle, albeit that his body was substantial flesh and bone. Others suggest that He opened the door by miracle and then it closed again. I care not how, but there He was, though the doors were shut! And I know this, that whatever doors there may be between my Lord and my soul, though they were doors made of seven times plated steel, He could pass through them or could open them to get at my heart when it longs after Him!

Brethren, if there are mountains between you and Christ, behold, He comes leaping like a roe or a young hart over the separating hills! Nothing can keep Him back from you except yourselfand if you will that He should comeHe wills to come and is on His way, even now. No considerations of domestic suffering or of personal pain. No remembrance of the trials of the week, or even the present temptations of Satan shall avail to keep back your Lord and Master! Surely you are aware He can make your soul like the chariots of Amminadab! But perhaps you are afraid He will not visit you because you have a fear which you cannot shake off.

So had the disciples, or they would not have closed the doors so carefully. They feared the Jewish mob which might try to slay them as they had done their Lord! And though you may be fearing the troubles of the week before you, the Lord will not despise you for it. Perhaps some very heavy cloud hangs over your spirit right now. Well, your Lord can pierce through clouds! Does not the sun look forth from the heavens though the morning is lowering and dreary? Shines he not even though the fogs and mists gather about our city? And Jesus comes, though sins encompass us and doubts and fears and cares hang thick about our path!

He comes as the dew which waits not for man, neither tarries for the sons of men. I see no reason why, now, at this very instant, we may not hear the voice of our Beloved! Blessed Lord, we beseech You to come, for come You can, as well we know! At favored times I have felt as though His very shadow were over me, as though the touch of His right hand were upon me and I heard Him say to me, Fear not, I am He that lives and was dead. And why not again? Why not now? There are many reasons which make us hope that we shall, this morning, behold Him! Let us look up, and with one hearty cry, Come, Savior, and reveal Yourself to us now as You do not unto the world!

II. Secondly, OUR SAVIOR HAD A PECULIAR MANNER WHEN HE WAS COME, so, if He is here, this morning, we may expect Him to be here in something like the following fashion. He stood in the midst of them. He stood, suddenly stoodwhere they had seen no one the moment before

He stood, plainly revealed. He did not flash across the room like a meteor, but He remained in one position as though He meant to tarry for a while. He stood in the midstHe took the place which a teacher should occupy, the position which naturally belongs to the Master and Lord.

I rejoice to think of my Lord Jesus as taking the midst of the circle when He visits His Brethren. I love the name of Calvin, but I always regard him as sitting on one side of the room. And I love the name of Wesley, but I regard him as occupying another side place in the assembly. There are many preachers in the Church, but not one of them is in the midst of the family circle of the redeemed. The Lord, alone, is therethe center of all hearts. Others are present and they shine with differing lights, but He is the sun! He is the center and ruler of the system of His Church.

This morning, in addressing you, I stand in body in your midst, but no doubt my preaching does not consort with the experiences and feelings of all present. I must stand on one side, but if my Lord will reveal Himself to you, I am sure we will all give Him the chief place! He will be the center of all our loves and delights. I would not yield precedence to you, Brothers and Sisters, in my desire to honor my Lord as the chief Beloved of my soul, and I feel sure that whatever your condition, you all agree to magnify Him and are all glad to look in the same direction, namely, to Him alone. Though our views may sometimes differ, yet our views about Jesus are the same, and our hearts best affections all unite in Him. Well, then, if He is here, this morning, we shall all feel that we find a common meeting place in Him, that our confidence is in Him, our consecration is to Him, we belong to Him, He belongs to us and we are happiest among the happy because He gathers us all around His loving heart.

When He stands in the midst, the next thing we find is that He speaks, and His word is, Peace be with you. The Presence of Christ, this morning, will be signaled by the bestowal of a deep sense of peace. You will not be able to tell one another why you feel such profound quiet, but it will vividly come before you that Jesus loved you from before the foundations of the world, that your names are engraved upon His hands, that He has bought you with His precious blood, that you are near and dear to Him and that where He is, there you shall be, also, and your souls will feel as if they were more than content. Your experience will be that of the Psalmist when he said, My soul is even as a weaned child.

It is a glad hour when we need nothing more, but are filled with all the fullness of God! When we can heartily say, Whom have I in Heaven but You, and there is none upon the earth that I desire beside You? Cares are gone, delight is come, longings are satisfied and desires fall asleep on His bosom, when Jesus is present! No sound of war is in the camp, nor voice of them that mourn. The time of the singing birds is come and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land. After observing that our Lord spoke, we next find that He showedshowed Himself to His disciples. Jesus did not come into their midst to show them a new thought, a philosophic discovery, a deep doctrine, a profound mystery, or, indeed, anything but Himself. He was a sacred egoist that day, for what He spoke of was Himself and what He revealed was Himself.

What a sight was that for the disciples! They saw the very Christ! They had seen Him for three years before, but not as one who had been dead and passed through the sepulcher! And now He stood before them, as the First-Begotten from the dead. The most conspicuous things He showed in Himself were His woundsHis hands, His feet, His side. Oh, if my Lord is present here this morning, the chief object of faiths vision will be Himselfand the most conspicuous point in Himself will be the emblems of His passion! The mind cannot contemplate a more blessed object than the wounds of Jesusfounts of redemption, doors of eternal life, sources of hope, scale of Heaven!

Look, you saints, look even now to your crucified Savior! As far as He enables you, come close to Him and put your finger into the nail prints, and say, My Lord and my God! Those sacred scars of His are the sure tokens of sin forgiven, punishment borne by the Substitute and the soul forever emancipated from her slavery! This is what Jesus does when He comes to us in spiritHe makes Himself more dear than ever by fuller and more condescending discoveries of His love, so that we know and believe the love which He has towards us. In so doing our Lord opens up the Scriptures. He did so to the eleven. Jesus Christs Presence is always known by His people by the value and the beauty which they are led to attach to the Scripture at such times.

The Bible is one book in the dark and another book in the light. Do you not, sometimes, take up the Scripture and as you read it, feel that it is like reading any other book, only that it involves a responsibility which another book does not bring upon you? At such seasons you get no sweetness out of it, but rather bitterness. But when Jesus takes the Book, He looses the seven seals and with His finger lights up every line and bids you look, if you will, through the hole in His hand and read the promises in that fashion! Ah, how they glow and glisten! Then the Book talks with you and you detect the Voice to be that of the Beloved Himself!

There is life in the Lord because Christ is there who is the Way, the Truth, and the Lifeand is, Himself, the eternal Logos, the true Word of God. Yes, Jesus Christs Presence never teaches a man to despise Scripture and look to inner light, or personal revelationfor much of supposed special revelation is the child of superstition and conceitwhereas in the Scriptures we have a more sure word of testimony. The more light a man has directly from the Spirit, the more he prizes the light of the Spirit in the Word. And the more truly he gets into communion with the unseen Christ, the more does he delight in the Truths of God as revealed to him in the pages of Inspiration. May we know Christs Presence by that sign and token this morning!

Dear Friends, the Lords Presence among His followers that day had this peculiarity about it, again, that then they forgot all their fears. As He had given them peace with God, so now He puts aside the fear of the Jews and every other fear which had distressed them. They had been frightened, at first. They thought He was a spirit, but now, as they gathered about Him and saw Him eat with them, they gathered around Him as

sheep around a shepherd and they felt at home. I am sure, as they went to their houses, they had no fears of Jews as they passed through the midnight streets. And when they reached their doors they felt joyous and light of heart. Whatever their pecuniary circumstances may have been, they had no longer any care, for they had seen the Lord!

Jesus Christs Presence will be known to you this day by the forgetting of your cares. There is a text in Solomon where he says, Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that are of heavy hearts. Let him drink and forget his poverty, and renumber his misery no more. The love of Jesus is that blessed strong drink whose Presence is the wine of which if a man will drink, he shall forgot his misery and shall remember his sorrow no more! If Jesus Christ does but give to the man of downcast spirit, the spiced wine of His pomegranate by making him feel that He is near him and that He loves himif He does but make him conscious that the Redeemers self is no fiction but a very present Friend and Helperthen whatever the trial may be, he shall bear it readily! The cross shall cease to be a load and the road beneath his pilgrim foot shall become smooth.

Brethren, we cannot enjoy, as yet, the Presence of Christ corporeally, but I have already shown you that all the blessings which His bodily Presence could bestow, we can realize if our Lord, after the same fashion, shall be present with us spiritually today.

III. Now thirdly, THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST WITH HIS DISCIPLES EXCITED VARIOUS EMOTIONS. These emotions may be excited by His spiritual Presence quite as readily. At first they were terrified, for they thought Him a spirit. It is a sad sign of mans depraved nature and of his gross carnality that the presence of a spirit is the source of alarm to him. If we were more spiritual than we are, we should not fear to meet beings of our own order, but should delight to think of the presence of disembodied spirits and should be glad enough to commune with them!

Because the disciples were unspiritual they were alarmed and when the alarm ceased a little, Jesus said to them, Why are you troubled? And why do thoughts arise in your hearts? I suppose they began to think of their ill conduct to their Master and conscience made them tremble. We are told by Mark that He also upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart. In gentle tones He chided them for having been so unbelieving and they must have felt this, also, to be a source of troubled thoughts.

Meanwhile they doubted whether it could be the risen Savior. But when they were convinced by indisputable signs, they greatly rejoiced and almost at the same time the very vividness of their joy blinded them into another doubt. Like a pendulum, they swung from joy to unbelief! After doubt went, they rejoiced, and then wonder came, and then doubt again, so that they scarcely knew where they were, they were in such a state of excitement! John, if you notice, gives a very calm account of it all, for he looked at it rather from Christs point of view than from the disciples and, having had his head so lately on Christs bosom, he was, perhaps, more believing than the rest. Lukes picture of it shows us the contending emotions at work in the breasts of the assembled Brothers and Sisters, for Luke was a physician and accustomed to watch symptoms and phases of feeling. He looked at it from the human side and, therefore, he gives us a fuller description of the tossing to and fro, the hopes, fears, joys, sorrows, questions and comforts of the hour.

Well, we will leave the 11 and come to ourselves. Suppose, a moment, that our Lord were actually to appear among us this morning? I will not say I wish He would, because we know Him no more after the flesh and there is no blessing which His corporeal Presence could bestow but what we have already in His spiritual Presence. But if He were to come, my Brethren, what would be our state of mind towards Him? I hope we should not be terrified. I think the most of us who believe in Him would be more likely to be overjoyed than at all frightened, but I am sure we should all be filled with the profoundest awe.

The sight of HIM! Our Master and Lord! Should we not, like John in Patmos, fall at His feet as dead? Would not the bliss of that vision be too great for these frail bodies? At any rate, we would devoutly bow the knee before Him and reverently adore Him! And oh what adoration would we give to the Lamb that once was slain! To that dear and ever blessed Son of God who has washed us from our sins in His own blood! Brethren, we would turn this Tabernacle into a temple and this hallowed hour into a fragment of Heavens eternity! If our Lord would but come here and show Himself among us, what overflowing love should He have from us! How would our hearts melt while He spoke! Brothers and Sisters, He is here!

Let us give that loving adoration to Him even now! Let us bow before Him and with prostrate reverence of heart worship the Divine Son! Why should it not be so? Brethren, may the Holy Spirit lead you into the depths of devotion now! I have no doubt we should feel a marvelous degree of serene joy to think that at length we were with our Lord. When we went home and told our friends who were not here, we would say to them, We have had some sweet Sundays, but we have never before had such a Lords-Day as this, for He who is Alpha and Omega walked among us and spoke with us! We forgot Brother Spurgeonhe went back to his seat and held his head in delightwe thought no more about him, for his Lord absorbed our attention! The joy we had in seeing Jesus was worth waiting for.

Well, dear Friends, we shall not have our Lords crucified body here so as to feel peace from the sight of our eyes and the hearing of our ears, but He is here, really. And all the facts which cluster around His Presence which would be legitimate reasons for peaceful joy, we have already, for He has died and redeemed us and He has gone into His Glory! And remember, He is pleading for us and He is coming again to take us Home to Himself! These are, by His Grace, the fundamental reasons for peace. We have all the real causes of joy that we should have if the Man of Nazareth did stand in our midst! Therefore let us be calmly glad and wholly at rest this morning. God help us to be so!

Surely, also, many would be melted down with deep contrition in our

Redeemers Presence. Some of us would have to say, Lord and Master, have You come to ask an account of our stewardship? We are ashamed to look You in the face, we have done so little for You. There is one who might say, I have been a member of a Church for years, but I have neither helped in the school, preached in the villages, visited the sick nor rendered any service whatever. I have eaten the fat and drank the sweet in the House of the Lord, but that is all that I have done. Brothers and Sisters, here, before the spiritually present Lord you may make the same

confessions and be humbled on account of them. I wish you would. Though Jesus is not here with that dear face to tenderly chide you, yet  
He is here, by His blessed Spirit, to gently remind you of your forgotten   
obligations. By His wounds and by His bloody sweat, I do entreat you to   
be loiterers no longer, but go work in His vineyard and cease not till lifes   
sun goes down! Ah, says one, but if our Lord were here, I would tell  
Him my great trouble and ask for His sympathy and help. I would come to  
His feet and beseech Him to save my husband and to convert my ungodly  
son. Do it, Sister, do it NOW, for He will hear you as assuredly as if we   
heard His footsteps in these aisles!   
His Spirit, who has put the desire into your soul, is the pledge of His  
Presence. Breathe the prayer and expect the blessing and your expectation shall not fail. I hear another Believer cry out, Ah, if my Lord were   
here before me, I would pour out my glad soul in praise and tell Him how I   
love Him! I would kiss His feet and wash them with my tears. Do it NOW,  
my Friend, for though you have not the flesh and blood of Christ present,  
yet Jesus in spirit is here and though His body is up in Glory, yet your  
tears and thankfulness will reach Him and be as acceptable to Him as if   
He were here in body! Even now His heart will accept the emotions of your  
soul! Let them flow out before Him as perfume from the flowers. Ah, says one, if I did but see the Lord I should leave this mornings   
assembly feeling that I could now lead a higher life than ever I had led before. I could not look at Him without saying, You altogether lovely One, I   
pledge myself to You, for You to live, for You to die and all I have and all I  
am shall be Yours forever. Beloved, do it unrestrainedly and unfeignedly   
even NOW! Do it now, I say, for He will just as well accept you, looking out

from the Glory Land above, as though He looked down upon you from this  
platform!   
I wonder what the scene would be with some hypocrites who are present, if Christ were to come. Ah, how they would wish they had never   
made a profession of religion! Oh Judas, Judas, how would you bear to  
see the risen glory of Him whom you betrayed? Are you here this morning,   
Judas? And you, vacillating Pilate, who knew the right but did the  
wronghow will you meet the Man in whom you found no fault but yet  
condemned to die? There may be many here who have despised Him, who   
have reviled His people and ridiculed His Gospel, albeit that Jesus shed   
His blood for the sons of men!   
Well, although Jesus is not here in body, yet will He soon come in Person to judge the quick and dead! And if you dare not meet Him now, how   
will you meet Him then? Thus says the Lord, prepare for His advent, for behold He comes to judge mankind, and woe onto those who shall be  
found wanting in the day of His appearing.   
IV. The last thing of all is this. Jesus Christ, when He came among His   
disciples, LEFT CERTAIN PERMANENT GIFTS which also can be realized   
by His spiritual Presence. One of the most precious gifts He left them was   
the realization of His Person. Those who saw Him that day never thought   
of Him, from then on, as a mere historical person, or a dream, or a phantom. You have read a great many histories but you have never realized the   
persons of history as you have realized your own father and mother and   
children. But the disciples must have realized Christ, for they saw Him   
and some of them touched Him and put their finger into the print of the   
nails.   
Now, it is very desirable that we should, all of us, realize the reality of   
Jesus Christ as God and Man, and we can do it, this morning, if He will  
come and overshadow us with His Presence. There are some of us to  
whom Christ has been a world more real than ourselves, for we have  
sometimes scarcely known whether we were in the body or out of the  
body, when He has been near. But we have always known whether He was   
in the body or out of the body. We have felt as if wife and father and   
mother were shadows that would pass awaybut we have realized the   
eternal existence of Christ and have known that He could not pass away.   
And so spiritually we have grasped Him more firmly than we have our own  
friends and kin.   
The most real thing under Heaven to my soul is the Lord Jesus Christ!   
Brethren, can you all say that? If you can, then Christ has been present  
with you this morning. I do not say that I can use this language always.   
Alas, alas, when my Lord has gone, it is not so with me! But when I know  
He is near, there is no force that does so completely constrain me, no impulse that does so utterly hold me spellbound as the impulse that arises   
from His Presence, and the magnificence that flows out of His love shed   
abroad in my soul. Every child of God knows it is so and thus it is clear  
that without seeing Christ with the eyes, you can obtain the blessing of   
realizing Him.   
Next He gave to them all a commission, He said, Go you into all the  
world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He has never laid His   
hand on your shoulder, my Brother, and said, Go and tell the Gospel to  
poor sinners. He has never touched you, my Sister, and said, Woman, I   
have sent you to bring your companions to Me. Go and tell them of My  
love! No, but He has virtually done it by the commission which He gave to   
all His disciples! And He does it powerfully and specially by His Spirit to   
many of us whenever we realize His Presence. We cannot sit down at the   
feet of Christ without feeling that we must work for Him! I defy any man to   
live near Christ and to be lazy! Our Lord walks a smart pace and if you   
will keep company with Him you must go His rate. But if you loiter and  
linger and waste time, Christ will be on ahead and leave you to yourself. I pray Him to commission some of you this morning! I tried last Sunday   
morning to call out young heroes for Christ. I do not know whether the  
Lord called them out by me or not, but I pray that Jesus would do it! If today He should appear, the Crucified One, with face more marred than that of any manwith pierced hands, with side opened by the deep gashif He should speak personally to each of you, and say, My Son, My Daughter, go and serve Me, from this day, until I come, with what energy   
would you go forth to His service, even if it were to the ends of the earth! The last gift He gave them was He breathed on them. His breath was the   
Spirit of God. This was the first drop of the shower of the Spirit which afterwards was shed so plenteously at Pentecost. He breathed on them and  
though they did not get the fullness of the Spirit, yet they obtained a   
measure of it and they became qualified to fulfill their commission. Oh  
that He would breathe the Spirit upon us now! No, we need not ask for it,   
Beloved, for our Lord has given the Spirit once and for all to all His people!  
He has baptized His Church into the Holy Spirit and into fireand the   
Spirit remains with us alwaysonly you must believe the might which   
that Spirit bestows upon you.   
Oh Brother, oh Sister, I beseech you do not estimate yourself according  
to your ability, according to your experience, your learning and the like,  
but according to that Divine energy which rests upon you if you are called  
of God to service! What are the powers within? They are feebleness itself!  
But the power from above is the power of God! Gird on this mystic belt,   
this Divine Omnipotence, and if you know how to wear it by faith, you  
shall break through a troop and leap over a wall. All things are possible  
to him that believes.   
May Jesus Christ, then, may His Spirit be so among us that each one   
of us may be conscious of obtaining a fresh anointing this very morning!   
And in that strength we shall go forth to new service for the glory of God.  
May God bless you for Jesus sake. Amen.

**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON Mark 16:9-16; Luke 24:36-44; John 20:19-24.** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK907, 766, 785.

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THE EVIDENCE OF OUR LORDS WOUNDS   
NO. 2061

**A SERMON DELIVERED   
ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, DECEMBER 2, 1888 BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON

**Then said He to Thomas, Reach here your finger and behold My hands. And reach here your hand and thrust it into My side: and be not faithless but believing.   
John 20:27.**

AMONG US in this day we have many persons who are like Thomas dubious, demanding signs and tokens, suspicious and oftentimes sad. I am not sure that there is not a slight touch of Thomas in most of us. There are times and seasons when the strong man fails and when the firm Believer has to pause a while and say, Is it so? It may be that our meditation upon the text before us may be of service to those who are touched with the malady which afflicted Thomas.

Notice, before we proceed to our subject in fullthat Thomas asked of our Lord what he ought not to have asked. He wanted to put our risen Lord to tests which were scarcely reverent to His sacred Person. Admire his Masters patience with him. He does not say, If he does not choose to believe he may continue to suffer for his unbelief. But no. He fixes His eye upon the doubter and addresses Himself specially to him. Yet not in words of reproach or anger. Jesus could bear with Thomas, though Thomas had been a long time with Him and had not known Him. To put his finger into the print of the nails and thrust his hand into His side was much more than any disciple had a right to ask of his Divine Master.

And yet see the condescension of Jesus! Rather than Thomas should suffer from unbelief, Christ will let him take great liberties. Our Lord does not always act towards us according to His own dignity but according to our necessityand if we are really so weak that nothing will do but thrusting a hand into His side, He will let us do it. Nor do I wonder at thisif, for our sakes, He suffered a spear to be thrust thereHe may well permit a hand to follow.

Observe that Thomas was at once convinced. He saidMy Lord and my God. This shows our Masters wisdomthat Thomas indulged Him with such familiarity, because He knew that, though the demand was presumptuous, yet the act would work for Thomas good. Our Lord sometimes wisely refusessaying, Touch Me not. For I am not yet ascended. But at other times, He wisely grants, because, though it is too much for us to ask, yet He thinks it wise to give.

The subject for our present meditation is just thisthe cure of doubts. Thomas was permitted to put his finger into the print of the nails for the curing of his doubts. Perhaps you and I wish that we could do something like it. Oh, if our Lord Jesus would appear to me for once and I might thrust my hand into His side! Or, if I might for once see Him, or speak

with Himhow confirmed should I be! No doubt that thought has arisen in the minds of many. We shall not have such proofs, my Brethren, but we shall have something near akin to them, which will answer the same purpose.

I. The first head of my discourse shall be thisCRAVE NO SIGNS. If such signs are possible, crave them not. If there are dreams, visions, voices, ask not for them.

Crave not wonders, first, because it is dishonoring to the sacred Word to ask for them. You believe this Bible to be an inspired volumethe Book of God. The Apostle Peter calls it, A more sure Word of prophecy; whereunto you do well that you take heed. Are you not satisfied with that? When a person, in whose veracity you have the utmost confidence, bears testimony to this or that, if you straightway reply, I would be glad of further evidence, you are slighting your friend and casting unjust suspicion upon him.

Will you cast suspicion upon the Holy Spirit, who, by this Word bears witness unto Christ? Oh, no, let us be content with His witness. Let us not wish to

see but remain satisfied to believe. If there are difficulties in believing, is this not natural, when he that believes is finite and the things to be believed are, in themselves infinite? Let us accept the difficulties as being in themselves, in some measure, proofs of the correctness of our position, as inevitable attendants of heavenly mysteries, when they are looked at by such poor minds as ours. Let us believe the Word and crave no signs.

Crave no signs, because it is unreasonable that we should desire more than we already have. The testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ, contained in the Word, should alone suffice us. Beside that, we have the testimony of saints and martyrs who have gone before us, dying triumphant in the faith. We have the testimony of many still among us who tell us that these things are so. In part, we have the testimony of our own conscience, of our own conversion, of our own experienceand this is convincing testimony. Let us be satisfied with it. Thomas ought to have been content with the testimony of Mary Magdalene and the other disciples but he was not. We ought to trust our Brethrens word. Let us not be unreasonable in craving after proofs when already proofs are afforded us without stint.

Crave no signs because it may be you will be presumptuous in doing so. Who are you to demand a sign from God? What is it He is to do before you will believe in Him? Suppose He does not choose to do it, are you therefore arrogantly to say, I refuse to believe unless the Lord will do my bidding? Do you imagine that any angel would demean himself to pay attention to you, who set yourself up to make demands of the Most High? Assuredly not. It is presumption which dares to ask of God anything more than the testimony of Himself which He chooses to grant us in His Word.

It is, moreover, damaging to ourselves to crave signs. Jesus says, Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed. Thomas had his sign and he believed. So far, so goodbut he missed a blessing peculiar to those who have not seen and yet have believed. Do not, therefore, rob yourselves of the special favor which lights on those who, with no evidence but the witness of the Spirit of God, are prepared at once to believe in the Lord Jesus unto eternal life.

Again, crave no signs, for this craving is highly perilous. Translated according to many and I think translated correctly, our Savior said, Reach here your finger and put it into the print of the nails. And become not faithless but believingintending to indicate that Thomas, by degrees, would become faithless. His faith had grown to be so little that if he continued insisting upon this and that, as a sign or evidence, that faith of his would get down to the very lowest. Yes, he would have no faith left. Become not faithless but believing.

Dear Friends, if you began to seek signs and if you were to see them, do you know what would happen? Why, you would want more. And when you had these, you would demand still more. Those who live by their feelings judge of the Truth of God by their own condition. When they have happy feelings, then they believe. But if their spirits sink, if the weather happens to be a little damp, or if their constitution happens to be a little disordereddown go their spirits and straightway, down goes their faith.

He that lives by a faith which does not rest on feeling but is built upon the Word of the Lord, will remain fixed and steadfast as the mount of God. But he that craves for this thing and that thing as a token for good at the hand of the Lord, stands in danger of perishing from want of faith. He shall not perish if he has even a grain of living faithfor God will deliver him from the temptation. But the temptation is a very trying one to faith.

Crave, therefore, no sign. If you read a story of a person who saw a vision, or if you hear another declare that a voice spoke to himbelieve those things, or not, as you like. But do not desire them for yourself. These wonders may, or may not, be freaks of the imaginationI will not judge. But we must not rely upon them, for we are not to walk by sight but by faith. Rely not upon anything that can be seen of the eyes or heard of the ears. But simply trust Him whom we know to be the Christ of God, the Rock of our salvation.

II. Secondly, when you want comfort, crave no sign but TURN TO THE WOUNDS OF YOUR LORD. You see what Thomas did. He wanted faith and he looked for it in Jesus wounded. He says nothing about Christs head crowned with glory. He does not say that he must see Him girt about the paps with a golden girdle. Thomas, even in his unbelief, is wise. He turns to his Lords wounds for comfort. Whenever your unbelief prevails, follow in this respect the conduct of Thomas and turn your eyes straightway to the wounds of Jesus. These are the never-failing consolation, from which, if a man does once drink, he shall forget his misery and remember his sorrow no more. Turn to the Lords wounds. And if you do, what will you see?

First, you will see the tokens of your Masters love. O Lord Jesus, what are these wounds in Your side and in Your hands? He answers, These I endured when suffering for you. How can I forget you? I have engraved you upon the palms of My hands. How can I ever fail to remember you? On My very heart the spear has written your name. Look at Jesus, dead, buried, risen and then say, He loved me and gave Himself for me! There

is no restorative for a sinking faith like a sight of the wounded Savior. Look, Soul, and live by the proofs of His death! Come and put your finger, by faith, into the print of the nails and these wounds shall heal you of unbelief. The wounds of our Lord are the tokens of His love.

They are, again, the seals of His deathespecially that wound in His side. He must have died, for one of the soldiers, with a spear, pierced His side and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw it bare witness. The Son of God did assuredly die. God, who made the heavens and the earth, took to Himself our nature and in one wondrous Person He was both God and Man. And lo! This wondrous Son of God bore sufferings unutterable and consummated all by His death. This is our comfortfor if He died in our placethen we shall not die for our sins. Our transgression is put away and our iniquity is pardoned. If the Sacrifice had never been slain, we might despair. But since the spear wound proves that the great Sacrifice really dieddespair is slain, hope revives and confidence rejoices.

The wounds of Jesus, next, are the marks of identity. By these we identify His blessed Person after His resurrection. The very Christ that died has risen again. There is no illusionthere could be no mistake. It is not somebody else foisted upon us in His placebut Jesus who died has left the dead, for there are the marks of the crucifixion in His hands and in His feet and there is the spear-thrust still. It is Jesusthis same Jesus. This is a matter of great comfort to a Christianthis indisputably proven doctrine of the resurrection of our Lord. It is the keystone of the Gospel arch. Take that away, or doubt it and there remains nothing to console you. But because Jesus died and the same Person rose again and ever lives, therefore does our heart sweetly rest believing that them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. And also that the whole of the work of Jesus is true, is completed and is accepted of God.

Again, those wounds, those scars of our Lord, were the memorials of His love to His people. They set forth His love so that His chosen can see the tokens. But they are also memorials to Himself. He condescendingly bears these as His reminders. In Heaven, at this moment, upon the Person of our blessed Lord there are the scars of His crucifixion. Centuries have gone by and yet He looks like a Lamb that has been slain. Our first glance will assure us that this is He of whom they said, Crucify Him! Crucify Him!

Steadily look with the eyes of your faith into Glory and see your Masters wounds and say within yourself, He has compassion upon us still He bears the marks of His passion. Look up, poor Sufferer! Jesus knows what physical pain means. Look up, poor depressed one! He knows what a broken heart means. Can you not perceive this? Those prints upon His hands, these sacred stigmata, declare that He has not forgotten what He underwent for us but still feels for us.

Once againthese wounds may comfort us because in Heaven they are, before God and the holy angels, the perpetual ensigns of His finished work. That passion of His can never be repeated and never needs to be After He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, He sat down on the right hand of God. But the memorials are always being presented before the infinite mind of God. Those memorials are, in part, the wounds in our Lords blessed Person. Glorified spirits can never cease to sing, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain. For every time they gaze upon Him they perceive His scars. How resplendent shine the nail-prints! No jewels that ever gemmed a king can look one-half so lustrous as these. Though He is God over all blessed forever, yet to us, at least, His brightest splendor comes from His death.

My Hearer, whenever your soul is clouded, turn to these wounds which shine like a constellation of five bright stars. Look not to your own wounds, nor to your own pains, or sins, or prayers, or tearsbut remember that with His stripes we are healed. Gaze, then, gaze intently upon your Redeemers wounds if you would find comfort.

III. This brings me to my third point. Whenever faith is staggered at all SEEK SUCH HELPS FOR YOUR FAITH AS YOU MAY. Though we cannot literally put our finger into the print of the nails and may not wish to do so, yet let us use such modes of recognition as we do possess. Let us put these to their utmost use. And we shall no longer desire to put our hand into the Saviors side. We shall be perfectly satisfied without that. You that are troubled with doubts and fears, I give you these recommendations

First, if you would have your faith made vivid and strong, study much the story of your Saviors death. Read itread itread itread it. Tolle lege, said the voice to Augustine, Take itread it. So say I. Take the four Evangeliststake the fifty-third chapter of Isaiahtake the twentysecond Psalm. Take all other parts of Scripture that relate to our suffering Substitute and read them by day and by night till you familiarize yourself with the whole story of His griefs and sin-bearing. Keep your mind intently fixed upon it. Not sometimes but continually.

Crux luxthe Cross is light. You shall see it by its own light. The study of the narrativeif you pray the Holy Spirit to enlighten youwill beget faith in you. And you will, by its means, be very greatly helped, till, at last, you will say, I cannot doubt. The Truth of the atonement is impressed upon my memory, my heart, my understanding. The record has convinced me.

Next, if this suffices not, frequently contemplate the sufferings of Jesus. I mean by that when you have read the story, sit down and try and picture it. Let your mind conceive it as passing before you. Put yourself into the position of the Apostles who saw Him die. No employment will so greatly strengthen faith and certainly none will be more enjoyable!

*Sweet the moments, rich in blessing,   
Which before the Cross I spend,   
Life and health and peace possessing   
From the sinners dying Friend.*

An hour would be grandly spent if occupied in turning over each little detail, item and incident in the marvelous death by which you are redeemed from death and Hell. You will be surprised to find how this familiarizing of yourself with itby the help of the Holy Spiritwill make it as vivid to you as if you saw it. And it will have a better effect upon your

mind than the sight of it would have done. For probably the actual sight would have passed away from your mind and have been forgottenwhile the contemplation of the sorrowful scene will sink deep into your soul and leave eternal lines!

You will do well, first, to read and know the narrative and then to contemplate it carefully and earnestlyI mean not to think of it for a minute or two at chance times but to take an hour or two that you can specially set apart on purpose to consider the story of your Saviors death. I am persuaded, if you do this, it will be more helpful to you than putting his finger into the print of the nails was to Thomas.

What next? Why, dear Friends, the Lord has a way of giving His people wonderful realizations. I hope I shall not say anything incorrect with this remark. There are times with us when the Lord is present with us and we are strongly impressed with that fact. Therefore we act under a sense of that Presence as if the Divine Glory were actually visible. Do you know what it is to write a letter to a friend feeling as if the Lord Jesus were looking over your shoulder? I know what it is at times to stand here and preach and feel my Lord so near me that if I had literally seen Him it would not have surprised me.

Have you ever, in the watches of the night, lain quietly when there was no sound but the ticking of the watch and thought of your Lord till, though you knew there was no form before you, you were just as certain that He was there as if you could see His sorrowful countenance? In quiet places all aloneyou scarcely like to tell the storyin the lone wood and in the upper chamberyou have said, If He spoke I should not be more certain of His Presence. And if He smiled upon me I should not be surer of His love.

These realizations have sometimes been so joyfully overwhelming that for years you have been lifted by them beyond all power of doubt. These holy summer days banish the frosts of the soul. Whenever a doubt is suggested to me about the existence of my Lord and Master, I feel that I can laugh the tempter to scorn for I have seen Him and spoken with Himnot with these eyes but with the eyes of my inner life I have beheld my Lord and communed with Him!

Nor is it merely in seasons of enjoyment that we get these helps but in times of deep distress. Prostrate with pain, unable to enjoy any comfort, unable even to sleepI have seen the soul of the Believer as happy as if all sounds were marriage peals. Some of us know what it is to be right gleesome, glad and joyous in hours of fierce trial because Christ has been so near. In times of losses and bereavementswhen the sorrow stung you to the quick and you thought, before it came, that you never could bear ityou have been so sustained by a sight of the sacred Head once wounded and by fellowship with Him in His sufferings, that you have said, What are my griefs compared with His?

You have forgotten your sorrows and sung for joy of heart, as those that make merry. If you have been helped in this way, it will have all the effect upon you that ever could have come of putting your finger into the print of the nails. If, perhaps, you have been given up to die and have, mentally, gone through the whole process of dyingexpecting soon to stand before the bar of God and have been happy and even exultantthen you could not doubt the reality of a religion that bore you up above the surging billows. Now that you are again restored to life for a little longer the remembrance of your buoyant spiritsin what you thought to be your dying hourswill answer all the purpose to you, I think, of putting your finger into the nail-prints.

Sometimes the strengthening influence may be afforded under the stress of temptation. If ever, young man, you have had a strong temptation hurling itself against you and your feet have almost gonewait, let me not say young manif ever a man or a woman of any age has had to cry out, God, help mehow shall I escape out of this? And you have then turned your eyes and seen your Lord and beheld His wounds. If you have felt at that moment the temptation had lost all power, you have had a seal from the Lord and your faith has been confirmed.

If at the sight of your Lord you have exclaimed, in presence of the temptation, How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God? Then my Beloved, by the Grace of God, you have had the best proof of your Redeemers power to save. What better or more practical proof could you desire?

In these times, when the foundations of our faith are constantly being undermined, one is sometimes driven to say to himself, Suppose it is not true. As I stood, the other night, beneath the sky and watched the stars, I felt my heart going up to the great Maker with all the love that I was capable of. I said to myself, What made me love God as I know I do? What made me feel an anxiety to be like Him in purity? Whatever made me long to obey my God cannot be a lie. I know that it was the love of Jesus for me that changed my heart and made me, though once careless and indifferent to Him, now to pant with strong desires to honor Him.

What has done this? Not a lie, surely. A Truth, then, has done it. I know it by its fruits. If this Bible were to turn out untrue and if I died and went before my Maker, could I not say to Him, I believed great things of You, great God. If it is not so, yet did I not honor You by the faith I had concerning Your wondrous goodness and Your power to forgive? And I would cast myself upon His mercy without fear. But we do not entertain such doubts. For those dear wounds continually prove the Truth of the Gospel and the Truth of our salvation by it. Incarnate Deity is a thought that was never invented by a poets mind, nor reasoned out by philosophers skill. Incarnate Deity, the notion of the God that lived and bled and died in human form, instead of guilty manit is itself its own best witness. The wounds are the infallible witness of the Gospel of Christ.

Have you not felt those wounds very powerful to you in the form of assistance in times of duty? You said, I cannot do it, it is too hard for me. You looked to Jesus wounded and you could do anything. A sight of the bleeding Christ has often filled us with enthusiasm and so with powerit has rendered us mighty with the omnipotence of God. Look at the Church of Christ in all ages. Kings and princes did not know what to do with her.

They vowed that they would destroy her. Their persecuting edicts went forth and they put to death thousands upon thousands of the followers of Christ. But what happened?

The death of Jesus made men willing to die for Him. No pain, no torture could keep back the believing host. They loved Jesus so that though their leaders fell by bloody deaths, another rank came on and yet another and another, till despots saw that neither dungeon, nor rack, nor fire could stop the march of the army of Christ. It is so now. Christs wounds pour life into the Church by transfusionthe lifeblood of the Church of God is from Jesus wounds. Let us know its power and feel it working within us to will and to do of His good pleasure.

And as for those who do not trust Him, what shall I say? The Lord help you to do so at once. For as long as you do not trust Him, you are under an awful cursefor it is written, If any man love not the Lord Jesus, let him be Anathema Maranathacursed at the coming of the Lord. May it not be so with you! Amen.

LETTER FROM MR. SPURGEON.   
BELOVED READERSThanks be unto God for thirty-four volumes of sermons thus completed. May they continue to be blessed of God long after the preacher and his present readers have entered into rest. The speaker is still laid aside by weakness, but the Word of the Lord never loses its power. His voice can only be heard of a few thousands but the printed page will talk to multitudes. Let us pray that the still small voice of the Holy Spirit may sound in the heart of readers for many generations to come.

A book may enclose the spikenard of a Truth of God, which, when forgotten, it shall give back to men with all its first perfume. The generation which now is may treat the Doctrines of Grace as if they were worthless but these priceless gems will yet be prized by a more enlightened age and judged to be of infinitely more value than all the tinsel which amuses our contemporaries. I am content to preach today to a comparatively small circle since I believe that the Truths I deliver are revealed of God for the salvation of multitudes innumerable. In some future day the Lord whom I serve will vindicate every faithful testifier of them from the reproach of men. At the same time, I praise God that even so many have been found faithful to the ancient faith of our fathers. Grace be with them all.

At the close of the year I salute my Brethren and entreat a place in their daily prayers. I ask that I may be allowed to return to my pulpit in health and may see the cause of our Lord prospering everywhere.

Yours in Christ,   
C.H. Spurgeon   
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A MEMORABLE INTERVIEW   
NO. 3541

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 7, 1916.   
DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Then He said to Thomas, Reach here your finger, and behold My hands; and reach here your hand, and thrust it into My side; and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered, and said unto Him, My Lord and my God.   
John 20:27, 28.**

WE are, all of us, apt to fall into a wrong state of heart, not because we are unconverted, nor yet because we are false to Christ, but simply because of our natural infirmities. So long as we are in this body, exposed to trial and temptation, we shall be prone to start aside like a broken bow. Thomas was a true-hearted follower of Jesus. He loved his Master. It had been a severe shock to his sensitive disposition and his thoughtful mind to see his Master betrayed, arraigned, scourged, crucified, dead and buried. He could not, at once, rally from the agitation it caused him, or think it possible that Jesus could have risen from the dead. Pondering the matter scrupulously, it seemed to him to involve too great a miracle to be creditedfar beyond anything to be expected! He would require, he said, very clear and satisfactory proofs before he would believe it. In like manner, you and I have, each of us, our characteristic faults. We may not be too thoughtful, like Thomaswe may, perhaps, be too thoughtlessand that is quite as mischievous. Even our pleasing qualities which adorn us as virtues may become our temptations. The best point about us, as a sound judgment was in the case of Thomas, may become the very snare that entangles us. Let no man judge his fellow. Above all, let no man exalt himself. He that is in his best estate, today, may be in spiritual poverty tomorrow! He who rejoices in God and walks in holy consistency may, before another sun has risenfew, though the hours of interval arehave felt his feet slide from under him and so fallen from his steadfastness as to have dishonored his God, and pierced himself through with many sorrows!

God grant that our meditation may be for the comfort of some present, while we proceed to notice the Master and the servantJesus and Thomasnarrowly looking at the actions of them both.

I. LET THE MASTER FIRST ENGAGE OUR ATTENTIONTHE MASTER IN THE PRESENCE OF AN UNBELIEVING DISCIPLE WHO HAS TREATED HIM WITH NO LITTLE PRESUMPTION AND RASHNESS.

How exquisitely touching, His gentleness! Does He upbraid Thomas? Is there indignation in His tone? Is there petulance in His chiding? Does He exclaim, How dare you doubt that I am alive? Or turns He upon him with some rough sentence, asking Why this impertinence that you should speak of putting your finger into My wounds, and thrusting your hand into My side? Unworthy servant, from this moment I disown you for having spoken so disrespectfully of your Lord and Master. No, far from it! He rather takes Thomas on his own ground, considers his infirmities, and meets them precisely as they are, without a single word of rebuke until the closeand even then He puts it very lovingly. The whole conversation was, indeed, a rebuke, but so veiled with love that Thomas could scarcely think it so. He speaks to him as if nothing had occurred to give any cause of offense, or by his presumption to occasion any estrangement.

Dwell for a moment on the mercy which our Lord must have shown and the blessed patience He must have exercised, to bear thus with Thomas. Ought he not to have known from the Old Testament that the Christ would rise from the dead? Had he not been reminded once and again by his Master of the prophecies which spoke concerning the death of Christ, and the Glory that should follow? Had he not heard the Master, Himself, frequently say that the third day He would rise again? He must have been present with the other Apostles when they turned His oracular sentences over in their minds and said, one to another, What does He mean by this, that He shall suffer and that He shall rise? And had He not just before seen the women and conferred with the Apostles who testified that they had found an empty tomb, that they had been told by angels that Jesus had risenyes, morethat when they were sitting together, Jesus had appeared in their midst? Yet, so strong was his unbelief, that he puts his own judgment against their assertion of fact, against the Inspired Scriptures, against the thrilling words that fell from the Masters own lips, against the united, concurrent acknowledgment of all the Brothers! And do you think not, Brothers and Sisters, that our willfulness is sometimes as irrational and unwarranted as his? We harbor doubts in the teeth of accumulated evidences and then credit ourselves with being wise and right, while we disparage all others as being foolish and wrong! The principle which lies at the root of all the heresies and the schisms that tear and divide the Church is just that self-confidence which will not let us yield, even though better men than ourselvesyes, though the united consent of the whole Church should bear testimony to a fact or a Truth of God to which we disagree! Through some lack of information or through some flaw of judgment, we judge differently from our companions and forthwith our self-approbation is unyielding, and our conduct is intolerant! It was no small scandal thus to put himself in opposition to the Master, in opposition to the Scripture and in opposition to all his fellow servants! Still, our Lord Jesus Christ forbears to utter a word of denunciation. He just says, Reach here your finger and behold My hands; and reach here your hand and thrust it into My side; and be not faithless, but believing. Softer words He could not have spoken! He responds without reproach. Such loving kindness and tender mercy as David was known to sing of old, did our blessed Redeemer show!

Another ground for admiring our Lords great patience with Thomas is that Thomas had dared to dictate the terms upon which he would believeand he had selected such terms as must have been most offensive had Jesus Christ been of a lofty, imperious, uncondescending spirit. Who is Thomas that he should put his hands into those wounds so lately healed? That side pierced by the soldiers spear? Is Thomas to make another road to that sacred heart? Strange that he should have asked so mysterious a sign to strengthen his faith! What? Was there no other way of believing in his Lord but that he must pass his finger and his hand into the very wounds of that blessed body? Ah, see how presumptuous the servant! See, also, how sympathizing the Master! Was it not asking too muchfar too much? Such a prayer ought not to have come from a disciple who had never forsaken his Master, much less from Thomas, who had fled with the rest, and had been absent when the Apostles had gathered together and seen the Master! But yet Jesus is so forbearing towards him. I know not whether to wonder more at the impertinence of the servant or the clemency of the Master! Let us take the lesson to ourselves. Have we during the past week fallen into a signal state of gross unbelief? Have we been thinking harsh thoughts of God? Has some sin suspended our communion with our Savior? Are we now cold at heart and void of spiritual emotion? Do we feel quite unworthy to draw near unto Him who loved us with so great a love? Be not desponding! The God of All Patience will not desert you! The love which our Lord Jesus Christ bears to His people is so great that He passes by their transgression, iniquity and sin! No, there is no anger on His part to divide you from your Lord. Behold! He comes over the mountains of your sins! He leaps over the hills of your follies. Since He thus graciously comes to you, will you not gladly come to Him? Do not think for a moment that He will frown or repulse you! He will not remind you of your cold prayers, your neglected closet, your unread Biblenor will He chide you for losing occasions of fellowshipbut He will receive you graciously, love you freely and grant you just what, at this moment, you need! I pray you notice the Masters patience. Come to Him, dear child of His, you beloved disciple of His, and have fellowship with Him now!

While we are speaking of the Master, I should next like to call your attention to the Masters great care. He had been to see His disciples once. He had stood in their midst and said, Peace be unto you. He had given them their commission, had breathed upon them and given them the Holy Spirit. But there was an absent one. Well, what man of you having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, does not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go and seek after that which has gone astray? There was one missing and Jesus must come again! There must be the same salutation of peace. There must be the same blessing bestowed, again, for Thomas must not be left out in the distribution of spiritual gifts. Thomas ought to have sought after Christ, especially after having been absent on the first occasion when He visited them. He surely ought to have said, My Master came to me and I was not there! I will, therefore, seek Him, be He where He may, and I will tell Him how I regret that I should have missed the golden opportunity of His Presence. But, Beloved, Thomas did not seek His Master. Therein He was just like we are! It is preventing Grace, Brothers and Sistersit is Grace that is beforehand with useven with our faint desires, which comes to us from Jesus Christ. Oh, how our Lord outruns us! Our sense of need is not as swift of foot as His perception of our need! Long before we know we need Him, He understands that we require Him and He comes to us to bless us! It was for one He came, and for that one who did not seek Him! He was found of one who sought Him not! You might have thought that Thomas would have been as well left alone a little while. We would have said, Well, if he is so obstinate as to lay down such conditions, let him cool a bit! Let him just stop awhile in the cold till he is willing to come in at the door, and not to make conditions that he must come in at the window, or by some way of his own. So let him wait, for beggars ought not to be choosers, nor should impertinent disciples be tolerated. Yes, but Jesus will tolerate what we will notand He will put up with us when we cannot put up with our Brothers and Sisters! We have not half as much to bear with from them as He has from us! Though Thomas might thus have been left, and deserved to have been left, yet Jesus came to him because He knew that His coming to him would be much better than letting him stay away. So, Disciple, do not say to yourself, I cannot come to the Table tonight, I do not feel fit! I shall not strive after fellowship with ChristI do not feel as if my soul could enjoy it. No, but it will do you no good to stay away! Will you turn aside from the Master? Will you refuse the symbols of His death? Be not so rash and inconsiderate, I entreat you! Why should He not come to you? Before that bread is broken, you may have experienced a delightful change in the state of your heart and, with pleasing surprise you may be crying out, like Thomas, My Lord and my God. And, oh, is it not blessed to think that Christ does not stop till His disciples invite Him? He does not wait for them to get ready for Him! No, He comes to them and meets themand finds them before they have sought Him! If you are in the mood of Thomas, perhaps you may be insisting upon some signs and wonders, as he did. Know you not that the Master can give you His own sign, unfold His own wonder and bestow upon you such a blessing that your heart shall scarcely have room enough to receive it? His tenderness and His care baffle all our thoughts and expectations!

Though we have already observed it, linger, I beseech you, upon the Masters matchless condescension. Behold the Lord of Life, who had overcome the sharpness of death and passed out of the portals of the tomb in triumph, having spoiled principalities and powers and overthrown sin, death, and Hellthe Son of God, at whose Resurrection angels had attended, glad to wait as servants upon His royalty, that Lordwhat do you think? He must strip Himself to gratify a disobedient, unbelieving discipleyes, He must strip Himself! It were not enough to show His handsthat were kindnessbut those hands must be touched and those wounds, themselves, must be probed by a finger all too curious! It would have been profane, had it not been for the Divine Pity that allowed it! The way into His heart must be revealed. Well, well, but He did it. Angels must have been shocked when they heard a man say, I will not believe unless He bares His side to mestill, He did it! Yes, just before He died, you will remember how He laid aside His garments and took a towel and girded Himself, and washed His disciples feet. Now that He is risen from the dead, He is the same Christand if He condescended, then, to wash His disciples feet, He will condescend, now, to bear with a disciples bad manners and will even meet him in his infirmities! If they cannot be healed without a sight of His wounded Person, he shall gaze upon His side again! He will do anything for the love of His people. There is no kindness too costly for Christ to show!

Now then, you who, while eagerly longing for His company, hide your face and blush for very shame, do you say, Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. My heart is not worthy to receive You as a guest? True, you are not worthyneither was Thomas. Yet you shall have His favor and rejoice in the light of His Countenance if you sigh and cry for it! Doubtless you have been very far, during the week, from what you, yourself, wish you had been. Nevertheless, He will blot out your iniquities like a cloud, and your transgressions like a thick cloud. Your old friends may have passed you in the street and did not recognize you because you are now so poor, but Jesus knows you! No one, perhaps, knows the privations you have had to put up with, poor Christian. You fancy you are despised and neglected by everybodyperhaps it may be your fancy, yet it is cutting to the heart even to think that your Christian Brothers and Sisters look down upon you! But Jesus never looks down contemptuously on His people. He condescends to stand on their platform and put Himself on a level with them with a sacred familiarity suited to their case. Full often He draws most near with most engaging smiles to those who are in the saddest plight. This is how Jesus is known to act. He never speaks proudly and loftily. His condescension unto His children, like His watchfulness over them, is unvarying!

Once more, the Masters bounty challenges our admiration and our confidence. When Thomas had received what he asked for, you might easily have conjectured that he would be put down in the second class of disciples. Instead of that, however, he was well commended in the Apostleship, and though not present when Jesus breathed on them and said, Receive you the Holy Spirit, yet on the Day of Pentecost Thomas received the same cloven tongue and the same power as the rest. Indeed, we have reason to believe that Thomas became as earnest an Apostle, as faithful a witness, and as blessed a martyr of the faith of Christ, as either Peter or James! The Master will not stint His goodness because we once and again display our meanness. No, Beloved, He will give us according to our ability to receive. If we are not able to receive, today, He will enlarge our desires and expand our capacities till tomorrow we may be able to receive from His fullness and Grace for Grace! Come, then, you hungry, starving Souls, you Believers who are coming near to penury and spiritual bankruptcydraw near in the spirit of love to Christ who is as certainly present in this place with us as He was with them in that chamber where the 12 were gathered! Draw near in spirit and in truth to Him and your souls shall be enriched to your own profit and to the Glory of God! And now I have a few words to say about

II. THE SERVANT.  
Thomas, struck with the Masters knowledge of what had been going on in his heart and overwhelmed with the manifestation of the Masters Presence and His Power, exclaimed, My Lord and my God. These five words are full of meaning. Let me endeavor to interpret them for you. First, they were an expression of faith. Thomas now avows the faith which before he had disclaimed. I will not believe, he said, except exceptexcept. Now he believes a great deal more than some of the other Apostles didso he openly avows it. Thomas was the first Divine who ever taught the Deity of Christ from His wounds! Nor has every Divine since then been able to see the Deity of Christ in His wounded Humanity risen from the dead. This Thomas did. He declared the proper Humanity of Christ when he touched Him and he declared His proper Deity when he avowed Him to be both Lord and God! Thomas was slow in arriving at facts, but he had a comprehensive mindand when he did arrive at a conviction, he grasped it thoroughly in all its bearings. Peter would be impetuous and leap to a conclusion, but Thomas must consider the circumstances, weigh the testimony, try, judge, and prove the evidences before he acknowledged a Truth of God. When his judgment did yield assent, he was firm. There was no shaking. He understood the Truth he adhered to better than others. Delightful in the ears of Christ, my Brothers and Sisters, is the expression of our faith! Let none of us hesitate to go over in our minds our avowal of faith in Him who lives and was dead, and is alive forevermore.   
It well becomes us, sometimes, to perform what the Catholics call, acts of faith. I mean in holy contemplation and quiet meditation, to declare before the Lord that we believe in the facts that are made known to us and the Doctrines that have been delivered to us. We believe that Jesus is the Son of Godforever be His name adored! That He is selfexistent and full of Power and Glory! We believe that He laid aside that Glory and became a Man in the likeness of sinful flesh, that He did not disdain to sleep upon His virgin mothers breast. He lived a life of holiness and died a death of scorn and ignominy. He slept in the tomb and the third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into Heaven. He sits at the right hand of God, even the Father. He reigns over all things for His people, having power over all flesh that He may give Eternal Life to as many as the Father has given Him. He shall shortly come to judge the quick and the dead. Among the sons of men He shall reign. He shall sit upon the Throne of His Father David. Prayer, also, shall be made for Him continually and daily shall He be praised!   
The short but expressive avowal of faith which Thomas made suggests to me this word of counsel. We should frequently make before God a declaration of our faith in the Deity of our Lord Christ and in all the Glories which surround His Character. Let this be done vocally when you can or otherwise mentallyfor the exercise is profitable. But these words, My Lord and my God, sound a little different to me from a simple avowal of faith. It was, as someone has said, like the cry of a dove that at last had found its mate. Poor Thomas! He doubted his Master, but he needed Him and could not be happy without Him! Now he has come flying back and he has found Him, and he seems to put his head, as it were, into the bosom of his Master, and to begin to weep and sigh like a poor child that has lost its mother in the streets of London and, when it is brought back again, cannot say anything else but, My mother, and, my mother, and, my mother, and feels so happy to think it has found, again, the dear bosom on which to rest! So Thomas seems to say, I have found You, my Master, my Lord and my God. He seems to humble himself, as though he would say, How could I doubt You? Where have I been? What have I been thinking? What has my obstinate mind driven me to? What did I say? What did I ask? How could I be so impertinent? My Lord and my God! You have forgiven it all and in Your Presence I seem to moan it out in those few words. Your silly servant, Your foolish servant, but You, my blessed Master, my condescending Master, my Lord and my God! Well now, Beloved, there is something very sweet in this. Though I called it moaning, still there is much music in it. Come now, you who have wandered, come and tell Christ at the Table all about it! Come and tell Him that you are grieved and that you are not so grieved as you ought to be. Tell Him you are sorry that you should not have lived with Him day by day. Your self-reproach may well be keen  
*Wretch that I am to wander thus   
In search of vain delights.*   
Penitently bewail before Him that you should have been so bewitched as to cleave to things below, and let your God, your Savior, go! Intense feeling commonly finds expression in few words. Silence is sometimes more thrilling than speech. My Lord and my God is the breathing of a contrite heart relieved in having found the Grace it needs!   
The short prayer, however, My Lord and my God, is the outcome of more than one emotion. If it involved a pang, it included an intense pleasure. Was it not a joyous astonishment which begot those words? It was so sweet to Thomas that he hardly thought his fellow disciples would be able to appreciate so great a wonder. It was too much for himself, so he addresses himself to the Master, as if He, alone, being the greatest marvel, could sympathize with him. I marvel, he seemed to say. I could not have believed it! I saw the traitor kiss Your cheek. I saw You dragged off with staves and lanterns to that lions den! I saw You when You were in Pilates hall, tried and mocked. I saw You when You were fastened to the tree. I stood there and I saw You bleed and die. I saw Your body taken down and wrapped in spicesand is it the same, the very same? Oh, yes, I recognize You. I know those hands. I took those loaves from them when the thousands were fed in Galilee. I know that facefull many a time have I looked with beaming eyes on that loving Countenance of Yours! I know that sideit is the same side I saw the soldier pierce, and I know it! It is the same! It is Yourself, Yourself, Yourself, the risen Christ! Oh, wonder of wonders! I can say no less! I can say no more! My Lord and my God!

Well now, holy wonder, Beloved, is no mean kind of worship! It is, perhaps, no mean part of the worship of Heaven. I like that verse we sing   
*Then let me mount the starry way,   
To the bright worlds of endless day   
And sing with rapture and surprise,   
Your loving kindness in the skies.*   
Will it not be a surprise when we get there? Though, indeed, we shall see nothing in Heaven but what we have been told of on earth for it will be just such a Heaven as God has told us ofyet we shall say that the half was not told us because we did not understand what we heard and could not enter into the meaning of deep spiritual revelations! Oh, what astonishment might seize upon us now if we could really grip the thought and I hope we shall! Jesus has loved, and lived, and died for meand now He lives and pleads for me! Oh, Believer, get to see Christ now with the optics of your mind! See Him now exalted in the highest heavens, though once rejected of men and, as with astonishment you behold the ineffable splendor of that starry Throne of God, surrounded by ten thousand times ten thousand of the chariots of God, and chariots of messengers of fire, all waiting to obey His Sovereign Willas you see the Man whose head was once crowned with thorns, from the highest seat that Heaven affords claiming Eternal Sovereignty, bow your head in devout astonishment, fall at His feet and, giving tongue to your rapture, exclaim, My Lord and my God!   
And did not Thomas, by such an exclamation as this, renew his personal betrothal to Christ and his positive consecration to His service? My Lord, he says, You Are, and I am Your servant. My God, henceforth You Are, and I am Your worshipper as long as I live. Beloved, years ago some of us were first spiritually espoused to Christ. Gladly would I remember those blessed hours when my young heart went out after Him and His blessed heart of love was revealed to me! We ought not to forget those times, for He does not forget them. He says to Israel, I remember you, the kindness of your youth, and the love of your espousals. With what enthusiasm we sung   
*Tis donethe great transactions done! I am my Lords, and He is mine   
He drew me and I followed on   
Glad to obey the voice Divine.*   
Perhaps many years have passed over you since then, but whether they have been many or few, I am sure we have not been invariably true to those vows and resolutions. Our memory of Him has not been equal to His mindfulness of us. Now, if the Lord should come to you afresh and give you a choice season of fellowship with Him, would it not be a most suitable response to give yourself up to Him afresh? Should we not often do this? Would not the freshness of close fellowship be peculiarly suitable for the renewal of our Covenant with our Lord, and of our consecration of ourselves to His service? On that night you were baptized, you could sing sincerely   
*High Heaven which heard the solemn vow, That vow renewed shall daily hear,   
Till in lifes latest hour I bow,   
And bless in death a bond so dear.*   
Oh, that Gods Holy Spirit would enable you now to say in your soul, Jesus, the despised of men, whom the great ones of this world know not, in whose blessed Person and redemptive work they will not believe, I take You, my Master. I acknowledge You to be my Lord. Your people shall be my people. Your God and Father shall be my God. Your blood shall be my confidence, and Your Law my rule. Your love shall quicken my love. Your life shall be my example. Your Glory shall be the one objective for which I strive. You, O Christ, are my Lord and my God. So shall your faith abound and all your Graces flourish!   
Do I hear some timid voice from this congregation whispering a complaint? Ah, there is nothing for me! He is speaking to the disciples. When the doors are shut, I am shut outside as a stranger. There is nothing for me. I am a sinner. Oh, but I tell you, if you will but knock, Jesus Christ will come outside to you! The doors are not shut to keep out poor sinners from the Presence of the Savior! Do you need Jesus to reveal Himself to you? Exalted in the highest heavens, He looks down upon you now! His voice is calling you, Come unto Me, and I will give you rest. Oh, poor Sinner, if you cannot put your finger into the print of the nails, yet believe that Jesus died! Then trust Him and rely upon His merits. Cast yourself flat at His feet! Stay yourself upon His Passion and Atonement, and you shall be savedsaved nowsaved without a moments delay! So shall all these other joys be your, for you, too, shall be numbered with the family and you shall feast upon the childrens meat, and be partakers of all the privileges of the sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty!

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **John 20:18-31**

Verse 18. Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things unto her. She was a true womanone whom they had known well enough to be quite able to trust her, and her witness ought to have been believedbut there were some that doubted.

19. Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in their midst, and said unto them, Peace be unto you. How He came there, we do not know, but doors cannot shut Him out. Is there any door between my soul and Christ, tonight, then? Have I shut myself up in the chamber of doubt, despondency, unbelief? He can come to me! While the doors are yet shut, He can appear within my spirit and say, Peace be to you. Oh, that He would do so! Do we not cry to Him to come and breathe peace upon us?

20. And when He had so said, He showed unto them His hands and His side. That they might be sure it was Hethe same who had died by crucifixionthat they might see how intimate He was with them familiarthat His scarcely healed wounds should be seen by them.

20. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord. Oh, for such a sight! There is a depth of gladness in a risen Christ. Those wounds preach peace and joy!

21-23. Then said Jesus to them again. Peace be unto you: as My Father has sent Me, even so send I you. And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said unto them, Receive you the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained. Thus did Jesus Christ support and make forever true the preaching of His Word. Do we declare that the sins of penitents are remitted? They are remitted. Are we, in His name, bidden to declare that, He that believes not shall be condemned? So shall it be. He will make the Word of God which is uttered to be true. We shall not speak without our Master making the utterance of His Word to be a matter of fact.

24. But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. Perhaps he lived a long way off, or else, being rather slow, he had stopped about, doubting, and fearing, and questioning, and he had not got there in time. Anyway, he was not there. Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together as the manner of some is, for it will be a loss to you, as it was to Thomas.

25. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe. Dogged, obstinate unbelief! Some have said he was a large-hearted man, who investigated truth. I do not see it. He had not gone to the tomb, like Peter and John, to look at the grave clothes, and to discover that Christ was not there. He does not appear to have investigated the testimony of Mary Magdalene and of the others. He was just as narrow-minded as he very well could be, as I believe modern doubters are with all their boast of their wonderful thoughtfulness and liberality! We have only their own opinion, I am sure, upon that matter but when a man sounds his own trumpet, there is not much in it.

26, 27. And after eight days His disciples were again within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in their midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then He said to Thomas. For our Lord has a way of making personal application of His word. He looks after the sheep that is sick, and severs it from the flock, that He may deal with it in His wisdom. Then He said to Thomas.

27, 28. Reach here your finger, and behold My hands; and reach here your hand, and thrust it into My side; and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto Him, My Lord and my God. And whether Thomas did put his finger into the print of His nails or not, we cannot tell. Everyone may think as he likes about that. He may have done so, or he may not, but this one thing happened, that he, answered and said unto Him, My Lord and my God. He made a splendid leap from the depths of doubt to the firm rock of confidence! With two blessed mys he seems to grasp Christ with both hands, and in two grand words he pictures Him, My Lord and my God.

29. Jesus said unto Him, Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. That is the faiththe true faiththat needs no buttressing and props, but believes the testimony of God.

30, 31. And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the son of God: and that believing you might have life through His name. God grant that the objective of writing the New Testament may be answered in each one of us!

Adapted from the C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software.   
PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #1775 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

MY LORD AND MY GOD!   
NO. 1775

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, APRIL 13, 1884,**

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

**And Thomas answered and said unto Him, My Lord and my God! John 20:28.**

WHEN the Apostles met on the first Lords Day after Jesus had risen, Thomas was the only disciple absent out of the eleven. On the second Lords Day, Thomas was there and he was the only disciple doubting out of the eleven. How much the fact of his doubting was occasioned and helped by the fact of his former absence, I cannot say, but still, it looks highly probable that had he been there at the first, he would have enjoyed the same experience as the other 10, and would have been able to say as they did, We have seen the Lord. Let us not forsake the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is, for we cannot tell what loss we may sustain thereby. Though our Lord may reveal Himself to single individuals in solitude as He did to Mary Magdalene, yet He more usually shows Himself to two or three, and He delights, most of all, to come into the assembly of His servants.

The Lord seems most at home when, standing in the midst of His people, He says, Peace be unto you. Let us not fail to meet with our fellow Believers! For my part, the assemblies of Gods people shall always be dear to me. Where Jesus pays His frequent visits, there would I be found

*My soul shall pray for Zion still,   
While life or breath remains.   
There my best friends,   
My kindred dwell.   
There God my Savior reigns.*

I know that full many of you can most heartily say the same. Oh, that we may behold the Lord Jesus in the present assembly! On the second occasion, Thomas is present, and he is the only one out of the 11 who is vexed with doubts. He cannot think it possible that the Lord Jesus, who was nailed to the Cross, and whose side was pierced, could have really risen from the dead. Observe joyfully the Lords patience with him. All the others had been doubtful, too, and the Lord had gently upbraided them for their unbelief and the hardness of their hearts.

But Thomas is not convinced by the ten-fold testimony of his Brothers, who, each one, well deserved his implicit confidence. After the plain way in which the Lord had told His disciples that He should be crucified and would rise again from the dead, they ought to have expected the Resurrectionand inasmuch as they did not, they were to be blamedbut what shall we say of him who, in addition to all this, had heard the witness of his 10 comrades who had actually seen the Lord? Yet there he is, the one doubter, the one sturdy questioner who has laid down most stringent requirements as to the only way in which he will be brought to believe. Will not his Lord be provoked by his obstinacy?

See how patient Jesus is! If we had been in that case and had died for those peopleand had passed through the grave and risen again for themwe would have felt very greatly grieved and somewhat angered if they had refused to believe in what we had done. But our Lord shows no such sign. He is tender among them as a nursing father. He rebukes their unbeliefthat was necessary for their sakesbut He manifests no vexation of spirit. Especially on this occasion He shows His tenderness toward Thomas and addresses His first words to him. If Thomas will not be convinced except by what I must call the most gross and materialistic evidence, our Master will give him such evidence!

If he must put his finger into the print of the nails, he shall put his finger there! If he must thrust his hand into His side, he shall be permitted to take that liberty! Oh, see how Jesus condescends to the weaknesses and even to the follies of His people! If we are unbelieving, it is not His fault, for He goes out of His way to teach us faithand sometimes He even gives what we have no right to ask, what we have no reason to expect, what it was even sin in us to have desired! We are so weak, so ignorant, so prone to unbelief that He will do anything to create, sustain and strengthen our faith in Him! He condescends to men of low estate. If through our own folly we are such babes that we cannot eat the meat which is fit food for men, our Lord will not grow weary of giving us milk, but He will even break the bread into morsels and take away the hard crusts that we may be able to feed thereon. It is not His will that one of His little ones should perish and, therefore, He chases away unbelief, which is their deadliest foe.

Our Lord had special reasons for turning as He did to Thomas, that day, and for taking so much trouble to bring Thomas out of his unbelieving condition. The reason must have been, surely, first, that He desired to make of Thomas a most convincing witness to the reality of His Resurrection. Here is a man who is determined not to be deceivedlet him come and use the tests of his own choice. If you tell me that the Resurrection of our Lord from the dead was witnessed by men who were prepared to believe it, I reply that the statement is totally false! Not one among that company even knew the meaning of the Lords prophecy that He would rise, again, from the dead! It was hard to make any of them catch the ideait was so foreign to their thoughtso far above their expectation. In Thomas we have a man who was especially hard to be convinced. A man who was so obstinate as to give the lie to 10 of his friends with whom he had been associated for years!

Now, if I had a statement to make which I wished to have well attested, I would like to place in the witness box a person who was known to be exceedingly cautious and wary. I would be glad if it were known that, at the first, he had been suspicious and critical, but had, at length, been overwhelmed by evidence so as to be compelled to believe. I am sure that such a man would give his evidence with the accent of conviction as, indeed, Thomas did when he cried, My Lord and my God! We cannot have a better witness to the fact that the Lord is risen, indeed, than that this cool, examining, prudent, critical, Thomas arrived at an absolute certainty!

Further, I conceive that our Lord thus personally dealt with Thomas because He would have us see that He will not lose even one of those whom the Father has given Him. The Good Shepherd will leave the 99 to seek the one wanderer! If Thomas is the most unbelieving, Thomas shall have the most care! He is only one, but yet he is one, and the Lord Jesus will not lose one whom He has ordained to save! You and I might have said, Well, if he will not be convinced, we must leave him alone. He is only onewe can do without his testimonywe cannot be forever seeking a solitary individual. Let him go. Thus might we have done, but thus Jesus will not do! Our Good Shepherd looks after the unitsHe is tenderly observant of each separate individualand this is a ground of comfort to us all! If one sheep is lost, why not the whole flock? If one is thus cared for, all will be cared for!

This note is also to be heard in reference to this matterit is to be feared that the dull, the slow, the questioning, the anxious, the weak in faith make up a very considerable part of the ChurchI do not know that they are in the majority, but they are certainly far too numerous. If all Christians were arranged and classified, I fear we could not, many of us, place ourselves in the front rank, but a large portion would have to go among the Little-Faiths. Our Lord here shows us that He has a condescending care for those who lag behind. Thomas is a week behind everybody else, yet his Lord has not lost patience, but waits to be gracious.

The other 10 Apostles have all seen the Lord and been well assured of His Resurrection for the last seven days. But that is no reason why the latecomer should be left out in the cold. Our Lord does not leave the rear rank to perish. We know that in the wilderness, the Amalekites slew the hindmost of the children of Israel. But when King Jesus heads the army, no Amalekites shall smite even the hindmost of His people, for the Glory of the Lord shall bring up the rear! The walls of Zion enclose babes as well as veterans! The Ark of our salvation preserves mice as well as bullocks! Our Solomon speaks of the hyssop on the wall as well as of the cedar in Lebanonand the Glory of the Lord may be seen in the preservation of the glowworms lamp as truly as in the sustenance of the furnace of the sun!

Now, if there should be any in this assembly who honestly have to put themselves down in the sick list, I beg them to take comfort while I try and set forth the experience of Thomas and what came of it. First, I shall call your attention to the exclamation of Thomas, My Lord and my God! Secondly, we will consider, how he came to it. And thirdly, how we come to it, for I trust many of us have also cried, My Lord and my God!

I. Let us consider THE EXCLAMATION OF THOMAS, My Lord and my God! This is a most plain and hearty confession of the true and proper Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is as much as a man could say if he wished to assert indisputably and dogmatically that Jesus is, indeed, God and Lord. We find David saying, O Lord of Hosts, my King, and my God, and in another place, (Psa. 35:23), he says, My God and my Lord, terms only applicable to Jehovah! Such expressions were known to Thomas and he, as an Israelite, would never have applied them to any person whom he did not believe to be God! We are sure, therefore, that it was the belief of Thomas that the risen Savior was Lord and God.

If this had been a mistake, the Lord Jesus would have rebuked him, for He would not have allowed him to be guilty of worshipping a mere man. No good man among us would permit a person to call him God and Lord we would feel like Paul and Barnabas when they tore their clothes because the men of Lystra were ready to sacrifice to themhow much more would the holy Jesus have felt a revolting of spirit against the idea of being worshipped and called, My Lord and my God, if He had not been of such a Nature that He thought it not robbery to be equal with God! The perfect Jesus accepted Divine homage and, therefore, we are assured that it was rightly and properly given. And we here, at this moment, offer Him, by His Grace, the same adoration!

To escape from the force of this confession, some who denied our Lords Deity in olden times had the effrontery to charge Thomas with breaking the Third Commandment by uttering such a cry of surprise as is common among profane talkers. Just as thoughtless persons take the Lords name in vain and say, Good God! or, O Lord! when they are much astonished, so certain ancient heretics dared to interpret these wordsMy Lord and my God! It is clear to any thoughtful person that this could not have been the case. For, in the first place, it was not the habit of a Jew to use any such exclamation when surprised or amazed. An irreligious Gentile might have done so, but it was the last thing that would occur to a devout Israelite.

If there is one thing about which the Jews in our Lords times were particular beyond everything, it was about using the name of God. Why, even in their sacred books they have omitted the word, Jehovah, and have only written Adonai, because of a superstitious reverence for the very letters of the Divine name! How can we, then, believe that Thomas would have done what no Jew at that time would have dreamed of? Israel, after the Babylonian captivity, had many faults, but not that of idolatry or irreverence to the Divine name! I do not know what an Israelite might have said under the influence of a great surprise, but I am absolutely certain that he would not have said, My Lord and my God!

In the next place, it could not have been a mere exclamation of surprise, or an irreverent utterance because it was not rebuked by our Lord and we may be sure He would not have suffered such an unhallowed cry to have gone without a reprimand. Observe, too, that it was addressed to the Lord JesusThomas answered and said unto Him, My Lord and my God! It was not a mere outburst of surprise addressed to no one, but it was an answer directed to the Lord who had spoken to him. It was also such a reply that our Lord Jesus Christ accepted it as an evidence of faith, for in the 29th verse He says, You have believed, and that confession was the only evidence of His believing which our Lord had received from Thomas. A mere outcry of confused astonishment in irreverent words would never have been received as a satisfactory proof of faith!

Sin is not an evidence of faith! The slander proposed by the Arian must, therefore, be rejected with derision. I am almost ashamed to have mentioned it, but in these days, when every kind of error is rife, it is necessary to bring to light and break in pieces many idols which we had rather have left with the moles and bats. I regard this cry of Thomas, first, as a devout expression of that holy wonder which came upon him when his heart made the great discovery that Jesus was assuredly His Lord and God. It had flashed upon the mind of Thomas that this august Person whom he had regarded as the Messiah was also God. He saw that the Man at whose feet he had sat was more than man and was assuredly God, and this amazed him so that he used broken speech.

He does not say, You are my Lord and my God, as a man would say who is making a doctrinal statement, but he brings it out in fragments. He makes adoration of it. He cries in ecstasy, My Lord and my God! He is amazed at the discovery which he has made and probably, also, at the fact that he has not seen it long before. Why, he might have known it and ought to have perceived it years before! Had he not been present when Jesus trod the sea? When He hushed the winds and bade the waters sleep? Had he not seen Him open the blind eyes and unstop the deaf ears? Why did he not cry, My Lord and my God, then?

Thomas had been slow to learn and the Lord might have said to him, as He did to Philip, Have I been so long time with you, and yet have you not known Me? Now, all of a sudden, he does know his Lordknows Him to such a surprising extent that such knowledge is too wonderful for him! He had come to the meeting to prove whether He who appeared to his Brothers was the same Man who had died on Calvary, but now he seems to have forgotten that original questionit is more than answeredit has ceased to be a question! He is carried far further by the flood of evidence! He is landed in a full belief of the Godhead of Jesus! He spies out within that wounded body the indwelling Godhead and, at a leap, he springs beyond the conviction that it is the same Man, to the firm assurance that Jesus is God and, consequently, in broken accents, but with double assurance, he cries, My Lord and my God!

My Brothers and Sisters, how I wish you would all follow Thomas this morning! I will stop a minute that you may do so. Let us wonder and admire! He that had not where to lay His head. He that suffered scourging and spitting, and died on Calvary is, nevertheless, God over all, blessed forever! He who was laid in the tomb lives and reigns, King of kings and Lord of lords! Hallelujah! Behold, He comes in the Glory of the Father to judge the quick and the dead! Let your spirits drink in that Truth of God and be amazed at it! If the fact that Jesus, the Son of God, suffered and bled and died for you, never astonishes you, I fear that you do not believe it, or have no intelligent apprehension of the full meaning of it! Angels wonder, should not you?! Oh, let us feel a holy surprise, today, as we realize the Truth that He who has redeemed us from our sins by His blood is the Son of the Highest!

Next, I believe that this was an expression of immeasurable delight, for you observe he does not say, Lord and God, but, My Lord and my God! He seems to take hold of the Lord Jesus with both hands, by those two blessed mysMy Lord and my God! Oh, the joy that flashed from the eyes of Thomas at that moment! How quickly his heart beat! He had never known such joy as at that instant and, though he must have felt deeply humbled, yet in that humiliation there was an excessive sweetness of intense satisfaction as he looked at His Divine Lord and gazed on Him, from the pierced feet up to the brow so marred with the crown of thorns, and said, My Lord and my God! There is, in these few words, a music akin to the sonnet of the spouse in the Canticles when she sang, My Beloved is mine, and I am His.

The enraptured Apostle saw the Friend of his heart standing before him, shining upon him in love and knitting His heart to him. I pray you follow Thomas in this joy in Christ. I pause a minute that you may do so. Jesus now stands before you, visible to your faith. Delight yourselves in Him! Be always ravished with His love! He is altogether lovely and altogether yours! He loves you with all the infinity of His Nature! The tenderness of His Humanity and the majesty of His Deity blend in His love to you. Oh, love the Lord, you, His saints, for He deserves your hearts! Therefore at this moment say, My Lord and my God!

More than this, I believe that the words of Thomas indicate a complete change of mindin other words, a most hearty repentance. He has not asked of the Lord Jesus to be permitted to put his finger into the print of the nails. No, all that has gone without debate. If you look at the chapter you will find no statement that he ever did handle the Lord as he had, at first, proposed. Whether he did put his finger into the print of the nails and his hand into His side must forever be unknown to us until we see Thomas in Heaven and ask him the question. If you read the Saviors words as commanding him to do so, then we may conclude that he did sobut if you read them as only permitting him to do itthen I think he did not do it.

I put the question to a dear companion of mineI read the passage and then I askedWhat do you think, did Thomas put his hand into Christs side? And the answer from a thoughtful mind and a gentle heart was thisI do not think he could. After the Master had so spoken to him, he would shrink from doing so, and would think it willful unbelief to attempt it. This reply coincided exactly with my own convictions. I feel sure that had it been my case, I would have felt so ashamed at ever having proposed such a test, and so overwhelmed to find the Lord yielding to it, that I could not have gone an inch further in the way of seeking tokens and proofs unless I had been absolutely commanded to do so. So, judging Thomas to be like ourselves and, indeed, much better than any of us, notwithstanding his imperfection, I gather that he completely turned round and, instead of putting his finger into the print of the nails, he cried, My Lord and my God!

The Savior said to him, Because you have seen Me, you have believed. Now, I lay no stress upon it, but it would seem probable that the Savior might have said, Because you have touched Me, you have believed, if Thomas had, indeed, touched Him. But inasmuch as He only speaks of sight, it may be that sight was enough for Thomas. I do not insist upon it, but I think it right to suggest it. I feel it is not unreasonable to conclude that all Thomas did was to look at his Lord. He could do no morethe delicacy of his spirit would not permit him to accept the offered testhis reverence stopped him. He saw and believed! In Him we see a complete change of feelingfrom being the most unbelieving of the 11, he came to believe more than any of them and to confess Jesus to be God!

This exclamation is also a brief confession of faith, My Lord and my God! Whoever will be saved, before all things, it is necessary that he is able to unite with Thomas heartily in this creed, My Lord and my God! I do not go in for all the minute distinctions of the Athanasian Creed, but I have no doubt that it was absolutely necessary, at the time it was written, and that it materially helped to check the evasions and tricks of the Arians. This short creed of Thomas I like much better, for it is brief, pithy, full, sententious and it avoids those matters of detail which are the quicksands of faith. Such a belief is necessaryand no man can truly hold it unless he is taught by the Holy Spirit. He can say the

words, but he cannot receive the spiritual Truth! No man can call Jesus, Lord, but by the Holy Spirit. It is, therefore, a most necessary and saving creed that we should cry to the Lord Jesus, My Lord and my God! I ask you to do this, now, in your hearts. Renew your faith and confess that He who died for you is your Lord and God.

Socinians may call Jesus what they pleaseto me He is God over all, blessed forever! I know that you say, Amen! Further than this, do you not think that these words of Thomas were an enthusiastic profession of his allegiance to Christ? My Lord and my God! It was as though he paid Him lowliest homage and dedicated himself, then and there, in the entirety of his nature to His service. To Him whom he had once doubted, he now submits himself, for in Him he fully believes. He does as good as say, Henceforth, O Christ, You are my Lord and I will serve You. You are my God, and I will worship you.

Finally, I regard it as a distinct and direct act of adoration. At the feet of the manifested Savior, Thomas cries, My Lord and my God! It sounds like a rehearsal of the eternal song which ascends before that Throne where cherubim and seraphim continually cry, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth. It sounds like a stray note from those choral symphonies which day without night circle the Throne of the Eternal! Let us, in solemn silence, now present our souls before the Throne of God, bowing in reverent adoration unto Him that was, and is, and is to come, even the Lamb that was slain, who is risen, and who lives forever.

My Lord and my God! O Son of Mary, you are, also, Son of the Highest, and unto my heart and spirit you are my Lord and my God and I worship you this day! We have not time or else I would sit down and invite you to spend a few minutes in private, personal worship, following the example of Thomas in adoring our Lord and God.

II. Our next division is to be headed with the questionHOW DID HE COME TO THAT EXCLAMATION? Have you ever thought what Thomass feelings were when he went to the meeting that evening? His going needed a complicated explanation. Why did he mingle with men whose assertions he doubted? Could he have fellowship with them and yet call them liars? Suppose Jesus Christ to be dead and not risenwhy does Thomas go? Is he going to worship a dead man? Is he about to renounce the faith of the last two years? How can he hold it if Jesus is not alive? Yet how can he give it up? Was Jesus Christ, Lord and God to Thomas when he first entered that meeting? I suppose not. He did not, when he entered the room, believe Him to be the same Person who had died.

The other disciples believed and Thomas was now the lone doubter peculiar, positive, obstinate. Has it never happened to other disciples to drift into much the same condition? Thomas was a lot out of catalog that eveninghe was the odd person in the little gathering and yet, before service was over, the Lord had completely changed him. Behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last. The first thing, I think, that led Thomas to this confession of his belief in Christs Deity was that he had his thoughts revealed. The Savior came into the room, the doors being shutwithout opening the doors He suddenly appeared before them by His own Divine Power.

Then and there, pointing to Thomas, He repeated to him the very words which Thomas had said to his Brothers. They had not been reported to the Savior, but the Savior had read Thomas thoughts at a distance and He was, therefore, able to bring before him, his exact words. Notice that the Savior did not say, Stoop down and put your finger into the nail prints in My feet. Why not? Why, because Thomas had not said anything about His feet and, therefore, the Savior did not mention them! Everything was exact. We, in looking at it, can see the exactness, but Thomas must have felt it much more. He was overwhelmed! To have his thoughts put in plain words and to hear his own words repeated by Him whom they concerned, this was truly amazing! Oh, he says, He who now speaks to me is none other than God! And He shall be my Lord and my God. This helped him to his assured conviction that the One who had read his thoughts must be God.

He was aided still further, for as soon as he perceived that this was the same Jesus with whom he had conversed before, all the past must have risen before his mind and he must have remembered the many occasions in which the Lord Jesus had exercised the attributes of Deity. Those past conversations, thus revived before him, must all have gone to support the conviction that Jesus was none other than Lord and God. And then, I think, the very air, and manner, and Presence of the Savior convinced the trembling disciple. They say there is a divinity that hedges a kingthat I am not prepared to believe, but I am sure there was a majesty about the look of our Lorda more than human dignity in His manner, tone, speech and bearing! Our Lords personal Presence convinced Thomas, so that he saw and believed.

But perhaps the most convincing arguments of all were our Lords wounds. It seems a long way round to infer the Deity of Christ from His wounds, yet it is good and clear argument. I shall not set it out in order before you, but leave you to think it out for yourselves! Yet one little hint I would give youhere is a wound in His side more than sufficient to have caused death. It has gone right to the heartthe soldier pierced His side with a spear and forthwith flowed there out blood and waterproving that the heart was pierced. The opening was still there, for the Lord invited Thomas to thrust his hand into His sideand yet Jesus lived!

Heard you ever such a story as thisa man with a gaping wide death wound inviting another to thrust his hand therein? Had our Lord been living after the way in which we live, by the circulation of our blood, one can hardly see how this could have been possible! Flesh and blood, being subject to corruption, cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, but the Saviors risen body came not under that description, as, indeed, His buried body did not, for He saw no corruption. I invite you to note well the distinction which may be seen in our Lords words concerning His own body. He does not speak of His body as flesh and blood, but He says, Handle Me and see; for a spirit has not flesh and bones as you see I have. It was a real body and a material body, for He took a piece of a broiled fish and honeycomb and did eat before thembut still His Resurrection body, living with an open wound in His side, reaching to the heart, was not after the manner of men.

So even in the wounds of Christ, we read that He is Man, but not mere man! His wounds, in various ways, were evidence to Thomas of His Deity. Anyway, the glorious fact rushed upon Thomass astonished mind in a single moment and, therefore, he cried out, My Lord and my God!

III. Finally, let us see HOW WE MAY COME TO IT. That is our final point and the most practical of all. I doubt not that the Spirit of God was at work with Thomas, at that time, very mightilyand that the true cause of his enlightenment was heavenly illumination. If ever any one of us shall cry in spirit and in truth, My Lord and my God! the Holy Spirit must teach us. Blessed are you who can call Jesus, Lord and God, for flesh and blood has not revealed this unto you, but the Father from Heaven.

But I will tell you when Believers do cry, My Lord and my God! I remember the first time it filled my heart. Burdened with guilt and full of fears, I was as wretched as a man could be outside of Hell, when I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Look unto Me, and be you saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. I did look, then and there, by His Grace! I gave a faith-glance to Him who suffered in my place and, in an instant, my peace was like a river! My heart leaped from despair to gladness and I knew my Lord to be Divine! If anyone had said to me, then, Jesus Christ is not God, I would have laughed him to scorn! He was beyond all question, my Lord and my God, for He had worked a Divine work in me!

It may not be an argument to anybody else, but forgiveness consciously known in the soul is a conclusive argument to the man who has ever felt it! If the Lord Jesus turns your mourning into dancing! If He brings you up out of the horrible pit and out of the miry clay and sets your feet upon a rock and establishes your goings, He is sure to be your Lord and God from that time on and forever! In the teeth of all that deny itin the teeth of all the devils in Hellthe redeemed heart will assert the Godhead of its Savior! He that has saved me is, indeed, God, and beside Him there is none else. This first avowal has proved to be only the beginning of these confessions. We remember many other acknowledgments of the same fact.

We were severely tempted and yet we did not slip, nor stain our garments, a wonder that we escaped! He that kept us from falling, must be God. I know some moments in my life when I could stand and look back in the morning light upon the valley through which I had passed in the darkand when I saw how narrow the pathway was; how a little step to the left or to the right must have been my total destruction and yet I had never tripped, but had come straight through in perfect safetyI was astounded and, bowing my head, I worshipped, saying, The Lord has been my refuge and my defense. He has kept my soul in life and preserved me from the Destroyer, therefore will I sing songs unto Him as long as I live. Oh, yes, dear children of God, when your heads have been covered in the day of battle, you have magnified the Keeper of Israel, saying, My Lord and my God!

We have felt that we could not doubt, again, and have joyfully committed ourselves to His keeping as to the guardian care of a faithful Creator. Such, also, has been the case in time of trouble, when you have been comforted and upheld. A very heavy affliction has fallen upon you and yet, to your surprise, it has not crushed you as you feared it would have done. Years before you had looked forward to the stroke with agonizing apprehension and said, I shall never bear it. But you

did bear it and, at this moment, you are thankful that you had it to bear! The thing which you feared came upon you and when it came, it seemed like a feather compared with what you expected it to beyou were able to sit down and say, The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

Your friends were surprised at youyou had been a poor, wretchedly nervous creature before, but in the time of trial you displayed a singular strength such as surprised everybody! Most of all, you surprised yourself, for you were full of amazement that in weakness you were made so strong. You said, I was brought low, and He helped me. You could not doubt His Deity thenanything which would rob Him of Glory you detested, for your heart said, Lord, there is none that could have solaced my soul in this fashion save only the Lord God Almighty. Personally I have had to cry out, It is the Lord, when I have seen His wonders in the deep. O my Soul, you have trodden down strength. My soul shall magnify my Lord and my God, for, He sent from above, He took me; He drew me out of many waters. He brought me forth, also, into a large place: He delivered me, because He delighted in me.

There have been other occasions less trying. Bear with me if I mention one or two more. When we have been musing, the fire has burned. While studying the story of our Lord, our faith in His Deity has been intensified. When the Spirit of God has revealed the Lord Jesus to us and in us, then we have cried, My Lord and my God! Though not after the flesh, yet in very deed and truth we have seen the Lord. On a day which I had given up to prayer, I sat before the Lord in holy peacefulness, wrapped in solemn contemplation. And though I did not see a vision, nor wish to see one, yet I so realized my Masters Presence that I was borne away from all earthly things and knew of no man save Jesus, only. Then a sense of His Godhead filled me till I would gladly have stood up where I was and have proclaimed aloud, as with the voice of a trumpet, that He was my Lord and my God!

Such times you, also, have known. Jesus is often known of us in the breaking of bread. At the Communion Table many a time we have seen and adored. It was very preciouswe were ready to weep and laugh for joy. Our heart kept beating to the tune of, My Lord and my God! Perhaps it was not in any outward ordinance that your soul thus adored, but quite away in the country, or by the seaside, as you walked along and communed with your own heart, you were suddenly overpowered with a sense of Jesus glorious Majesty, so that you could only whisper to yourself as in a still small voice, My Lord and my God! Or perhaps it was when you were laid aside with illness that He made all your bed and then you knew His Divine Power.

It was a long and weary night to those who watched you, but to you it was all too short and brimmed with sweetness, for the Lord was there, and He gave you songs in the night! When you awoke you were still with Him and felt ready to faint with overwhelming delight because of the brightness of the manifestation. At such a time you could have sung

*My Christ, He is the Lord of lords,   
He is the King of kings!   
He is the Sun of Righteousness,   
With healing in His wings!   
My Christ, He is the Heaven of heavens,   
My Christ, what shall I call?   
My Christ is first, my Christ is last,   
My Christ is All in All!*

I will tell you, yet again, when Jesus has been Lord and God both to me and to youand that is in times when He has blessed our laborsand laid His arm bare in the salvation of men! When our report has been believed by those who rejected it, before, and the Lord has sent us a happy season of revival, we have given to Him the glory and rejoiced in His Omnipotent Love!

We prayed for our children and when, to our surpriseit is a shame to say, to our surprise, for it ought not to have surprised usthe Lord heard our prayer and, first one, and then, another, came to us and said, Father, I have found the Lord! Then we knew that the Lord, He is God, and our God, too! We looked up from our prayers with tears in our eyes to think the Lord Jesus could have heard such weak petitions. And we said in the depths of our hearts, My Lord and my God! We went out and tried to teach a dozen or two in a cottagepoor, broken words were all that we could utterbut the Lord blessed it and we heard a poor woman crying for mercy as we came outand we said inwardly, My Lord and my God!

If you have been in the Enquiry Room after some Brother, whom God greatly honors, has been proclaiming the Word with power, and if you have seen the people falling right and left under the shafts of the Divine Word, you must have cried, This is no cunningly devised fable, no fiction, and no fancy, and your heart must have throbbed with all its life, My Lord and my God! Have you not felt as if you would dare to go through the very streets of Hell and tell the grinning fiends that Christ is King and Lord forever and ever? The time is very soon coming with some of us when we shall have our last opportunities in this life to find this true. How comforted and refreshed have I often been when visiting dying saints. Truly the Lord has prepared a table for them in the presence of the last enemy.

I can truly say that no scenes that these eyes have ever beheld have so gladdened me as the sight of my dear Brothers and Sisters when they have been departing out of the world unto the Father! The saddest scene has been the happiest! I have known some of them in life as selfdistrusting, trembling, lowly-minded Believersbut when they have come into the Valley of Death, they have displayed no fear, no doubt, but all has been full assurance! Placid, calm, beautiful, joyful and even triumphant have been the last hours of timid Believers! As I have heard their charming words, I have been certain of the Godhead of Him who gives us victory while we die! It is faith in His name that makes men strong in death! When heart and flesh fail us, only the living God can be the strength of our life and our portion forever.

How sweet to know Jesus as our living God in our dying moments! In Him we rejoice with unspeakable joy and full of glory, as we say unto Him in death, My Lord and my God! Come, Brothers and Sisters, be of good cheer! A little further on and we shall come to the narrow stream! This we shall cross in an instant and then it will be but a short, short time! Twenty years is soon gone, a hundred years, even, fly away as on eagles wingsand then we shall be forever with the Lord in Glory! How sweetly will we sing to His eternal praise, My Lord and my God!

There shall be no doubters in Heaven! No skeptics shall worry us there! But this shall be the unanimous voice of all the redeemedJesus is our Lord and God. The united Church, freed from every spot and wrinkle, and gloriously arrayed as the Bride of Christ, shall be conducted to His Throne and acknowledged as the Lords Beloved. And then shall she with full heart exclaim, My Lord and my God!

**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 20:1-29.** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK309, 337, 650. Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #2721 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

FAITH WITHOUT SIGHT   
NO. 2721

A SERMON   
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, APRIL 7, 1904.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, JUNE 6, 1880.

**Jesus said to him, Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. John 20:29.**

WE count those people blessed, indeed, who lived in our Saviors day and saw Him when He dwelt here among men. And truly blessed were their eyes, for they saw, and their ears, for they heard what kings and Prophets had long desired to see and to hear, yet were not so privileged. But we who now believe in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ have a blessing superior to theirs, for the benediction of the text is not to those who saw and believed, but to those who have not seen, and yet have believed. No doubt Thomas was highly favored when his Lord said to him, Reach here your finger, and behold My hands; and reach here your hand, and thrust it into My side. This was an act of very remarkable condescension on Christs part. I can scarcely conceive that any other of the 12 Apostles was more tenderly treated than was this doubting disciple. Nevertheless, though Thomas was greatly privileged, there is a superior blessing, as his Master told himand that blessing, I hope, belongs to many of usBlessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

How often have you said in your heart, They are indeed blessed up yonder, for they behold Christ face to face. Their eyes see the King in His beauty in the land that is very far off. Yes, Beloved, they are truly blessednone can dispute that, for John heard the voice from Heaven saying to him, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord. There is indescribable bliss for all those who behold their Saviors face and who wear His name on their foreheads. Yet, dear Friends, think not that all blessedness is reserved for the glorified, for we also have much here! It almost seems as if Christ had commenced to preach again His Sermon on the Mount, or to add another beatitude to those He then announced Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed. We must wait for the blessing of sight till the blessed by-and-by, in the land of the hereafter, but, just now, it will be quite enough to fill us to the very brim with joy if we can take in the full meaning of this message of the Master.

This blessedness belongs to us who have not seen and yet have believednot to all here present, if there are any who are still in unbelief. The Lord have mercy on you, dear Friends, and bring you out of that state of death and deadly danger, giving you faith in Him even now! Oh, that you might begin to believe in Him this very hour! But I thank God that there are many of us who do believe in Jesus and who have received life through His name. And though we have not at present seen Him, yet He declares that we are truly blessed.

I. So, the first thing I shall have to say is, PARTAKERS OF THIS BLESSEDNESS, DO NOT LET US TRY TO DIMINISH IT.   
We have a blessing, peculiar and singular, through not having seen and yet having believed, so let us not try to diminish it, first, by pining for a voice, or a vision, or a revelationsomething which is like sightso that it could not then be said of us that we have not seen. Have you ever had this kind of thought, when you have been living by faith alone? Perhaps you have said to yourself, Oh, butbut if God would in some way reveal Himself to me so that my very senses might assist my faith! If I might be hidden away in some cleft of the rock and might see the hem of Jehovahs robe! Or if I might hear some Divine voice but whisper that I am Histhen I would, indeed, rejoice and never doubt again! If I might see some miracle, something that I was sure was the finger of God. If I might get near enough to God to be impressed for life with what I sawwhether it was a burning bush or some wayfaring man whom I might entertain as an angel unawaresor even if it were some terrible judgment, yet if I could but feel certain that God had come near to me so that I should never doubt again, what a grand thing it would be!   
Brother, Sister, do not ask for anything of the kind! Do not wish to have it even if you could, for blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. You want to see, you are pining for something which is practically the same as sight! You do not feel content to swim in the pure sea of faith, but your Lord will not give you what you childishly crave. After all, it is only vanity that you are pining for, so He will deny it to you and will say, My child, instead of wanting to see, believe, trust, follow Me in the dark, for it is better for you not to see. Even if you did see and believe, yet you would have obtained only an inferior gift, for the higher blessing, the cream of blessing belongs to those who have not seen, and yet have believed.   
Next, do not try to diminish the blessing, when you are in trouble, by asking for some remarkable and special Providence to open to you. Oh, says someone, I have asked for that many a time. Well, you may, if you feel led to do so, but, still, believe in God if no particular and almost miraculous Providence is manifested. Gods Providence is always at work and we make mistakes in putting down some things as Providences, and others as not. You escape in a railway accident and say that is a Providence. Yes, but it is just as much a Providence that you go to town six days a week and there is no accident. You are supplied with bread when you are out of work and in needthat is a Providence. Yes, but it is just as much a Providence when you are not out of work and do not fall into need. I do not say that you are not to pray for Providence to help you, but I do urge you not to be continually pining after those singularities of Providence which are picked out of some mens biographies of which more than is right may be made. Do not say, I expect God to do for me some wonderful, strange thing, or else I cannot trust Him. No, blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believedthey who, through the whole of their lives, know that the right hand of God has been leading them steadily on. Though there is nothing they could write about and put down as a sort of semi-miracle, yet they believe that all things are working together for good for them, and will bring out Divine purposes filled with love and Grace.   
Again, do not diminish the blessing by craving after ecstatic experiences. It is a very delightful thing, you know, to have your soul made, like the chariots of Amminadib, and to be carried right away with holy delights. Such sacred joys have been given to many saintseven Paul had to write, Whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knowsand we do look upon some of those happy seasons with special delight, but we must not say, I cannot trust in God because I have no such experiences. I cannot rely upon His promises, or cling to the atoning Sacrifice because I am denied these high spiritual joys. Oh, no! Trust Him even if it is all dark around you! Rely upon Him though you cannot see a star in the night. If, like Paul, for a day and a night you have been in the deep. Or if, through many days and nights, neither sun nor moon shall appear, still trust in the Lord. Though you have not even had any spiritual joy arising out of the conscious possession of Divine life in your soul, still cling to Him whose everlasting arms have never yet failed any clinging soul, and whose loving kindnesses and tender mercies are just as sure in the darkest night as in the brightest day!   
There is another way in which we may diminish this blessing of faith without sight and that is, by always demanding clear arguments to answer every objection that may be raised. Some of us have lived long enough to have been informed, a great many times, that the Gospel has suffered most serious injury through the assaults of some learned man who has made a wonderful discovery which, it is supposed, will undermine the very foundations of revealed religion. When we were boys, the great arguments against the Scriptures used to be founded upon stones dug out of the bowels of the earth. Geology had come up and, therefore, Christianity was to go down! Since then, we have seen a great number of remarkable things come and goand some dear souls who have been very timid, have been considerably shaken and troubled.   
Well now, beloved Friends, let us hear our Lord saying to us, Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed, and let us come to this pointthat we know what we know, and it is Divinely fixed in our soul that it is so and, therefore, if an objection is raised against what we believe, we feel certain that it goes to be answered. It may not always be our duty to answer itwe may not have the special knowledge that is necessary for that task. We have a proverb which says that fools set stools for wise men to tumble over and, any fool could throw a stone into a well, which a very wise man could not get out again. And, nowadays, it seems to be the business of a great many learned fools to find difficulties for wise men to answer.   
We have something else to do beside answering them. If you try to satisfy every man who starts a new theory, you will have nothing to do but to answer objections! One says that there is no such thing as matter but if I prick myself with a pin and the blood flows out, I do not need any other argument to convince me! I hope that you, dear Friends, have made up your minds that certain things are matters of conviction to you and that you will not dispute about them. For instance, the Presence of God the Holy Spirit in your soul must be so truly a matter of personal consciousness that whatever argument may be urged against it, you may say, Well, I may not be able to answer your argument, but I know that there is a reply to it. I have not seen, yet I have believed. Though I could not form a syllogism, nor argue upon the matter to your satisfaction, yet I know within myself that God is, and that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. I know, too, that He is my Father, that He has begotten in me a new life which I never had till His blessed Spirit worked it in me. I know that He has lifted me up into a new world and has given me to see and to know what I never even dreamed of until I came to trust in Himso let that stand for my answer. It may not satisfy an objector, but it will satisfy yourself.   
Yet again, we may diminish this blessing by being overanxious for success in our work. We ought to be very anxious to win souls for the Lord Jesus Christ, but blessed is the man who goes on faithfully preaching the Gospel even if he does not immediately see souls converted, and who believes in the power of the Gospel, even though for the moment it is not manifest to him. Blessed, too, is the Sunday school teacher who has not yet seen one child in his class brought to the Savior, but who still believes that there will be many, and who keeps on teaching them, and crying to God for their salvation!   
Just once more, we must try not to diminish this blessing by wanting always to have the concurrent faith of others to support our own. There are some people who can believe only while everybody else around them believesif cheerful friends come in and encourage them, they feel bright and happy. That is a kind of seeing by proxysomebody else sees, so you believe. But blessed is he who has not seen, even with other peoples eyes, and yet has believed! Blessed is he who says, I can stand alone. If there is nobody else who believes this Truth of God, I know it is true, for I found it in the Scriptures. If everybody else denies it, I affirm its truthfulness and I rest in it, for I am sure about it. Let God be true, and every man a liarnot merely some men liars, but every man an liar if he contradicts the God of Truth. Let them all go whatever way they willI stand steadfastly for God and my faith in Him shall not be shaken. This is a blessed way of living and I pray that you, dear Friends, may not rob yourselves of this benediction of our Lord even in the slightest degree, but that you may be resolved to claim as your own the beatitude in our text.   
II. Secondly, and briefly, DO NOT LET US THINK THAT THIS BLESSEDNESS IS UNATTAINABLE.   
If we are, indeed, believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, let us believe that this benediction is ours and that it is possible for us to believe though we do not see. For, observe, that God deserves to be believed. Apart from every other consideration, His own personal Character is such that He ought to be believed. If, my Brothers and Sisters, God had spoken to us in the Scriptures and revealed a Truth which had no analogy in nature which was not supported by the judgment of learned men and to which our own experience seemed to be a contradictionyet, nevertheless and notwithstanding, God must be believed! If every morsel of evidence that ever came in our way had to be placed in the opposite scale and we had nothing but, God has said it, to put into this one, the fact that God has said it ought, to every loyal heart, to weigh down all the rest! Though you have not seen, surely you are never going to compare your poor eyes with God! Though you have never heard, surely you are not going to set the evidence of your eyes against the declaration of God who cannot lie!

For my part, I am determined that if all my senses were to contradict God, I would deny every one of them and sooner believe myself to be out of my right mind than believe that God could lie! And I desire to feel that in every emotion of my spirit, every throb of my heart, every thought of my brain and everything that is contrary to the plainly-revealed Truth of God, I will count myself a fool and a madmanand I will reckon God to be wise and true. If we can exercise such faith as thatand I am sure God well deserves it, for the infinite Creator, the ever-blessed Faithful and True, cannot be guilty of falsehood and cannot even errso, if we trust Him as He ought to be trusted, then shall we realize the blessedness of which our text speaks.   
Further, dear Friends, look along the whole line of history, and note how the saints have trusted in the Lord, and see whether He has not been true to them. Trace the Inspired record from the days of Noah to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and see what it will prove to you. Has He said anything and has He not done it? Has He promised and then has He ever failed to keep His word? Has He threatened and has He not carried out the threat? Look through the biographies of all who have trusted Him. Has He deceived any one of them? Has it ever been shown that it is a foolish thing to believe God? Was there ever a man who truly trusted in the unseen Jehovah and who, by doing so, was made a fool of? Find him out, if you canin a Bible story or anywhere elsethe man who really believed in God and, afterwards, came back saying that he had believed a fiction, or that, if God existed at all, He had broken His promise and deluded the man who relied upon it. No, there is no such case, and there never shall be one! The whole roll of the past confirms the faithfulness of God.   
I also appeal to you who have believed in God and ask if your own experience has not warranted your faith. Brothers and Sisters, ever since you have known the Lord and up till now, how has He treated you? Has He ever given you any occasion for distrusting Him? Rightly looked at, has there even once occurred, in the whole of your personal or family history, anything that reasonably permitted you to suspect the truthfulness of God? O Brethren, I have sometimes called myself ten thousand, thousand fools in one for ever doubting the faithfulness of my God! When I look back over my own life, it always seems remarkableto me, at any rateas anything that has ever been found in the pages of fiction. Oh, how wonderfully and how graciously has God dealt with me! What do I not owe to His faithfulness and truth? Doubt You, my Lord? I could doubt all except Youand doubt myself most of all! Cannot all of you, Beloved, who love the Lord, say the same?   
Some of you have been through deep waters. You have been very sick, or very poor, or perhaps you have lost many dear relatives and friends. You have been greatly cast down in spirit. You have gone through fire and through water. Well, now, how has the Lord dealt with you in all these experiences? I know that you have found His mercy to be *Always faithful, always sure.*   
Well, then, He deserves to be trusted although you cannot see Him. You know what kind of a man he is of whom we say, Trust him? Yes, I would trust him as far as I could throw Him, but no further! But what a dishonor you would put upon your God if you could not trust Him any further than that! Indeed, that is no trust at all, it is sight. Do not, therefore, begin to doubt God because you cannot see Him and because, to reason and sense, difficulties seem to intervene, but bravely trust Him when you see Him not, for He well deserves to be believed. The history of His whole Church proves that He is worthy to be trustedand your own personal history proves it, too.   
III. I have spoken but briefly upon that part of our subject, although much more might be said upon it. But I want to devote a little more time to one other point. DO NOT LET ANY OF US MISS THIS BLESSING THROUGH NOT SEEING THE GROUND OF IT.   
It is a blessed thing to trust God when you cannot trace Himto believe when you cannot see. For, first, this is a sure mark of a spiritual and renewed mind. There were some who saw Christ who, nevertheless cried, Away with Him, crucify Him! There were some who saw Christ and who could not help perceiving that there was a wonderful power in Him, yet they did not believe in Him and they were not saved by Him. There were persons who saw Christ and who even, in some sense, believed in Him, yet who believed not with true saving faith. But if any of you who have not seen Him, really believe in Him, this is the evidence that you are the children of God!   
Let me remind you of that description of the people of God which is given by Peter in his first Epistle, the first chapter, and the 8th and 9th versesWhom having not seen, you love; in whom, though now you see Him not, yet believing, you rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. So that the people who have received the salvation of their souls are those who love the One they have never seenand who even rejoice in Him whom they do not see! You may conclude that you are truly a child of Godyou may make certain of your election and of your adoption into the Lords family if you can truly say, I am one of those who have not seen the Lord Jesus, and yet I have believed in Him. I can say to Him   
*I love You, dearest Lord! And will,   
Unseen, but not unknown.*

Next, this kind of man is indeed blessed because, believing when he has not seen is a proof that his heart is right towards God. I do not know any better evidence that two persons are agreed with one another than that they fully trust each other. If I have a friend in whom I so implicitly trust that I do not need any evidence, there should be no writing between him and me. He shall not need to say that what he says is trueif he only says it, then I am certain of the truth of it. That is because my friend and I are on such good terms with one another. And when you trust God in spite of all outward appearances and surrounding circumstances, it is a comfortable proof to yourself that you are on good terms with God, that you are walking in sweet fellowship with Him and it is one of the most blessed facts in your whole history!

Perhaps God is chastening you just now and your heart is very heavy. There are many things which seem to discourage you, but you can still say, Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him. Ah, my dear Friend, you are among the blessed of the Lord! Yes, among the very choicely blessed ones, for it is clear that there is no quarrel between you and your God. You have been reconciled to Him and you are walking with Him, even though you are walking in the dark. I like that saying of the old Scotchwoman though it sounds strange. When someone said to her, Perhaps, after all, Gods promises will not be true to you and you will be lost. Well, she answered, if I am lost, He will lose more than I shall. It seems a strange thing for anyone to say, but the good woman meant that the Lord would lose His honor and His Character for truthfulness if He allowed one to be lost who had trusted in Him. That showed that she was on good terms with God and understood Himand all such people are greatly blessed.

Again, dear Friends, those who believe Christ, whom they have not seen, are blessed because their character and conduct in this respect are most acceptable with God. I do not know anything which gratifies a man more than to be implicitly trusted. There are not many of us who are worthy of such confidence, but when people do absolutely trust us, we feel that they have given us all the honor that they can possibly put upon us. No flattery can ever equal that warm glowing praise which is passed upon a man when we put entire confidence in him. And our Lord delights for us to just give ourselves up to trust in Him in that fashion. I do not believe that the seraphim in Heaven praise the Lord as much, in all their hallelujahs, as a poor tried child of God does when he trusts himself entirely in his Heavenly Fathers hands. And it seems to me that the darker the night is, and the heavier the burden is, and the more crushed the spirit is, if we can fully trust Him, then, the sweeter is the music of our resignation and the more acceptable is the homage which we pay to God. Ah, though You break me up until I am small as the grains of March dust, and though You blow upon me as with a hurricane that threatens to drive me away, yet shall every atom of my being trust in You, and believe You, O my God!

If we can carry out that resolution, it will honor God and be acceptable to Him in the highest degree. Without faith, it is impossible to please God. Is it not strange that the eternal God can ever be pleased with us? It is a wonderful thing, certainly, that we poor creatures should, by any means, be able to give pleasure to the infinitely-happy Godyet so we do when we trust Him.

Again, you shall find that the man who believes without seeing is truly blessed because that faith brings comfort to his own soul. I desire to bear my own testimony concerning this matter. I have never been so happy, in my whole life, as when I have had nothing to trust to but God. Those times in which I have been flung into the sea and been compelled to swim because I could not touch the bottom anywhere, have been the most joyous times to my own heart. If I had to select the choicest hours of my lifethose which I would like to have over againthey would be those times in which I may have been thought rash and imprudent, but in which I have been enabled just to believe God and to leave everything in His hands. At such times I have seen the iron, swim! I have seen the Lords hand working marvelously in the midst of the earth and it has given me the utmost delight!

Now, is not every Christian here able to say just that? It is not your happiest time when the barn is full and when the vats run over the brim, for, sometimes, you have been satisfied with the abundance of your earthly mercies but your happiest time has been when there was only the last handful of meal at the bottom of that barrel and you had to scrape it up to make a cake for the Prophetyet there was always enough to make a cake! And when the oil only dribbled out of the cruse, and you thought it would soon be dried up, yet the Lord told you it would never be exhausted, and it never was! I think it is better to have that barrel of meal, and that cruse of oil, than it would be to have the biggest vat of oil you ever saw, and the largest granaries full of corn, so long as you have this promise for your mottoThe Lord will provide. If the Lord will provide, you cannot have a better Provider! He is not in the habit, as the God of Providence, of doing anything sparingly. He fills the stores of the widows and orphans and feeds them well. And when He feeds His own children, He feeds them well. Happy is that man, and blessed in his own heart is his sense of intense comfort, who can say, I cannot see, but I do believe.

There is another reason why such a person is blessed, and that is that he is having formed in him a grand character. It is a poor character that lives only on what it seesthat is the beasts characterit is quite satisfied as long as its eyes can perceive the pasture. There is no great character that can ever come to a man who has no faith. The heroes among men are all men of faitheven those who are heroes concerning common matters, the heroes of patriotismthough it may not always be faith in God that they possess, yet is it faith of some sort that braces them up and makes them superior to the doubters all around them. No man could be a William Tell who had not firm confidence and, certainly, no man could have been a Martin Luther who had not full and entire trust in his God. It is a wondrous education to a man to be compelled to trust his Godto be driven right out from paddling along the shore in his little canoe by a big rolling wave which carries him right out to seaand there he is taught to be a mariner who can brave the tempest and laugh at the hurricane! We would always remain children and have to be carried in our mothers arms, in long clothes, if we had not trials and troubles. God often hides Himself in order to teach us to trust Him moreand so, God helping us, we grow to be men.

And, lastly, let me remind you that we are very likely coming to a time when we shall need to believe without the use of our eyes. If our Lord Jesus Christ does not soon come, some of us shall die. And if your faith depends on your sight, what will you do when your eyes are in the grave? They are going to be thereyou will not be able to carry a single particle of this wonderful telescopic, microscopic, optical arrangement of yours with you to Heaven. I have seen many of my dear friends die and I know that their eyes were still in their bodies, for I looked into them and helped to close them. They did not take them away with them, so how do they get on, now that they have no eyes? I have seen their ears left behind and laid in their coffinsand all their senses have gone, like their seeing and hearing. And if they could not believe without their senses, what would they do in the disembodied state where they now are before the Throne of God?

Why, they commune with Christ without the intervention of the flesh! Then, do so now, Beloved! Do not always be needing to use these poor eyeballs, these dim glasses, here, for they do not see much. There are angels in this place, flying to and fro while I am preaching. I cannot see themit is my eyes that make me blindbut I shall see them when these eyes are gone. My Lord is also here. I know He is, for He gave His promise of old that He would be, and He is sure to keep His word. But I cannot see Himand that is the fault of these poor eyes of mine. When they are gone, then I shall see Him! When I get rid of the encumbrances of eyes and ears

*Then shall I see, and hear, and know   
All I desired or wished below!   
And every power find sweet employ   
In that eternal world of joy.*

What would I do if I could not draw near to God without my eyes and ears and hands, without touch and taste, when I am so soon to live in a world where there will be no hands, or eyes, or ears until the Resurrection morning? Then we shall get our bodies back again, but, until then, if we are to be blessed at all, it must be in the way our Lord says in the textby faith without sight! So, Brothers and Sisters, if you want to enjoy great blessings. If you wish to lead a happy life and to die a triumphant death. If you would have a glorious time between death and the coming of Christ. If you would see your Masters face with acceptance in the day of His appearing, ask that this blessing may be yoursBlessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

Now I close when I have just said to you who do not know whether you are converted or not, but are waiting until you have some wonderful impression, or until you hear a voice down in the garden, or until you have a striking dream or see an apparition and so onall that rubbish will be of no use to you! Just believe in the Lord Jesus Christ without any of those things! You are a sinner and Jesus Christ is a Saviorso come and trust Him. Though you see Him not, yet is He to be found by you if you seek Him with all your heart. Therefore, wait for none of these things that I have mentioned, but come and trust Himand blessed shall you be in believing although you cannot see Him! The Lord add His blessing, for Christs sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 20:19-31.**

Verse 19. Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and said unto them, Peace be unto you. He has not risen from the tomb many hours before we find Him thus coming to His disciples. His love to them was too great to permit Him to be long absent from them. He had said to them, A little while, and you shall not see Me and again, a little while, and you shall see Me. So He kept His word. He stood in their midst and said unto them, Peace be unto you. He is the Lord and Giver of peace just as much, now, as He was then! Oh, that He would speak peace to the hearts of all His people now! May each believing soul among you have a deep peace! May all your troublous thoughts come to an end and every anxious mind be calmed! Peace! Blessed peace! Oh, that the Spirit of peace would breathe it upon us all! Peace be unto you.

20. And when He had so said, He showed unto them His hands and His side. These were the marks to help their recognition of Him. These were the memorials to excite their gratitude. These, too, were the tokens of His condescension, for a man does not show His wounds to any but to those whom He loves. He showed unto them His hands and His side. You cannot see that sight, Brothers and Sisters, but you can meditate upon it. Think how He gave those blessed hands to the nails and that precious side to the soldiers spearand, as you think of them, let your love flow forth unto Him who suffered thus for you.

20. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord. I should think they were glad! They had been afraid of the Jews, but they forgot that fear when they saw the Lord. I suppose that, at first, when He suddenly appeared in their midst, they were afraid of Him. But now there was first a sacred calm and then there was a ripple of holy gladness on the surface of the still waters of their souls. We cannot see Him, Brothers and Sisters, with these eyes of ours, but by faith we can behold Him! So we may have gladness even as the disciples had. We ought to be the happiest people in all the world because Christ is ours and is spiritually with us as He promised that He would be.

21. Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as My Father has sent Me, even so send I you. You are to go forth and to bless the world, even as I have done. My Father has sent Me; and even so send I you. You are to be My delegates to carry on My serviceMy commissioned officers to go forth to conflict and to conquest in My name.

22, 23. And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said unto them, Receive the Holy Spirit: whose sins you remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose sins you retain, they are retained. This is as much as for Christ to say, I will back up your ministry. When you preach that men are condemned for sin of which they have not repented, I will make it to be so as a matter of fact. When you declare pardon to all who trust in My precious blood, I will make it so. That Truth of God which you preach shall have My seal of approval set upon it. My power shall go forth with your proclamation of the Truth, so that it shall be seen that you are not proclaiming a fiction. When you preach My Gospel, I will remit the sins of all who believe it. And when you pronounce sentence of condemnation on such as remain in unbelief, I will confirm your declaration!

24. But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. Very likely, loving Jesus, as he evidently did, very much, Thomas was broken-hearted when he found that his Master was dead. So, when his fellow disciples told him that Jesus was alive, he could not believe it. He felt that the news was too good to be true. He had fallen into a fit of despondency and got away, as broken-hearted, depressed people often do, trying to get quite alone, when Christian company would be one of the best ways of finding comfort and solace. So, Thomas was not with them when Jesus came.

25. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. We have seen the Lord. There is no mistake about the matter, for we have all seen Him. And thus, with loving, anxious desire, they tried to cheer him and to make him participate in the gladness which they themselves had enjoyed. Dear Friends, always look after your weak Brothers and Sisters. If there is a Thomas who is depressed and sad, and who therefore shuns you, do not shun him, but find him and try to tell him what you have learned by way of comfort for your own heart. Perhaps God will use it to comfort him, also.

25. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe. Thomas should not have said that, because, after all, it was not true. I do not suppose that he did put his finger into the print of the nails, and thrust his hand into Christs side, yet he did believe. We sometimes say a great deal that would have been far better left unsaid and, especially when our spirit is depressed, it is a token of wisdom to feel, We are hardly in a condition of mind in which we can speak as we ought, so we had better remain silent.

26. And after eight days again His disciples were within, and Thomas with them. That is better. His love brought him out, you see, away from himself. And it often happens that by getting a man away from himself, we get him away from his worst enemy.

26. Then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. His first salutation, after His resurrection, was such a choice one that there could not be a better, so He repeated it when He appeared the second time. Peace is so rich a blessing that even the Divine Master can say nothing sweeter to His faithful followers! So again He says to them, Peace be unto you.

27. Then He said to Thomas, Reach here your finger, and behold My hands; and reach here your hand, and thrust it into My side: and be not faithless, but believing. Our dear and condescending Master would give to His feeble and somewhat petulant disciple all the proofs he had asked to have! He shall have evidence clear as noonday if he must have it. Thomas, however, as I suppose, was wise enough not to accept the gracious offer of his Lord. Sometimes it is wise not to take what God may put in our way. You remember how Balaam was allowed to go with the men sent to him by Balak, and he did so, yet it would have been much wiser of him if he had not gone. I do not think that Thomas put his finger into the print of the nails, or thrust his hand into his Masters side. On the contrary, we read

28. And Thomas answered and said unto Him, My Lord and my God. Leaping out of the slough of doubt onto the rock of confidence by a single spring, and getting further, perhaps, than others had done who had before outstripped him, he inferred the Deity of Christ from His wounds and His Resurrectiona grand chain of argument of which we have not the intervening links. His thoughtful mind made him feel that if Christ was, indeed, risenthe same Christ who had diedit was proved by those death-wounds that He was both Lord and Godwhile his personal, appropriating faith, realizing the identity of the Savior, made him say, My Lord and my God.

29. Jesus said to him, Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. That is well.   
29. Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. That is better.   
30, 31. And truly, many other signs did Jesus in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you might have life through His name. Now, dear Friends, has the purpose for which this Book was written, been answered in your case? Have you been led to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and so to believe that you have life through His name? If not, why not? May you have Grace to answer that question, for the Lord Jesus Christs sake! Amen. 225

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THE MAIN MATTER   
NO. 1631

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, NOVEMBER 6, 1881, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that, believing, you might have life through His name.**

**John 20:30, 31.**

THE public life of our most blessed Lord Jesus Christ was brief. Few suppose it to have exceeded three and a half years but yet, what a full life it was! It had in it not only enough to compose the four Gospels, each one of which is sufficient to lead men to saving faith, but so much remained over and above that, the Apostle John makes this remarkable statement And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written, every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Our Lords life was as ample as His own festivalsit feeds thousandsand with the fragments that remain many baskets might be filled!

A man may complete a great and fruitful life in two or three years, while another may have existed as long as an antediluvian and yet his life may be poor and powerless. Not only did the Lord Jesus speak and do great things as to number, but there was a world of power in each word and work. He did not display a multitude of feeblenesses, but each individual outcome of His life was grand enough to have been a marvel if considered by itself! As was the Doer, in whom dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, such were the deedsthey, also, were full of Grace and the Truths of God!

There was a fullness of Divine wisdom, Grace and power about each act of Jesus. Hence the Apostle, here, speaks of the Lords acts as signs many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples. There was a mass of instruction in all our Lords movements. Nothing about Him was trivial. He preached by His entire life, preached a marvelous array of Truths and preached them with living freshness! Never is He twice the same, though always the same. When we find Him repeating His discourses, as we sometimes do, if the Sermon on the Mount sounds like the Sermon on the Plain, yet a different drift, aim and tone create a singular variety. Each separate act of the Lord is a sign of something beyond itself and the whole of the acts put together display an ocean of doctrine without bottom or shore.

What a Christ was this! Oh that His Spirit may dwell in us, that our lives, also, may be rich and full! Rich to the Glory of God, and full to the blessing of our fellow men. Yet, dear Friends, though the whole of Christs life has not been written, we perceive in our text that what has been recorded is the most useful part of it and that it was preserved for our benefit. The Inspired record was written with a purposethe facts were wisely culled and collected out of the entire mass on account of their bearing upon the desired objective and enough has been preserved to effect a design which, above all others, is most important to us. These are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that, believing, you might have life through His name.

May our reverence to the Inspired Gospels lead us to give earnest heed to their design and objective, for it would be profane to baffle their purpose by refusing their testimony. First, this morning, let me speak a little with you upon the design of all Scripture, which is faith. Secondly, upon the great Object of true faith, which is Jesus the Christ, the Son of God. And then, thirdly, let as further commune together upon the true life of the soul which is linked and wrapped up with the name of Jesus Christ, in whom we are led to believe by the testimony of the things written concerning Him.

I. First, then, dear Friends, THE OBJECTIVE OF ALL SCRIPTURE IS TO PRODUCE FAITH. There is no text in the whole Book which was intended to create doubt. Doubt is a seed self-sown, or sown by the devil and it usually springs up with more than sufficient abundance without our care. The practice of reading skeptical works is a very dangerous onewe have enough tendency to sickness in our own constitutions without going to fever hospitals to test the atmosphere. Holy Scripture is no mother or nurse of doubtit is the creator of a holy confidence by revealing a sure line of fact and truth.

It has been thought by many expositors that John here refers only to the things which Jesus did after His ResurrectionMany other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples. But I think there are abundant reasons, with which I need not trouble you just now, to show that John must have referred to the whole of our Saviors life and to all the acts of itand that the book which he speaks of is his own book, the Gospel which contains his own life of Christ. John includes the whole story of Jesus of Nazareth in the reference of the text. I venture to go much farther and to say that the statement that John made here, though it must refer to his own Gospel, is equally true of the entire Scriptures.

We may begin at Genesis and go on to the Book of Revelation and say of all the holy histories, These are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Though this Bible is a wonderful library of many books, yet there is such a unity about it that the mass of the people regard it as one book and they are not in error when they do so. This one Book has but one design and every portion of it works to that one end. Of the whole canon of Inspiration we may say, as we read every detail, These are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

Observe, then, no part of Holy Scripture was written with any wish to magnify the writer of it. Many human books are evidently intended to let you see how profound the thoughts of their authors are, or how striking is their style. Self-consciousness is often apparent and the man is seen as well as the fruit of his mind. If some authors can, at any time, introduce themselves, they do not hesitate to do so, even though they have to go out of their way to do it! But you shall never detect the least degree of this in any of the writers of sacred Scripture. True, they did not set that foolish fashion of certain brethren in modern times who call attention to their own modesty by placing their initials on their title-pages instead of their names.

We have no Prophet of the Lord named D. N. J., or M. C. H.! And those who bear such initials in these days are by no means veiled writers, but are as well-known as if their names were written out in full. The Inspired authors freely write David, Job, Isaiah, John, Matthewand why shouldnt they? Having given their names, how very little of themselves will you ever find in their books? They lose themselves in their theme and hide themselves behind their Master. A most striking instance of this is found in Johns Gospel. John was a man above all others fitted to write the life of Christ. Did he not know more of Jesus by observation, by intimate fellowship and by hearty sympathy with Him than any other of the Evangelists?

And yet he has left out many interesting facts which the others have recordedothers, mark youwho did not actually see the facts as he did. Speaking after the manner of men, this silence is very wonderful. Can you guess how much this abstinence cost the Apostle? The other three Evangelists received much at second hand, though, truly, by the Spirit of God. But John literally and personally saw these things! He beheld them with his own eyes and yet he gives us fewer incidents in the life of Christ than the other Evangelists. What self-forgetfulness was this! He is silent because his speech would not serve the end he aimed at. And the most striking point is thishe omits, as if of set purpose, those places of the history in which he would have shone.

He and James and Peter were frequently selected by the Master to be with Him when others were excluded. But of these occasions John says nothing. At the resurrection of the daughter of Jairus, it is said of the disciples, as well as of the relatives and the multitude, that the Lord put them all out and only suffered the three to be with Him. This was a singular honor, but John does not say a word about the raising of the daughter of Jairus! What self-oblivion! I should not have omitted it if I had been writing, nor would you. If we had been writing apart from the inspiration of the Spirit, we should have treasured up those special incidents of favor and we should not have thought ourselves egotistical, either, but should have considered ourselves as specially called to record a miracle which was witnessed by so very few!

The Spirit of God, in moving John to write, took such full possession of him that he wrote only that which worked towards the one great objective. No matter how interesting the event, he leaves it unrecorded if he judges it to be aside from his design. Notice, next, that only three were with our Lord at His Transfigurationand John was one of them. John does not mention that august event except it is that He says, We beheld His Glory, the Glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father, full of Grace and truth, in which there may be a reference to it, but it is by no means clear! At any rate, he does not narrate the circumstance, but leaves it to other pens.

This is a moral miracle! What uninspired man could have left out such a vision from his page? Even more striking is the fact that the Master, when He took with Him the 11 to the garden, left the major part of them at the gate, but He led the three further into the garden and bade them wait at about a stones-cast distance, where some of them heard His prayers and observed His bloody sweat. John, who was one of them, says nothing about it! Had he forgotten it? That were impossible! Did He doubt it? Certainly not! But the omission shows you that these incidents were not written with the view of honoring John, but that the reader may be led to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God! He leaves out that which would have brought John into the front, in order that he may fill up the whole foreground of his canvas with the portrait of his Lord. Everything is subordinated to the one grand endthat you should believe that Jesus is the Christ.

What a lesson is all this to us who write or speak for God! Let us labor for this one thing, that we may lead men to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God! If any sort of preaching would exalt ourselves, let us choose another, lest we hide the Cross of Christ! If we can occupy the space with something more forcible, let us omit the choicest piece of oratory. Let us prune the vine of our speech that all its sap may go to fruit and let that fruit be the bringing of men to believe that Jesus is the Christ!

Further, notice that Holy Scripture was not written with the mere view of imparting knowledge to men by presenting them with a complete biography of Jesus Christ. The one objective of Scripture is that you may believe on Jesus Christ. It was not the aim of the Evangelists to present us with a complete life of Jesus Christ. Observe the difference between such a writer as John and an ordinary biographer. Usually when you see a biography advertised, it will be your wisdom to save your money, for scarcely ever is there a biography written that is fully worth the money asked for it. I can point you to biographies stuffed full of letters which might just as well have been burnedand common places which might as well have been forgotten. The good man never did anything in his life except that he married a wife and took a holiday and traveled through Switzerland and went to Venice and Rome!

Every scrap that he wrote home about, the most common incident of travel, is secured and inserted as if it were a priceless gem. It is just the same that every Tom and John and Mary would have said, and yet it is paraded as something heavenly! The book must be swelled out and so the biographer gives us every bit of sense or nonsense that he can find. There must have been great searching of drawers, great writing to first cousins, uncles and aunts, to know if they have an old letter anywhere of the dear deceased! All manner of small talk is inserted because, to speak the truth, our lives are mostly so little that if we do not blow them up with wind there will not be enough to make a volume for the book-market!

How different is the biography of Jesus of Nazareth! The signs and wonders which He did are not written to make a bookthey are not even written that you may be informed of all that Jesus didthese are written with an end, an aim, an objectiveThat you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Matthew, when he writes of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham, leaves out everything that does not bring out Christ in connection with the Kingdom of God. He paints Messiah, the Prince, and he will not be taken off from his work. Luke brings forth Jesus as the Man and you see how wondrously he keeps to that one line of things. But when you get to John, and he is about to bring forth the Lord Jesus as the Son of God, he omits numbers of details that show our Lord in other lights and other aspects.

Here Jesus is not so much the King in His KingdomHe leaves that to Matthewhe sticks to his own point which is indicated by his opening sentencesIn the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He desires to set forth our Lords glorious Messiahship, personal Sonship and Deity! And he adheres to that and to that, alone. The Evangelists do not attempt, merely, to increase our knowledge, but they aim to win our understandings and to conquer our hearts for Christ! Notice yet again, dear Friends, that the Gospels and the other Books of Scripture were not written for the gratification of the most godly and pious curiosity.

Truly, I would have liked to have acted to our Lord as Boswell did to his friend, Dr. Johnson! I would have thought it an honor to have noted down every choice word He dropped and every act He did. I would have recorded the very color of His hair and you should have known whether His eyes were blue or hazel! I would have left on record every incident about the very fabric of that hem of His garment which the woman touched. Would not any of you have done so? Do you not love Him so much and prize Him so greatly, that you would have thought the smallest trifle about Him to be a gem of knowledge? Our love ennobles everything that has to do with our adorable Lord!

But the writers, Inspired by the Holy Spirit, were not led astray by this feeling. They knew their Object and gave their whole strength to Him! The Holy Spirit did not send His servants to gather up interesting details and preserve curious facts. None of them wrote to gratify your curiosity, even about the things which concern your Lord and Master. You shall be told that which shall lead you to believe Him to be the Son of God and you shall be told no more, for had all been written, you might have spent all your time in trying to know Christ after the flesh! But now He has preserved only that which, by His blessing, shall teach you to know Him after the spirit. It is not to gratify curiosity but to beget faith within the soul that the memoirs of our Lord are written by the Evangelists.

Again, the Scriptures are not even written with the view of setting before us a complete example. I want you to notice that. It is true that the Gospels set before us a perfect Character and we are bound to imitate it. It is true that when we read the life of Christ we may learn how to live and how to diebut that was not the first and chief design of the writersthey wrote that we might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God and that, by believing, we might have life through His name! Good works are best promoted, not as the first, but as the second cause. They come as the result of faith and he that would promote that which is pure and honest and holy, had best promote faith in Jesus Christ, the Savior!

The Scripture does not go in for flowers, first, nor even for fruit, but it plants roots and, therefore, it aims at implanting faith in Jesus Christ, for when we have believed in Him, the faith that works by love will be sure to produce a sacred imitation of His most beloved and perfect Character! Yes, let the truth stand as I have put it, these are written, first and last, with no other end and objective but this, That you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Open his Gospel and see how John, all through it, keeps to his design. It would be worth while to spend the whole morning and a half dozen other mornings, in showing you that John never takes his eyes from this one point. You will soon perceive that his Book contains a series of testimonies borne by persons led to faith in Jesus as the Christ.

John, in the first chapter, teaches the Truth of God which he was about to proveread the 17th and 18th verses, The Law was given by Moses, but Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. Here you see that Jesus is the Christ. No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him. There is the onlybegotten Son, and the two verses show us that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. John had been convinced of this at our Lords Baptism by the descent of the Holy Spirit upon Him and, therefore, he bore this witness at the commencement.

Almost immediately after follows the conversion of Andrewand what does Andrew witness? He says to his brother, Simon, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. Close on the heels of that comes Nathanaels testimony. He says, Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel. Directly after follows the changing of the water into wine at the marriage of Cana in Galileeone of the seven miracles which John mentionsand he never mentions any more than those seven. And of this, the first of the seven, he says, This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth His Glory; and His disciples believed on Him. The miracle was intended to produce faith and did produce it! At the end of each record of a miracle, John tells us that some believed in Him and generally that they came to believe that He was the Christ, the Son of God.

That memorable third chapter concerning Nicodemus shows us how that enquiring master of Israel came to believe in Him and how the Lord was revealed to Nicodemus as both the Sent One and the Son, For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved. In the fourth chapter you get to the well at Sychar, where the Lord manifests Himself to a poor fallen womanand she is convinced and hastens to tell her friendsand they, by-and-by, know that this is, indeed, the Christ, the Savior of the world!

In the case of the raising up of the noblemans son in the same chapter, you are reminded by John that the father was led to faith in Jesus and the natural inference is that you ought to be led to display a like confidence. In the fifth chapter the healing of the impotent man at the pool is narrated in order to introduce the statement, But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father has given Me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me. When 5,000 had been fed, we read, Those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the world.

In the 69th verse of the sixth chapter you find Simon Peter saying, We believe and are sure that You are that Christ, the Son of the living God, and so in the seventh chapter, others said this is the Christ, being convinced by that which He had spoken. To the man born blind, Jesus said, Do you believe on the Son of God? and the mans practical answer was an avowal of faith and an immediate act of worship. But I am afraid you would soon grow weary if I were to dwell upon every incident which would prove my point. The whole Book is made up of modes of reasoning by which men have been led to believe in Jesus!

It might have been written for the sake of the Unitarians of our own time. It contains repeated declarations that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and a series of testimonies of persons brought to see this by the signs that Jesus worked among them. Study Johns Gospel with that view and you will see how the Lord brings one to believe on Him by a call which came with Divine authority. A second by unveiling the secrets of her life. Another by answering his prayers. Another by enlightening his mind. Of the whole of His disciples, our Lord gives the secret reason of their discipleship in His matchless prayer, For I have given unto them the words which You gave Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from You, and they have believed that You did send Me.

Throughout the whole Book, the strain is the same, for it begins with Andrews confession, We have found the Messiah, and ends with Thomas, to whom Jesus said, Reach here your finger, and behold My hands. Thomas cries in ecstasy, My Lord and my God! And this is almost the top stone of the confessions and achievements of faith, but not quite, for here is the crown of all, Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. You Bible readers who have never believed in Jesus as the Christ, have read in vain! You have read to your own condemnation, but not to your salvation!

Oh, you that are afraid that you may not be allowed to believe in Jesus, dismiss that foolish fear, for this holy Book is written on purpose that you may believe and, therefore, it is clear that you have full liberty to do so! Every time John dipped his pen into the ink he breathed the prayer, Lord, bring men to believe in Jesus by that which I have written. And he closed his Gospel by declaring the innermost longing of his living soul, These are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. My dear Hearer, your immediate conversion to faith in the Lord Jesus is the objective of this Book. God grant it may be fulfilled in you!

II. We turn, in the second place, to a subject which is a step further THE GREAT OBJECT OF TRUE FAITH IS CHRIST JESUS. The text does not say, These are written that you might believe the Nicene Creed, for good as that creed is, it was not, then, composed, and is not the chief object of faith. It does not say, These are written that you might believe the Athanasian creed. A very good creed, but rather savage, and also not then devised. No, noThese are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing, you might have life through His name. That is to say, the faith which brings life to the soul is faith in the Person, offices, Nature, and work of Jesusand though you may be in the dark about a thousand things and may make mistakes about 10,000 moreyet if you believe in the Messiah, the Son of God, you have eternal life!

First, I am to believe in Jesus that He is the Christ, that He is the promised Messiah, anointed of God to deliver the human race. I must believe that this is He whom God promised at the Garden of Eden when He said, The Seed of the woman shall bruise the serpents head. This is the Sent One who is come to seek and to save that which is lostin Him we are to believe, for it is writtenWhoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. Next we are to believe that He is the Son of Godnot in the sense in which men are sons of God, but in that higher sense in which He is the only-begotten Son of God, One with the Father, eternally and indissolubly One. The Word was with God, but more than that, the Word was God.

Now, this is to be believed if we would live unto God. Whoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwells in him and he in God. Who is he that overcomes the world, but he that believes that Jesus is the Son of God? A Jesus who is not Divine could give us no power to overcome the world! But in His Godhead we find our strength. Put the two together, that He, the Divine One, became Man, and was sent into the world to redeem usand we have the right idea of Immanuel, God With Us! Will this belief save us? Assuredly it will, but listen while I explain. First, believe this to be a matter of fact. Having believed it to be a matter of fact, go on to look into the record concerning Him till you are undoubtedly sure of itfor these are written that you might believe with the fullest confidence that Jesus is God and Savior.

When you are sure of the fact, the next thing is to accept it for yourselfagree that Jesus shall be your Anointed, through whom you will get the anointing which comes upon Him as the Head and descends to you as the skirts of His garment. At the same time, unfeignedly consent that He shall be your God and cry with Thomas, My Lord and my God! You are getting on, now, to complete faithgo one step further. Yield yourself up to the grand Truth of God which you have received, for that is saving faiththe submission of yourself to the Truth of God. Acting upon the conviction of its truth, I must saysince Jesus is now my Savior, He shall save me! Since He is the Christ anointed for me, I will trust Him and share His anointing! Since Christ is the Son of God, I will rest in Him, that I, also, may become in Him a child of God.

That is the point. He that has the Son has life: and he that has not the Son of God has not life. Accept Jesus as He is set forth, for to as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. The faith which receives Christ as He is revealed as the Messiah and as the Son of God, is the faith which has eternal lifeand the Scriptures are written that you way have this faith! I want you to notice one more thing and that is, we are to receive Jesus of Nazareth as being the Christ and the Son of God on the ground of the written Word of God.

SeeThese are written that you might believe. From this it is clear that the ground of acceptable faith is the written Word of God and it is vain to look for any other. Oh, says one brother, I could believe, but I do not feel as I ought. What have your feelings to do with the truth of the statement that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God? I read in the newspaper such-and-such a statement about affairs in Europe. I may have sufficient cause for doubting the news, but it certainly would not be a good reason if I were to say, I do not believe the telegram because I do not feel that it is true. How can our feelings affect matters of fact? They are either true or not, altogether apart from the condition of the hearer.

Now, here is a testimony concerning Jesus borne by John and three other Evangelists. If these things are true, then they are true whether your heart dances for joy or sinks in despair. Whatever becomes of our changeable feelings, facts are stubborn things and alter not! Experience cannot make a thing true and frames of mind and feelings cannot make a thing to be a lie which is, in itself, true! Over the head, then, of all the storms, turmoils and changes of my poor, weak, silly nature, there rises a Rock that is higher than I, higher than all things! A Rock which cannot be moved, let the storm rage as long as it willChrist Jesus, the anointed Son of God died in the place of all who trust in Him! I trust in Him and I am saved!

If He is, indeed, commissioned of God to save Believers. And if He is, Himself, God, pledged to save Believers, then I, as a Believer, am as safe as the Throne of God, or the presence-angels which surround it! Whatever I feel or do not feel, I am a saved man since I heartily believe that which the Book was written to teach me, namely, Gods Gospel to men, embodied in Jesus Christ, who, being the Son of God, is anointed of the Lord to save His people!

III. So I come to the third point, which is this, that THE TRUE LIFE OF A SOUL LIES IN CHRIST JESUS AND COMES TO THAT SOUL THROUGH FAITH IN HIM. I understand by the life of a soul only one thing, and yet for the sake of clearing it we must divide it a little. First, when a man has been found guilty of death, if by any means that sentence is removed from him, he may be said to obtain life, life in its judicial form. Suppose that a person who is condemned to die is by some just and lawful means acquitted? In that fact he finds life. That is the first form of life that every man has who believes that Jesus is, indeed, the Christ. He is acquitted, pardoned, justified and, therefore, he lives.

Through the righteousness of Jesus Christ, he is made just in the sight of God and, being covered with perfect righteousness, he lives and must live forever. He is absolved, for he has believed in Christ Jesus, and by that act, he has accepted the righteousness of God and escaped from death. The guilt has been removed and, therefore, the penalty cannot be inflicted. This judicial life is attended with an imparted life. God the Holy Spirit is with Believers, breathing into them a new, holy, heavenly life. They are dead to the world and buried with Christ, but they live unto God, never more to be slain by sin.

The life of Christ is infused into them by the Spirit of the living God, even as the Lord Jesus has testified, Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that hears My word, and believes on Him that sent Me, has everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Observe that this life grows. It continues to gather strength and as it increases, it is spoken of, by John, as life, more abundantly. That life never dies! It is impossible that it should ever be destroyed! It is a living and incorruptible Seed which abides forever. The life of saints on earth is, in fact, the same life as that of saints in Heaven. There is no change in the substance of the new life when we enter Gloryonly that it grows and develops and reaches perfection in Heaven. The Believers life on earth is Christhis life in Heaven is the same.

As far as our spiritual nature is concerned, we have undergone the Resurrection and are raised from the deadand the life that we live here is the Resurrection lifeyet the Resurrection has not passed already, for as to the body it must be changed, and if it dies and is buried it shall be raised again at the sounding of the last trumpet. We are waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body from the power of death, waiting in the full assurance of hope. The soul even now lives in newness of life, for we are quickened by the Spirit of God! The new life enters the soul in and through believing and is the same life which we shall exercise forever at the right hand of God, even as Jesus said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believes on Me has everlasting life.

I need to enlarge a little upon the fact that this life comes with believing because I need it to be noticed that it really comes with believing apart from any other necessary circumstances. One person complains to me, Sir, I cannot tell exactly when I was converted and this causes me great anxiety. Dear Friend, this is a needless fear. Turn your enquiries in another directionAre you alive unto God by faith? Do you believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God? Are you resting and trusting in Him? Yes, you say, with all my heart. Well, never mind about when you were converted. The fact is before you and its date is a small matter. If a person were to say to you, You are not alive, how would you prove that you are alive? A good plan would be gently to step on his toe, or do something to make him feel that you possess life. I do not think it could be necessary for you to find your birth certificate because if you held it in your hand and said, This document is conclusive, it would not be half so convincing a proof of life as some distinct act of life!

If I thought that I knew the very moment in which I was born again I might be mistaken. Indeed, little reliance can be placed upon our judgment or our memories. I would sooner believe, today, than be quite sure that I began to believe 30 years ago! Perhaps very few of you know the exact minute at which the sun rose this morningand yet you do not doubt that it has risen, for at this present moment your are enjoying its light! Some mornings you can tell the instant of the suns rising, but frequently it is so cloudy that the sun is up before you know it! A man would be an absolute lunatic who should say, I do not believe that it is daylight, for I do not know when the sun rose. Date is a very small and unimportant matter compared with certainty and fact!

Do you believe in Jesus Christ? Then you are alive unto God and life is the evidence of birth. Well, says another, but I hardly know how I was converted. That, again, is another minor matter. Some of us can trace the way in which the Lord led us to Himself and we are very grateful to the instrument by whom we were brought to a knowledge of the Truth of God. But our text does not state that the Bible was written that you and I might trace our faith in Christ to John, or to anyone else. No, it was written that we might believe in Jesus Christ as the result of testimonyand I care not one farthing by what testifying agent you were brought to do itso long as you do but believe because of the witness of the Word of God.

I am sure whatever the outward means of your faith, the Spirit of God must have worked it, for there is no living faith apart from His sacred working upon the mind. If you sincerely believe, the mode in which you gained your faith need not be enquired into. Well, says one, but I want to know that I am alive unto God by my feelings. I feel often so sad and full of pain. Listen, is not pain as good a proof of life as pleasure? If anybody said to me, I know I am alive because I feel so well, I should reply, And I sometimes know that I am alive because I feel so ill. Rheumatic pain is as rare a proof of life as a thrill of delightand so, anxiety about your estate and hatred of sin and grief over your imperfection are just as sure signs of spiritual life as the highest joy or the liveliest energy! Do not worry yourself, therefore, about that. If you believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and are resting in Him, it is well with you.

But, says one, I change so much. I feel sometimes as if I must be a Christian, but at other times I feel as if it were out of the question that I could be saved. Yes, and do you not change a great deal as to your bodily life, too? I do, I know. Why, this heavy, damp, thick atmosphere half poisons me! Lift me up a few thousand feet on a mountain side, with a good stiff breeze blowing, and I feel quite another man! Are these changes reasons for questioning my being alive? No, no! Quite the reverse. The reason why I feel these changes is because I am alive, for I reckon that if I were a broomstick or a brick wall the atmosphere would not matter much! If you have no spiritual life, you will know few changes, but because you are alive these variations must and will occur to you.

I make you smile. I wish I could smile away some of those fears which hang like a nightmare over certain of the best of you. But I have such conflicts within, cries one. Ah, dear Friend, there are no conflicts in dead men! There would be no warfare between faith and unbelief if you were not on the Lords side! If our whole being remained in its natural death, there would be no inward fighting, but inasmuch as there are two minds within you, depend upon itone of those minds is the mind of God! This inward conflict should not cause you to doubt, but rather lead you to cling the more tenaciously to your conviction that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, the Savior of men!

Faith in Jesus begets life and this life will flourish or decay very much in proportion to our faith. Believe firmly and your life shall be vigorous. Believe tremblingly and your life will be faint. Yet all depends upon the name. Is not that a blessed word, that believing, you might have life through His name. The name means the whole Character of Christall His offices and relationships, all the work He has done and is doingwe have life through His name. We have no life anywhere else but in that name! Jesus Christ said to Lazarus, Lazarus, come forth, and why did he come forth? Why, because at the back of the word which called him, there was the name of Christ who quickens the dead!

Why were demoniacs cured? Was it not because unclean spirits knew the name of Jesus and trembled at it? The devil and death, sin and despairthey all yield to that name! When some began to exorcise in another name, the devil leaped upon them and cried, Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are you? That name has power in Heaven, has power on earth, has power in Hell, has power everywhere! And if we trust in that name and live to the Glory of that name, we have life through that name!

I come back to my beginning and there I closethe one thing, the main thing, the only thing is that we hold on to Jesus Christ through thick and thin, through foul and fair, up hill and down dale, in the night and in the day, in life and in death, in time and in eternitythat we steadfastly believe that Jesus of Nazareth, who died upon the Cross, is the Messiah of God, yes, the Son of God, sent to cleanse away iniquity and bring in perfect righteousness! Whether we see Him on His Cross or on His Throne, all our hope, all our trust must be fixed in Him and so we shall live when time shall be no more!

Verily, I say unto you, those who thus trust Him shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of His hands, for He has said it, I give unto My sheep eternal life. Stay there, O true Believers, and let none entice you from your steadfastness! If any of you have never exerted this faith, may the Lord bring you to Jesus at once! This sacred Book was written on purpose to make you believe! The Spirit is given to lead you to believe! The objective of every preaching of the Gospel is that you may believe! Therefore come and welcome! And at this hour believe on the one saving name and live thereby. God grant it for His names sake. Amen.

LETTER FROM MR. SPURGEON . Mentone, November 19th , 1881. TO FRIENDS AT HOMEI am happily resting. Pray that I may gather strength in body, soul and spirit, and return to my labor to perform a far greater work than has ever been given me up to now. At this time revival services are being held at the Tabernacle and I beg all friends to strive together in their prayers for a great and extraordinary blessing. Especially let all members of the Church be up and doing, for time is short, men are dying, wickedness abounds and there is need that the Gospel be preached with power. With fervent love in Christ Jesus, Yours forever, *C. H. Spurgeon*.

Adapted from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #443 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE TWO DRAUGHTS OF FISHES   
NO. 443

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON SUNDAY MORNING, APRIL 6, 1862, BY REV. C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Now when He had left speaking, He said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a draught.   
Luke 5:4**

**And He said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and you shall find some. They cast therefore and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.   
John 21:6.**

THE whole life of Christ was a sermon. He was a Prophet mighty in word and deed. And by His deeds as well as His words He taught the people. It is perfectly true that the miracles of Christ attest His mission. To those who saw them they must have been evident proof that He was sent of God. But we ought not to overlook that probably a higher reason for the miracles is to be found in the instruction which they convey. To the world without, at the present time, the miracles of Christ are more hard to believe than the doctrine which He taught. Skeptics turn them into stones of stumbling and when they cannot object at the marvelous teaching of Jesus, they attack the miracles as monstrous and incredible.

I doubt not that even to minds seriously vexed with unbelief, the miracles, instead of being helps to belief, have been trials of faith. Few, indeed, are there in whom faith is worked by signs and wonders. Nor, indeed is this the Gospel way of bringing conviction to the soulthe secret force of the Living Word is the chosen instrumentality of Christand wonders are left to be the resort of that Anti-Christ by whom the nations shall be deceived. We, who by Divine Grace have believed, view the miracles of Christ as noble attestations to His mission and Divinity. But we confess that we value them even more as instructive homilies than as attesting witnesses.

It is our conviction that we should lose much of the benefit which they were meant to convey to us, if we were merely to view them as seals to the roll, for they are a part of the writing of the roll itself. The marvels worked by our blessed Lord are acted sermons fraught with holy doctrine, set forth to us more vividly than it could have been in words. We start with the assumption upon which our sermon will be grounded this morningthat Christs miracles are sermons preached in deedsvisible allegories, truths embodied, principles incarnated and set in motion. They are, in fact, the pictures in the great book of Christs teachingthe illustrations by which He flashed light into dim eyes.

We have heard of some ministers who could say that they had often preached from the same text but they had never delivered the same discourse. The like may be said of Christ. He often preached upon the same Truth of God but it was never precisely in the same manner. We have read in your hearing this morning, the narrative of two miracles (Luke 5, and John 21), which seem to the casual observer to be precisely alike. But he who shall read diligently and study carefully, will find that though the text is the same in both, the discourse is full of variations.

In both the miraculous draughts of fishes, the text is the mission of the saints to preach the Gospelthe work of man-catchingthe ministry by which souls are caught in the net of the Gospel and brought out of the element of sin to their eternal salvation. The preacher is compared to a fisherman. The fishermans vocation is a toilsome one. Woe be to that minister who finds his calling to be otherwise. The fisherman must go forth in rough weathers and at all hazards. If he should only fish in a calm sea he may often starve. So the Christian minister, whether men will receive the Word with pleasure, or reject it with anger and wrath, must be ready to imperil reputation and risk comfort.

Yes, he must hate his own life, also, or he is not worthy of the heavenly calling. The fishermans is a rough occupationno dainty fingers may come in contact with his nets. It is not a trade for gentlemen, but for rough, strong, fearless men, who can heave a rope, handle a tar-brush, or scour a deck. The ministry is not meant for your dainty souls who would go delicately through this world without a trial, an offense, an insult, or a sneer. Such work is meant for men who know how to do business on great waters and can go abroad upon the sea, not fearing the spray or the waves. The fishermans calling, too, must be carried on perseveringly. It is not by one grand haul that a man makes his fortune. He must constantly cast forth his net.

One sermon makes not a preacher. He who shall but now and then deliver himself of some carefully prepared oration, is no true minister of God. He must be instant in season and out of season. He must cast his net in all waters. He must in the morning be at his work and in the evening he must not withhold his hand. To be a fisherman, a man must expect disappointments. He must often cast in the net and bring up nothing but weeds. The minister of Christ must reckon upon being disappointedand he must not be weary in well-doing for all his disappointmentsbut must in faith continue in prayer and labor, expecting that at the end he shall receive his reward. It needs no great labor for you to work out at leisure the comparison between fishermen and the Gospel ministry, the simile is so aptly chosen.

The two narratives before us have a degree of uniformity. That shall be our first point. But they have a greater degree of dissimilarity. We will bring that out in the second place. And, then, thirdly, we will suggest some great lessons which they both combine to teach us.

I. First, then, IN THESE TWO MIRACLES THERE ARE MANY POINTS OF UNIFORMITY. They are both intended to set forth the way in which Christs kingdom shall increase.

1. First you will perceive that in both miracles we are taught that the means must be used. In the first case, the fish did not leap into Simons boat to be taken. Nor, in the second case, did they swarm from the sea and lay themselves down upon the blazing coals that they might be prepared for the fishermans feast. No, the fishermen must go out in their boat. They must cast the net. And after having cast the net, they must either drag it ashore, or fill both boats with its contents. Everything is done here by human agency.

It is a miracle, certainly, but yet neither the fisherman, nor his boat, nor his fishing tackle are ignored. They are all used and all employed. Let us learn that in the saving of souls God works by means. So long as the present economy of Grace shall stand, God will be pleased by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. Every now and then there creeps up in the Church a sort of striving against Gods ordained instrumentality. I marked it with sorrow dating the Irish Revival.

We constantly saw, in some excellent papers, remarks which I thought exceedingly injuriouswherein it was made a subject of congratulation that no man was concerned in the work. No eminent preacher, no fervent Evangelist. The whole was boasted to be conducted without human instrumentality. That was the weakness of the Revival, not its strength. You say it gave God more glory. Not so. God gets the most glory through the use of instruments. When God works without instruments, doubtless He is glorified. But He knows Himself in which way He gets the most honor and He has Himself selected the plan of instrumentality as being that by which He is most magnified in the earth.

We have this treasure. How? Alone? Without any earthly accompaniments? No. But in earthen vessels. What for? That God may have less glory? No. But in the earthen vessels on purpose, that the excellency of the treasure may be of God, and not of us. God makes the infirmity of the creature to be the foil to the strength of the Creator. He takes men who are nothing in themselves, and works by them His splendid victories. Perhaps we would not admire Samson so much if he had dashed the Philistines in pieces with his fists, as we do when we find that with such a weapon, so unadapted to the work, as the jawbone of an ass, he laid on heaps the thousands of his foes.

The Lord takes ill weapons, that with them He may work great deeds. When He said, Let there be light and there was light without any instrument, He showed His glory. But when instead, thereof, He takes the Apostles and says again, Let there be light, and sends them forth who were darkness in themselves and makes them the medium of lighting up a dark world, I say there is a greater glory. And if the morning stars sang together when they first saw light upon the newly made earth, surely the angels in Heaven rejoiced even more when they saw light thus streaming upon the dark earth through

men, who, in and of themselves, would only have increased the blackness and made the gloom more dense.

God works by means of men whom He especially calls to His work and not as a rule without them. The hypocrite strives to get rid of the pastorate but he never can, for the Lord will ever continue to give pastors after His own heart to feed His people and all attempts made by the flock to dispense with these pastors will lead to leanness and poverty of soul. The outcry against the one man ministry comes not of God, but of proud self-conceitof men who are not content to learn although they have no power to teach.

It is the tendency of human nature to exalt itself which has raised up these disturbers of the peace of Gods Israel, for they will not endure to submit themselves to the authorities which God has Himself appointed. They abhor the teachings of the Apostle, where he says, by the Spirit of God, Obey them that have rule over you and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable to you.

Brethren, I warn you, there is a spirit abroad which would pull down the men whom God Himself has raised up, that would silence those into whose mouths God has put the tongue of fire, that foolish men might prate according to their own will to the profit of no one and to their own shame. As for us, we shall, I trust, never cease to recognize that agency by which the Lord works mightily among us. We would check no ministry in the Church of God. We would but be too glad to see it more abundantly exercised. Would God that all the Lords servants were Prophets!

But we enter our solemn protest against that spirit which, under presence of liberty to all, sets aside the instrumentality by which the Lord especially works. He will have you still keep the fishermen to their nets and to their boats. And your new ways of catching fish without nets and saving souls without ministers, will never answer, for they are not of God. They have been tried and what has been the result of the trial? I know not a Church in existence that has despised instrumentality but it has come to an end within a few years either by schism or decay.

Where upon the face of the earth is there a single Church that has existed fifty years where Gods chosen instrumentality of ministry has been despised and rejected? Ichabod! is written upon their walls. God rejects them because they reject Gods chosen way of working. Their attempts are flashes in the pan, meteoric lights, will-o-the-wisps, swellings of proud flesh, bubbles of foam, here today and gone forever on the morrow.

2. Again, in both our texts there is another Truth of God equally conspicuous, namely, that means of themselves are utterly unavailing. In the first case you hear the confession, Master, we have toiled all the night and have taken nothing. In the last case you hear them answer to the question, Children, have you no meat? Noa sorrowful No. What was the reason of this? Were they not fishermen plying their special calling? Verily, they were no raw hands. They understood the work. Had they gone about the toil unskillfully? No. Had they lacked industry? No, they had toiled. Had they lacked perseverance? No, they had toiled all night.

Was there a deficiency of fish in the sea? Certainly not, for as soon as the Master comes, there they are in large number. What, then, is the reason? Is it not because there is no power in the means of themselves apart from the presence of Christ? The Great Worker who does not discard the means would still have His people know that He uses instrumentality, not to glorify the instrument, but for the sake of glorifying Himself. He takes weakness into His hands and makes it strong, not that weakness may be worshipped, but that the strength may be adored which even makes weakness subservient to its might.

Brethren, let us as a Church always keep this in mind, that without Christ we can do nothing. Not by might, nor by power but by My Spirit, says the Lord. Put no dependence upon societies, upon committees, upon ministries, upon anything that we can do. Let us work as if it all depended upon us. But let us come to God depending upon Him, knowing for sure that it does not rest with us, but with Him alone. Let us send forth the missionaries to the heathen. Let us send forth our men into the dark streets and lanes of London. Let us scatter tracts. Let us distribute the Word of God. Let us send forth preachers by scores from our School of the Prophets. But when this is done, let us not sit still and say, Now it is all accomplished, good must come of it. No, Lord, unless Your blessing descend from on High, as well might we have done nothing, for no eternal results can follow.

How often this drives me to my knees! The surprising work which God is doing in connection with this place lifts up my heart with joy. But then the fear lest it all should come to nothing for lack of His blessing casts my spirit to the very earth. You will remember, I dare say, that one Brother was moved, some time ago, to distribute a volume of the sermons preached here to every student in Oxford and Cambridge. After that had been done and some two hundred thousand sermons had been distributed, he then gave them to every member of Parliament, to every peer of the realm and to princes, kings and emperors of Europe. Having accomplished that work, he has another in hand of great magnitude.

Dear Friends, as I think of these books traveling everywhere among high and low, the rich and poor, in all places of the land, my heart is glad. But then, if God withholds the blessing, as well had they never been born in the press and circulated by human hand. What good can they do? Let the net be ever so broad, ever so strong, and let it be ever so industriously cast into the sea, yet we shall toil all the night and take nothing unless the Master comes to bless the work.

Let us, then, be always in prayer for the blessing. Let us remember that we have done nothing until we have prayed over what we have done. Let us consider that all the seed we have put into the ground is put there for worms to eat, unless we have dropped into the soil the preserving grain of prayer to keep that other grain alive. We shall have harvests if we wait on God for them, but after all our sowing, if we look to the soil, the seed, or the sower, we shall see nothing for our pains.

3. Thirdly, there is clearly taught in both these miracles the fact that it is Christs Presence that confers success. Christ sat in Peters boat. It was His will that by a mysterious influence drew the fish to the net, as though He had a hook, a secret hook in each of their jaws. As though He could stop them in their sportive leaps and hurry them all to one common spot. It was His Presence on the dry land, when He spoke from off the shore to His toiling disciples out yonder and said, Cast the net on the right side of the shipit was His Presence that drew the fish to the place where they were taken.

Oh, Brethren, we must learn thisthat it is Christs Presence in the midst of the Church that is the Churchs powerthe shout of a King in the midst of her. It is the Presence of Christs great representative, the Holy Spirit, that is to give the Church force. I, if I am lifted up, will draw all men unto Me. There is the attraction. The Spirit gives the power and we must tarry until we get it. But when we have it, then we cannot preach in vain, for we become a savor of life unto life to those who hear. Christians, Christs Presence with you must be your power. Be much in fellowship with Him. Catch much of His Spirit. Meditate much upon His sufferings. Keep close to His Person. And then, wherever you go, there shall be a power about you which even your adversaries shall be compelled to acknowledge.

Oh that we had more of Christs Presence in us as a Church! Lift up your hearts for it. If Christ is here at all, let us not grieve Him. I charge you, O you daughters of Jerusalem, that you stir not up nor awake my love till He pleases. And if He is not here, let us rise from the bed of our sloth and go forth and seek Him, crying, Oh You whom my soul loves, tell me where You feed, where You make Your flock to rest at noon! And if you find Him, I charge you hold Him and let Him not go till you bring Him into your mothers house, into the chamber of her that bare you, even the Church of Christ. There will we hold Him, there will we embrace Himand He shall show to us His love.

4. In both instances the success which attended the instrumentality through Christs Presence developed human weakness. We do not see human weakness more in non-success than in success. In the first instance, in the success you see the weakness of man, for the net breaks and the ships begin to sink and Simon Peter falls down withDepart from me for I am a sinful man, O Lord. He did not know so much about that till his boat was filled. But the very abundance of Gods mercy made him feel his own nothingness.

In the last case, they were scarcely able to draw the net because of the multitude of fishes. Brethren, if you or I would know to the fullest extent what utter nothings we are, if the Lord shall give us success in winning souls we shall soon find it out. As we see first one, and then another, and then scores and then hundreds, brought to the Lord Jesus, we shall say, Who has begotten me these? How can such wonders be worked by me? And we shall fall prostrate before the footstool of Sovereign Grace and confess that we are unworthy of such amazing favors.

Let the Church spread, let her conquests be many, let her overrun whole provinces with her heavenly arms and instead of man becoming more famous, man shall sink lower and lower and it shall be more and more fully perceived that it is the Lord. Little works, such as have been common in our Churches for years, where twos and threes are added, are quite consistent with great self-congratulation, and so is utter barrenness. Mark the pompous carriage of many a fruitless preacher and see if it is not so.

Let the Lord make bare His arm and the man humbles himself in the dust, for when hundreds are ingathered, this cannot be the minister, this is the finger of God. The man is forgotten, then, in the very abundance of his success and the Lord, alone, is magnified in that day. Oh that God would do in the Churches of England some great and stupendous works by all His ministers! Then would they discover their own weakness and then would the name of God be glorified!

You frequently meet with the observation, if a man is successful in winning souls, I am afraid he will grow proud: how we ought to pray that he may be kept humble! Brethren, that is a very necessary prayer for anybody. But it is no more necessary for the man who is successful than for the unsuccessful one. In fact, it is an assumption of pride on any persons part to think that he has less need to pray against pride than any other man. Think not that when the Church prospers, it becomes necessarily proud. No, the very fullness of the boat makes it sink, and the very abundance of the miracle makes us cry out the more, It is the Lord, for we feel that it could not have been of man, for it is out of mans reach to have accomplished such wonders.

So far, then, there is a likeness running through the whole. Means must be usedmeans alone, unavailingChrists Presence gives the success. That success develops human weakness and leads to the exclamationIt is the Lord.

II. Having, then, shown the likeness, you will be still more interested in REMARKING THE DISSIMILARITY.

Allow us to say in the commencement, that we think the first picture represents the Church of God as we see it. The second represents it as it really is. The first pictures to us, the visible, the second the invisible. Luke tells us what the crowd see. John tells us what Christ showed to His disciples, alone. The first is common truth which the multitude may receive, the next is special mystery revealed only to spiritual minds. Observe, then, carefully, the points of divergence.

1. First, there is a difference in the orders given. In the first, it is, Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a draught. In the second it is, Cast the net on the right side of the ship. The first is Christs order to every minister. The second is the secret work of His Spirit in the Word. The first shows us that the ministry is to fish anywhere and everywhere. All the orders that the Christian has, as to his preaching, is, Launch out into the deep and let down your net. He is not to single out any particular character.

He is to preach to everybody, sensible sinners and insensible sinners. He is to preach to the dead dry bones of the valley as well as to the living souls. He is not to look where the fish are, but just to throw the net in, doing as his Master tells him, Go you into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. Those ministers who preach only to the elect should remember this. Our business is to include all sorts of fish and not to be particular about where we are, but just splash the net in. What if we are in town, or city, or village? What if we are among the rich or poor, learned or illiterate? What if we are among the debauched or immoral? We have nothing to do with thatour duty is the same, to launch out into the deep, and let down the netthat is all.

Christ will find the fishit is no business of ours. The secret truth is that when we are doing this, the Lord knows how to guide us, so that we, cast the net on the right side of the ship. That is the secret and invisible work of the Spirit, whereby He so adapts our ministry, which is in itself general, that He makes it particular and special. We speak to all, and He speaks to some. We blow the trumpet, but only the bankrupt debtors hear itonly those who are truly of the Spirit of God know the joyful sound and rejoice therein. We cannot single them out, but God can. We thrust in the blessed loadstone of the Gospel, and that heavenly magnet has an affinity to some hearts which God has quickened, so that as many as were ordained unto eternal life believe.

The Apostles preached to the crowd but the Lord God, the Holy Spirit, who had decreed the salvation of His chosen, sent the Word home with power to the chosen and separated ones. What a joy it is to think that we always have a picked congregation here, for the Lord has picked them! Though they are crowded together promiscuouslyhere the good, and there the bad, all sorts mingled and mixed togetheryet God brings them in according to His eternal purpose and all the while there is a core of chosen souls inside the mass of the congregation to whom God is applying the Word. We cast the net, after all, on the right side of the ship and we do find it full.

2. In the first instance you will clearly see that there is a distinct plurality. The fishermen have netsin the plural. They have boatsin the plural. There is plurality of agency employed. Each man seems to come out distinctly. In the next case, it is one. There are many men but they are all in one boat. They unitedly drag the net and it is but one netthere is no division, it is all one. Now, this is the visible and the invisible. To us, the means that God makes use of to bring sinners to Himself are various.

Sometimes we are in one boat trying to catch all the fish we can. There is another boat over yonder and they are trying to do the same. We ought to consider them as being partners and whenever our boat gets too full, we should beckon to our partners in the other ship to come and help us. We ought not to look upon those Brethren who differ from us as though they were emptying the sea and competing against us. The more the merrier. The more men to do good, the more will the Lords name be praised. I think, in many of our towns where some of our whining Brethren say that all good people should go to one Chapel, that it is far better to have three or four.

I question whether the plurality of agency involved in denominations is not a great benefit and blessing. Instead of, in the slightest degree, standing out against my Brethren for carrying out their convictions, I praise them and look upon them as partners in another ship. Our denominational distinctions help to keep us awakethus we stir one another up and do far more good in the world than would be the case if there were only a nominal Church. God would have the agency diverse. There must be several nets and there must be several fishermen and these fishermen in different boats.

So far as we are able to see, there will always be a Paul and a Barnabas, who cannot get on together. There will always be outward divisions in the ministry. And I avow myself the advocate and lover of these things. As I said last Sunday, the thing called Sectarianism I do not disown but maintain.

But let us look to the inward. In John they are all in one boat, all fishing together, all dragging one net. Ah, Brethren, this is what is really the fact. We do not see it, but all Gods ministers are dragging one net and all Gods Church is in one ship. Oh, I bless God for that sweet doctrine! It is no use striving after outward uniformity. We shall never see it. Neither the texture of the human mind nor the will of God require it. It is of no use to contend against the diversities which exist in the great visible Church. I do not know that these differences are evils.

They are the natural results of mans finite character and must and will exist to the end of the chapter. It is the unity of the Spirit. It is unity in Christ Jesus. It is unity in love to one another that God would have us regard. Let us learn this unity from the fact, that after all, though we may look as if we differed, yet if we are Gods ministers, there is only one ministry. If we are Gods Church, there is only one Church in the world. There is only one spouse of the Lord Jesus. There is only one fold and one Shepherd. Though to our eyes it will always be so, two boats, or twenty boatstwo nets, yes, fifty netsyet to Him who sees all things better than we do, there is only one boat and one net. And they shall all, who are taken in that one net, be safely brought to shore.

3. Thirdly, there is another difference. In the first case, how many fish were caught? The text says, a great multitude. In the second case, a great multitude are taken, too, but they are all counted and numbered. An hundred and fifty and three. Luke does not tell us how many were caught the first time, for there were some of them not worth the counting. But the second time, you will perceive the exact number is recorded, an hundred and fifty and three.

What was Peters reason for counting them? We cannot tell. But I think I know why the Lord made him do it. It was to show us that though in the outward instrumentality of gathering the people into the Church, the number of the saved is to us a matter of which we know nothing definitely, yet secretly and invisibly the Lord has counted them even to the odd one. He knows well how many the Gospel net shall bring in. See where the Word is preached what a great multitude are brought in! Thousands, tens of thousands are added to the different Churches of Christ and make a profession of their faith.

It were impossible to reckon all over Christendom how many have been taken in the outward net of the visible Church of Christ. But, Brethren, it is quite possible for it to be known of God how many shall be brought at last and how many now are in the invisible Church. He has counted them, foreordained their number, fixed them, settled them. The number, an hundred and fifty and three seems to me to represent a large definite number. They shall be in Heaven a number that no man can number, for Gods elect are not few. But they shall be a number whom God can number, for the Lord knows them that are His.

They shall be a number certain and fixed, which shall neither be diminished nor increased but shall abide the same according to His purpose and will. Now, I, as a preacher, have nothing to do with counting fish. My business is with the great multitude. Splash goes the net again! Oh Master! You who have taught us to throw the net and bring in a multitude, guide into it the hundred and fifty and three!

4. Yet again, notice another difference. The fish that were taken the first time appear to have been of all sorts. The net was broken and therefore, doubtless some of them got out again. There were some so little that they were not worth eating and doubtless were thrown away. They shall gather the good into vessels and throw the bad away. In the second case, the net was full of great fishes. They were all great fishes, all good for eating, all the one hundred and fifty and three were worth keeping. There was not one little fellow to be thrown back into the deep again.

The first gives us the outward and visible effect of the ministry. We gather into Christs Church a great number. And there will always be in that number some that are not good, that are not really called of God. Sometimes we have Church meetings in which we have to throw the bad away. We have many blissful meetings where it is gathering in the fish and what big hauls of fish has God given to us! Glory be to His name! But at other times we have to sit down and look our fish over, and there are some who must be thrown awayneither God nor man can endure them.

Thus is it in the outward and visible Church. Let no man be surprised if the tares grow up with the wheatit is the order of things, it must be so. Let none of us wonder if there are wolves in sheeps clothingit always will be so. There was a Judas among the Twelve. There will be deceivers among us to the end of the chapter. Not so the invisible Church the Church within the Churchthe holy of holies within the temple. In that there is none to throw away. No. The Lord who brought them into the net, brought the right sort in. He did not bring one hypocrite or apostate. And having brought them in to the exact number of one hundred and fifty and three, they cannot one of them get out againbut they are kept in that net, for that net does not break.

They are in the secret invisible Church of Christ and they cannot get out of it, let them do what they may. They may even give up their nominal profession, and thus get out of the visible Church but they cannot give up their secret possession. They cannot escape from the secret and invisible Church and they shall all be kept there till the net is dragged to land and the whole hundred and fifty and three saved.

6. Yet again, you notice in the first case the net broke and in the second case it did not. Now, in the first case, in the visible Church, the net breaks. My Brethren are always calling out the net is broken! No doubt it is a bad thing for nets to break. But you need not wonder at it. We cannot just now, when the net is full, stop to mend it. It will break. It is the necessary consequence of our being what we are that the net will break.

What do I mean by this? Why, that instead of having some one denomination, we have twenty or thirty? The net is broken. I do not at all grieve over it. I believe it is what must be as long as we are flesh and blood. For until you get a set of perfect men, you never will have anything but these divisions. The net must break and will break. But glory be to God, the net does not break after all in reality, for though the visible Church may seem to be rent and torn to pieces, the invisible Church is one. Gods chosen, Gods called, Gods quickened, Gods blood-bought they are one in heart and one in soul and one in spirit. Though they may wear different names among men, yet they still wear before God their Fathers name written on their foreheads. And they are, and always must be one.

You perceive, Brethren, that I do not advise you to strive for a nominal unity. The more you strive after that, the more divisions there will be. Certain Brethren left many of our denominations and formed, they said, a Church that should not be a sect. All they did was to make a sect the most sectarian of sectsthe most narrow and most bitter of cliques, though containing some of the best men, some of the best Christians and the ablest writers of the times. You cannot make a visible uniformity, it is beyond your powerthe net is broken.

There now! Take care of the fish and leave the net alone, but still maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of perfectness. Take care that you are not a schismatic in your heart, that you hold no heresy in your soul, that you are one with all them that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. And in this you will soon see that the net is not broken but that the saints are one. Ah, I bless God that when once we get with Gods peopleit does not matter what they arewe soon find the net is not broken. There are many a godly clergyman of the Church of England with whom I commune with the greatest joy and I have found the net was not broken.

And in conversing with Brethren of all denominations, some who from doctrine, some who from sentiment stand wide as the poles asunder, I have still found and known that there was such a real and perfect harmony of heart that the net was not broken. I do not believe that charity would ever have had such perfect work in Christs Church if it had not been for our being divided into tribes, like the twelve tribes of old. It is no charity for me to love a Brother who thinks as I thinkI cannot very well help it. But for me to love a dear Brother who differs from me in some pointswhy there is exercise and room for my charity!

And as God has left trials and troubles to exercise faith, I believe He has left us in many doctrinal difficulties on purposeto exercise our love till the day shall come when we shall all grow to the stature of perfect men in Christ Jesus. The net is not broken, Brethren. Do not believe it, and when you read about this denomination, and that, do not be grieved at these names and tribes, but rather, thank God for them. Remember, that is the visible Church and the net is broken. But there is an invisible Church where the net is not brokenwhere we are one in Christ and must be one forever.

There are several other points of difference but I think we have hardly time to enlarge upon them. I will only hint at them. In the first case, which is the visible Church, you see the human weakness becomes the strongest point. There is the boat ready to sink, there is the net broken, there are the men all out of heart, frightened, amazed and begging the Master to go away. In the other case it is not so at all. There is human weakness but still they are made strong enough. They have no strength to spare, as you perceive, but still they are strong enough, the net does not break, the ship goes slowly to land dragging the fish.

And then, lastly, Simon Peter pulls the fish to shore. Strong he must have been. They were just strong enough to get their fish to shore. So in the visible Church of Christ you will often have to mourn over human weaknessbut in the invisible Church, God will make His servants just strong enoughjust strong enough to drag their fish to shore. The agencies, means, instrumentalitiesshall have just sufficient force to land every elect soul in Heaventhat God may be glorified.

Then, notice, in the visible Church, they launched out into the deep. In the second case, it says they were not far from the shore, but a little way. So today our preaching seems to us to be going out into the great stormy deep after fish. We appear to have a long way to reach before we shall bring these precious souls to land. But in the sight of God we are not far from shore. And when a soul is saved, it is not far from Heaven. To us there are years of temptation and trial and conflict. But to God, the Most High, it is finishedit is done. They are savedthey are not far from shore.

In the first case, the disciples had to forsake all and follow Christ. In the second, they sat down to feast with Him at the dainty banquet which He had spread. So in the visible Church today we have to bear trial and self-denial for Christ, but glory be to God, the eye of faith perceives that we shall soon drag our net to land and then the Master will say, come and dine. And we shall sit down and feast in His Presence, with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in the kingdom of God.

III. The time is gone and I close by NOTICING ONE AMONG MANY LESSONS WHICH THE TWO NARRATIVES IN COMMON SEEM TO TEACH. In the first case, Christ was in the ship. Oh, blessed be God, Christ is in His Church, though she launch out into the deep! In the second case, Christ was on the shore. Blessed be God, Christ is in Heaven. He is not here, but He has risen. He has gone up on High for us. But whether He is in the Church, or whether He is on the shore in Heaven, all our nights toiling shall, by His Presence, have a rich reward.

That is the lesson. Mother, will you learn it? You have been toiling long for your children. It has been night with you as yet. They give no evidence of Divine Grace. Rather they give many signs of sin and they grieve your spirit. Your nights toiling shall have an end. You shall at last cast the net on the right side of the ship. Sunday school teacher, you have been diligently laboring long and with but little fruit. Be not discouraged, the Master will not let you work in vain. In due season you shall reap if you faint not. And as these disciples had a great sea harvest, so shall you have a harvest of souls.

Minister, you have been plowing some barren rock and as yet no joyful sheaves have made your heart glad. You shall, doubtless, Come again, rejoicing, bringing your sheaves with you. And you, O Church of God, travailing for souls, meeting daily in prayer, pleading with men that they will come to Christ, what if they are not saved yet? The morning comes, the night is far spent, and the Master, Himself shall soon appear. And though He may not find faith on the earth, yet His advent shall bring to His Church the success for which she has waitedsuch success that as a woman remembers no more her travail because a man is born into the worldso shall the Church remember no more her toils, her efforts and her prayers, because Christs kingdom has come and His will is done on earth even as it is in Heaven.

Work, dear Friends! If there are any of you that are not working, begin now. If there are any of you not saved as yet, the Lord grant that when the Word is preached, you may be caught in it as in a net. We do throw it out once this morning. We hope to throw it again this evening. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved, for he that believes and is baptized shall be saved and he that believes not shall be damned.

Flee to Christ! Escape from the wrath to come! May the Spirit apply that Word to you, and lead you to the place where high on Calvary with bleeding hands and feet the Savior dies! One look at Him and you are saved. Look, Sinner, and live! God save you, for Christs sake! Amen.

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THE POWER OF CHRISTS PRESENCE   
NO. 3146

A SERMON   
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**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 2, 1873.

**Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved said unto Peter, It is the Lord. John 21:7.**

I AM going to speak, on this occasion, to my Brothers and Sisters who are workers for Christ. When our Lord met His Apostles by the lake and provided for them that memorable meal, He did not think it out of place to say to Peter, Feed My lambs; feed My sheep. These practical exhortations were regarded by Him as quite in keeping with holy fellowship and so, though we are coming to the Communion Table at the close of this service, I feel that I am only right in speaking upon practical matters to you, my fellow laborers and fellow soldiers in the work and warfare of Christ. And I pray that God will, through me, speak to all here who love our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

You know that we read in the Gospels according to Luke and John, of  
two miraculous draughts of fishes. [See Sermon #443, Volume 8THE TWO DRAUGHTS OF FISHESRead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.]

The one that is recorded in this Chapter from which our text is taken was, in several respects, similar to that which was worked at an earlier period of our Lords history.

Before He called His Apostles, He worked the miracle of giving them a great haul of fish after they had toiled all the night and had taken nothing. And then, after He had died upon the Cross and risen from the grave, He repeated the miracle in almost identical fashion. I think there was a great lesson which our Savior intended His disciples to learn from that repetition. The miracle was a pictureand He wanted them to look upon it and catch the idea it was meant to conveyand as they had probably not all caught it the first time, He held the picture up before them again, that they might have another opportunity of learning the lesson which He had intended it to teach them.

You notice that in both instances they had toiledthey had toiled all the nightbut they had toiled in vain. The night was the best season for fishing, as it still is. They had toiled in the place where they had often caught fish before, for they were experienced fishermen, apt at their craft. Yet after using all the means that had been successful at other times, they were unsuccessful, for they had taken nothing. They had toiled perseveringly, too, for it was not only at night that they had toiled, but all the night. From the time when they pushed forth from the shore, in the moonlight, until the morning star warned them of the dawning of the new day, they had toiled. Yet they had taken nothing.

This teaches us that we may work for Christ and try to win souls for Himand do that work at the best time, in the best way and even persevere in doing itand yet be unsuccessful. We must be unsuccessful if, like the disciples, we are laboring without the Masters Presence. In both instances, the turning-point was when the Master came. On the first occasion, He borrowed Peters boat and preached a sermon from it to the crowd upon the shore. And then He said to Peter, Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a draught. In the second case, He bade the disciples, cast the net on the right side of the ship. But in both instances it was the appearance of Jesus that filled the net and filled it so miraculously that the despairing toilers of the night realized that Someone who was more than man had spoken to themand they fell down to worship Him as Divine. So whenever Jesus comes to His workers, however unsuccessful they may have been, they are sure to succeed when He is there! Yes, and to succeed beyond their own expectationsjust as the disciples were surprised that by the same hands which all night had taken nothing, 153 great fishes should be takenand out of the same nets which were empty all the night, (save here and there a piece of tangled weed to mock their hopes), there should come so many great fishes upon which they and others might be feasted to their full! The Apostles could not do anything without their Lord and neither can weso the main point for us to remember is that we need Jesus Christ to come into our midstand this point I shall try to drive home with all my might, praying God the Holy Spirit to stir up the hearts of His people so that they may have a great longing to be useful in the winning of souls and realize that this can only be achieved by those who enjoy true fellowship with Christ!

I. I want, first, to show THE DISSIMILARITY AND THE SIMILARITY OF OUR POSITION TO THAT OF THE APOSTLES UPON THIS OCCASION.   
First, there was a dissimilarity in which the advantage is altogether on our side. The Apostle Peter and his brethren had been fishing unsuccessfully, but they had not been commanded to fish. They may or may not have been right in fishing at that time, but at any rate, they were doing it on their own account. Peter said, I am going fishing. It was his own work, done entirely in accordance with his own willChrist had not bidden him go fishing. But in our case, Brothers and Sisters in Christ, we have our Lords commission, Go you into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. We have received this Divine commission, so that when we preach the Gospel, we are not fishing as amateurs or selfsent volunteers, but as those who are sent by the Most High to do His bidding. When He commissions anyone, there is a sort of implied guarantee that He will give him success. At any rate, He will not send His servant upon a fools errand, but by some means or other, He who gives the authority will be sure to give the power that is needed to go with it. Wisdom is justified of all her children. You, dear Brothers and Sisters, in trying to serve God, each of you in your proper sphere, have done what you were sent to do, for Jesus has said to you as He said to His disciples, As My Father has sent Me, even so send I you. Remember that passage almost at the end of the Revelation, Let him that hears, say, Come. Having heard the Gospel, you have tried to say, Come, to the people and you have not gone beyond your commission in doing so, for you were commanded to do it! Every Believer is a priestunder the Christian dispensation there is no other priesthood save that of our Lord Jesus Christ and that which is common to every Believer in Him. So when you, having believed on Him, have gone to speak of Him to others, you have only exercised that royal priesthood which is rightly yours, for He has made us kings and priests unto God. So, first, the Apostles went fishing without having any commission to fish and, therefore, they were unsuccessful. But we have an advantage over them because in the Gospel fishery, every true child of God who casts the net is commissioned by his Master to do so!   
The disciples also had not their Master with them. All the night when they were casting the net and drawing it in, and finding nothing in it, they were by themselves. But that is not the case with us. As a Church we can say that we have had the Masters Presence with us these many years. Oftentimes in our assemblies we have been as sure of His Presence as we can ever be sure of anything! Our hearts have been rejoiced, purified and sanctified by gazing upon Him by faith. There have been Prayer Meetings in which I hope all of us have felt bowed down and humbled like Peter was when the Master was in his boat. And there have been times of solemn rejoicing over converted sinners in which the Lord Jesus has been manifestly in our midst! His promise, Lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world, has been most graciously fulfilled in our experience and we, therefore, bless the Savior that we have not to wait for Him to come to us, for He has long been with us and has never left us! These many years the simple preaching of Jesus Christ and Him crucified has filled this House of Prayer as it is tonight. People know that there is nothing to be heard here but the old, old story of the Crucified Savior, yet let the weather be as rigorous as it may, still will the crowds come to hear the Word of the Lordand in this we do rejoice and evermore will rejoice! In this respect, also, we have the advantage over the fishermen on the Sea of Galilee.   
And so we have in another pointbecause the Master was not with them, they caught nothingbut it cannot be said of us that we have taken nothing. I do not know that it would be right for us to try to compute how many souls have professed to have found the Savior during the years in which we have worked together, but I believe, Brothers, we may say this to the Glory of God and to the honor of the simple Gospel that we have preachedthe number who have joined this Church, alone, can only be spoken of by thousands. And if we were to speak of tens of thousands, yes, and many tens of thousands who here and elsewhere have found the Savior under the Word preached by us, we would not exaggerate in the least. We put the crown upon the head of our Master, but what joy we feel that it has been so! Suppose that He had left us? Vain would it have been for us to preach the Word, even with earnestness, for earnestness, alone, will not convert souls. There must be the Presence of Jesus to bless menand it has been with us, year after year, even unto this day, glory be to His holy name! [The years referred to number approximately 20.]

In these points, then, our case is dissimilar to that of the Apostles when they were toiling all the night and had taken nothing.   
But we are precisely like the Apostles in certain other points, the first of which is that we would have taken nothing if the Master had not helped us. No child would have come from the Sunday school to say, I love the Savior and wish to confess my faith in Him and to unite with the Church here. No young woman would have come out of that large and blessed Bible class if the Lord had not put the right words into the lips of the Sister who speaks for Him there. No young man would have been converted in our senior classes if the Spirit of God had not gone with the conductors. And from this pulpit no Word of Life would have been spoken if it had not been first given to us by God and then sent home to the hearts of our hearers by the Holy Spirit. We would have taken nothing without our Lord!   
And even now, Brothers and Sisters, our success is wonderfully like the non-success of the Apostles, for we have scarcely taken anything in comparison with what still needs to be taken! Even when we speak of tens of thousands converted, what are they in comparison with the millions all around us in this vast city? When God gives us an increase of a hundred or a 120 in a month, we are glad and thankful, but large as those numbers are, what are they compared with the perishing myriads of London alone? Why should we not have 3,000 converts in a day as on the day of Pentecost? Why is it that our Churches are not multiplied till they cover this city in every part? Why does not the old Church of Christ, (for such we are), the old Catholic and Apostolic Church of Christ, come more to the front instead of lingering in the background? It is because we have not yet the fullness of the Masters power as we must have itand desire to have it to the praise of His Glory! Christs Presence, if He would but come among us in the fullness of His strength, would do so much more for us than anything that we have ever seenthat we would be as much astounded by the increase as the Apostles were by the two great draughts of fishes! Christ had but to will it and the fish came swimming in shoals to the netand He has but to will it and souls will be converted by millions to Himself and His Gospel! He had but to give His disciples the directions to where to cast the net and the same net that had been empty would become full. And He has but to teach His ministers how to preach, and touch their lips with a burning coal off the altar to fire them with a Pentecostal enthusiasmand they would speak in a way in which as yet they have never spoken and with a power they have never yet experienced! Such days are promised and they will surely come. We are not straitened in God. We are straitened in ourselves. If we have not those glorious days of ingathering, it is because some sin of ours still keeps the Masters Glory from us. Oh, let us turn to Him and may He graciously turn to us!   
**Let our mutual love be fervent,   
Make us prevalent in prayers!   
Let each one esteemed Your servant   
Shun the worlds bewitching snares,   
Lord, revive us,   
All our help must come from You!**   
II. Now, secondly, I have to speak upon THE MEANS WHICH WE ARE TO USE SO AS TO GAIN OUR MASTERS PRESENCE. I have tried to show you that all our success must come from Him and all that He gives us must be ascribed to Him. So how can we secure His Presence? We have it in a measurehow can we have it more fully?   
Well, let us always remember that He comes just where He wills to come. There is absolute Sovereignty about the work of Christ in the Kingdom of His Grace. As the wind blows where it wishes, so does the Spirit of God work wherever He pleases. I do not think that we can always account for the great success of one preacher and the non-success of another by anything that we can see. We have to fall back upon the Sovereignty of God and say, God wills it and, therefore, it is. He will have us know that Sovereignty is His Divine prerogative. He has the key of DavidHe opens and no man shuts. He shuts and no man opens. If He wills it, the rain shall descend steadily to make fat the fields. But if He wills it, He can restrain the dew of Heaven until the most fertile Church shall become barren as the mountains of Gilboa! He exercises His power not according to our will, but according to His own willwe must never forget that.   
At the same time, what course should we take in order to secure His Presence? I reply, first, that we had better go on with our work for Him. If we want Christ to bless us and we are doing work for Him, we had better keep on steadily doing it. These disciples of His had been fishing all night. Perhaps if they had not fished at night Christ would not have given them fish in the daytime. He does not often come to bless idlersHe acts Sovereignly, as I have said, but He generally gives His blessing to those Churches that do the most for Him. I have always found that an earnest Gospel ministry and a prayerfully united Church will have Gods blessing when others will not have it. Go on, Sunday school teachers, go on, tract distributors! Go on, Evangelistsgo on, all of you who are laboring for Christkeep, each one, to his own service and even if it has been night with you and you have taken nothing, still keep on at your toil! Probably the best way to bring the Master to you is to labor for Him with all your might.   
Sometimes, however, it will be necessary for us to wash or mend our nets. In the miracle recorded by Luke, we find that the fishermen, after toiling all night, were washing their netsand either on that occasion, or on a similar one, some of them were mending their nets. Every Church needs to do that and every Church member, every Christian worker needs to do that. The preacher will do well to adopt another styleto study more diligently and to make himself more proficient in the knowledge of the Word. Sunday school teachers must more carefully study the lessons for their classes and go to their scholars better prepared for their work. Your nets will often need washing and mending if you are to be fishers of menand all of you will be more likely to get the Masters blessing if you pay more attention to the means you are using for doing good in His service! Christ does not want slovenly work, nor is He likely to bless those who think that any kind of service will do for Him. I have heard of a preacher who thought that whatever came first into his head was good enough for his people. On one occasion, he informed one of his officers, at the end of his sermon, that he had never thought of it before he entered the pulpit. And the good Elder replied, I thought so while listening to you. I thought that if you had considered it beforehand, you would never have said what you did. We all need to wash and mend our netsI mean that we all need to do Christs work in the best possible wayand that is the way in which we are most likely to be privileged with His Presence.   
On that first occasion, the fishermen had been listening to Christs words, for they had, at His request, turned their boat into a pulpit in which He sat down and taught the people who stood on the shore. Was there any connection between that incident and the great haul of fish? I think there was and that if they had not granted Christs request, and listened to His sermon, He would not have blessed them with that multitude of fish. At all events, I know that a worker will always be all the better for waiting a while and sitting as a learner at Christs feetreading the Word for Himself, or listening to the Truth as it is preached by some God-sent minister. The message may strike a keynote in your heart which shall so influence your whole life that, henceforth, you shall be in a different condition and more likely to be blessed of the Most High.   
Do you ask, What is there that will bring Christ to a Church and keep Him there? I reply, in a word, prayer. There is no force in nature that is equal to the power of prayer! The law of gravitation holds the planets in their orbits and links the sun to all the spheres that circle round him, but prayer has before now made gravitation, itself, cease to exert its energy! Sun, stand you still upon Gibeon, said Joshuawho had first spoken to the Lord about the matterand you, Moon, in the valley of Ajalonand sun and moon stood still! We speak that which, to many nowadays, only causes ridicule, but to our minds it seems ridiculous to doubt that God listens to the voice of men. When men are made in the image of Godtwice-made and so made His childrensurely their believing prayers shall move the heart of their heavenly Father! You remember what Christ said to His disciples, in His Sermon on the Mount? If you, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven give good things to them that ask Him? Of course He will listen to the voices of those whom He so dearly loves! You know, Beloved, that there is power in prayer. When Believers meet together and unitedly cry, Lord, revive Your work. Put more power into the ministry. Make the hearts of Your people to be more full of love and zeal. Save the ungodly. Awaken the unconcerned! It will be done. It is not with us merely a matter of hope that earnest prayer will bring blessing to the Church and to the worldit is a matter of fact it must be so! The laws of Nature may be suspended, but laws that appertain to Gods own Character for truth and faithfulness cannot be suspended. He would not be God if He did not answer prayer! His own promises bind Him to do so. O you that doubt Him, try Him! If any of you question the power of prayer, see what has already been done by it. As for you who are the servants of the living God and who have access to His Mercy Seat, you have but to ask and to receiveyou have but to seek and to findyou have but to knock and the door shall be opened to you! Brothers and Sisters in Christ, join one another in praying Christ to come into our midst! Do pray for a blessing, pray mightily for itand rest not day nor night till that blessing comes!

We must, however, add to prayer the waiting for that blessing that we seek. After Christ had ascended to Heaven, His disciples went to an upper room and waited there till the Holy Spirit was given to them on the day of Pentecost. They did not sit there thinking that perhaps the promised blessing might come, or might not come, but there they waited till they heard the sound from Heaven as of a rushing mighty wind and the cloven tongues, like as of fire, sat upon each of them. So let us come together in our assemblies expecting the blessing which the Lord has promised, for the blessing will certainly come if we believingly expect it. Open your mouth wide, says God, and I will fill it! Oh, for the capacity to believe God, for assuredly God will never dishonor our faith!   
And then, to our expectation, we must add the opening of our own hearts to receive the blessing. We want the Savior to bless us and He says, Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him, and he with Me. He is ready to bless you, Belovedare you ready to be blessed by Him? O you that love Him, fling wide the doors of your heart and ask Him to come in! He has bought you with His hearts bloodwill you not give Him your hearts best love? He is Himself your Beloved, your Husband, your All-in-All, so treat Him not as a stranger. Let Him not stand and knock any longer, but open wide the door and bid Him come in! Is it your will, dear Brothers and Sisters, to receive Him? Do you really want Him? Do you long for more of Him? You will have to be very prayerful and very careful if He does come to you, for He is a jealous loverand when He dwells in the heart, He looks with severe eyes upon anything contrary to His will that is done by His own dear onesjust as a king will tolerate in a stranger what he would not endure from a courtier. I am afraid we sometimes pray for sanctification and do not really wish for it and I am also afraid that we sometimes ask for a great blessing and do not really wish for it. Do you believe that Christ can come to us and bless us? Are you living as if you expected Him to come to you? If so, when He comes you will be overawed by the majesty of His Presenceand you will say with John, It is the Lord. As we hear of blessing in the Sunday school, we shall say, It is the Lord. As we hear of the work of Grace in the Bible classes, we shall say, It is the Lord. And at every Church Meeting, as we hear the stories of those who have been brought to believe in Jesus, we shall say, It is the Lord, for no one else could have worked so blessed a work in our midst!   
I wish I knew how to put this subject before you so that every believing heart would be affected by it to the highest possible degreebut I do notand therefore, as we are coming to the Communion Table, I will try to use the sacred feast to stir up you who are serving Christ to pray for more of His Presence. You have here before you the memorials of His love to you. He gave His body to be broken for you, His heart to be pierced for you. Has Christ done all this for you and will you not do much for Him? You are saved, your sins are covered, you are His dear childthen will you not spend and be spent for Him? If the Master were to come and stand here tonight instead of meand show you His pierced hands and feet and then were to call you, His own people, up, one by one and put such questions as these to you, (I will give you the questions directly)I wonder how you would feel? You would come up these stairs dazzled with His beauty and overwhelmed with His love as He gazed upon you! And then He would say to each one of you, My blood-bought one, what are you doing for Me? Are you feeding My sheep? Are you feeding My lambs? I think I see you blush and hear you reply, My dear Master, I have been with some of Your lambs this afternoon. But did you really feed them? I spent a happy hour with them. Well but did you feed them? I endeavored to do so, good Master, but I am ashamed to say that I did not feed them as I should have done. But did you feed them as My lambs, and as I would have fed them? Did you love them? Did you speak affectionately to them? Did you tell them about Me? Did you try to bring them to Me? Did you pray over them? Did you send them away feeling that their teacher longed that they should all know the Savior?   
Well, the Master is not here in bodily Presence and I will not put such questions to you, but I would like you to put them to yourselves and to think that you hear the Master putting them to you, even as of old He said, Simon, son of Jonas, do you love Me? I think I hear Him call up some Brother and say to Him, You who are redeemed by My precious blood, what have you done for Me? I think I see you blush as He says to you again, What have you done for Me? At last you say, I am a member of the Church. But what have you done for Me? I sometimes put something into the offering box. But what have you done for Me? He shows His hands, lays bare His side and says, I suffered this for you what have you done for Me? I fear that there are some members of this Church who would not like to be put to such a test as that! And for my own part, I would desire to say to the Master, Give me a few more years in which to serve You better and give me more Grace that I may be more diligent in the service that You have allotted to me. And I pray you, beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ, if you feel that you must present the same prayer, make this your solemn resolution that, by His Spirits help, you will lay yourselves outbody, soul and spiritfor His dear sake.   
But, alas, there are some of you who do not love Him at all! Some of you to whom the Christ of God is quite a stranger. Oh, that your hearts were changed! For remember that He will soon come in His Glory and all His holy angels with Him! And you who will not now kiss the silver scepter of Mercy that He holds out to you in the preaching of the Gospel, must then feel the weight of that iron rod of Justice with which He will break the ungodly and dash them in pieces like a potters vessels! Be wise, therefore, and trust the Savior now! The Lord grant that you may do so and then, having trusted Him for yourself, may you serve Him with all your heart and soul as long as you live on this earthand then go to join that great multitude which no man can number of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues who stand before the Throne of God and before the Lambforever ascribing their salvation to His Grace!   
Have you ever heard the story of the poor man, in deep distress of mind, who one night dreamed a dream? He found himself outside the gates of Heaven and he sat down and wept, for he longed to enter. Presently he heard sweet music and saw a company of people approaching with palm branches in their hands. He asked who they were and one of them said that they were the noble army of martyrs coming to take their thrones. Then he wept much and said, I cannot enter with you. While he sat mourning, he heard the trumpet sound, again, and another company came along singing, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain. He said to them, Who are you? They replied, We are the goodly fellowship of the Prophets and Apostles. And he wept again, for he said, I cannot enter with you. Presently another company came, chanting the praises of the Grace of God. And he said, Who are you? They answered, We are the preachers of the Word, and the deacons and elders of the Church. Again he said, I cannot enter with you. He sat down and wept till, by-and-by, he saw a larger company coming, marching like an exceedingly great army, and singing sweetly as they came. In the very front rank was the woman that was a sinner, with her rich voice leading the song. And near her was the thief who, at the last, had prayed, Lord, remember me. They came along right jubilantly and he asked them, Who are you? And they answered, We are the company of great sinners, saved by great mercy. At once he said, I can go in with you!   
And, Brothers and Sisters, that is the company to which you and I belong! And when we enter Heaven, they will welcome us just as heartily as they did the martyrs, the Prophets and the Apostles! Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinnersand when sinners repent, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God, and joy in the heart of God, Himself, because they have sought His pardoning mercy! If any of you are not saved, it is not because there is any lack of mercy in the heart of God! If you perish, it is not for want of an open door set before you! So come in while you may!

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **JOHN 21.**

Verse 1. After these things Jesus showed Himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and on this wise showed He Himself. May every one of you, my fellow disciples, realize that Jesus is showing Himself to you! He is only to be seen in His own Light. He must show Himself to us, or else we shall never see Him.

2. There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of His disciples. He had told them to go into Galilee and gave them the promise, There shall you see Me. So now they were by the Galilean Lake. They were keeping their appointment with Christ and as He always keeps His appointment with His people, He was there to meet them as He had promised.

3. Simon Peter said unto them, I am going fishing. They said unto him, We will go with you. Their Master had told them to wait, but they could not wait. Surely when they were in Galilee by His command, they might have trusted Him to supply their needs, but their faith was slack, so Peter said, I am going fishing, and the others were much of the same mindwaiting had become weary work, as it often does with our faint heartsso they said, We will go with you.

3. They went forth, and entered immediately into a ship; and that night they caught nothing. As is generally the case with us in our will-work and will-worship. When we are not guided of God, but go entirely according to our own mind and will it will be thus with us, also. Men attempt some business speculation without asking guidance of God and they make a miserable failure of it, so that it might be written of them as of the disciples, That night they caught nothing.

4. But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. They were thinking of fishing, so they saw boats, nets and the sea. If they had been thinking of Jesus, they would have looked for Himand when He came, they would have known Him.

5. Then Jesus said unto them, Children, have you any meat? Have you anything to eat?   
5. They answered Him, No. But that was not His fault.   
6. And He said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and you shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it in for the multitude of fishes. He testified His Presence by crowning their exertions with His blessing. And soon they had a great catch of great fishesa great contrast to their night of fruitless toil.   
7, 8. Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved said unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the lord, he girt his fishers coat unto him, (for he was naked), and did cast himself into the sea. And the other disciples came in the little ship, (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits), dragging the net with fishes. We often come very slowly to Christ because we will drag that net with fishes. We have such a deal of care, anxiety, and trouble when we need not have any at alland so we come slowly, dragging the net with fishes.   
9. As soon, then, as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread. Why did they want to go fishing on their own account? Christ had all that they needed ready for them there was the fire and there were the fish cooking on it, ready for their breakfast. It was the Lord Jesus Christs business to provide for them and He did so.   
10, 11. Jesus said unto them, Bring of the fish which you have now caught. Simon Peter went up and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three and for all there were so many, yet the net was not broken. And there lay those 153 big fishes on the beach. Christ had no need of them but perhaps He condescended to use some of them for that morning meal, as He said to Peter, Bring of the fish which you have now caught.   
12. Jesus said unto them, Come and dine. [See Sermon #2072, Volume 35

BREAKFAST WITH JESUSRead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at

http://www.spurgeongems.org.] Or, Come and break your fast after your long nights toil. How they must have opened their eyes to see the fish ready cooked for them to eat!

12. And none of the disciples dared ask Him, Who are You? knowing that it was the Lord. It was the Lordthe Lord who had asked them if they had any food, the Lord who had filled the net which had previously been empty, the Lord who had given them His own fish from His own fire that they might have breakfast with Him! O good Master, if we have been toiling all week and have caught nothing, call us now to come and eat of that which You have, Yourself, prepared!

13-15. Jesus then came and took bread, and gave them some, and fish likewise. This is now the third time that Jesus showed Himself to His disciples after that He was risen from the dead. So when they had dined, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, Do you love Me more than these? More than this lot of fish, these boats, these nets? You gave them all up for Me once, but now you have taken to them againdo you really love Me better than your fishing and your fish?

15. He said unto Him, Yes, Lord; You know that I love You. He said un  
to him, Feed My lambs. [See Sermon #1684, Volume 28FEED MY LAMBSA SUNDAY SCHOOL SERMONRead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at

http://www.spurgeongems.org.] Do not go after fish any more, but attend to My businessfeed My lambs. The proof of your greater love to Me than to all worldly things will be found in your doing of the work which I have committed to your charge.

16. He said to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, Do you  
love Me? [See Sermons #117, Volume 3DO YOU LOVE ME? And #1281, Volume 22DO YOU LOVE ME?Read/download the entire sermons, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.]

He said unto Him, Yes, Lord; You know that I love You. He said unto him, Feed My sheep. Quit the sea. I am giving you no more business there come now and be a pastor to My blood-bought sheep.

17. He said unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, Do you love Me? Peter was grieved because He said unto him the third time, Do you love Me? And he said unto Him, Lord, You know all things; You know that I

love You. [See Sermon #2669, Volume 46COMFORT FROM CHRISTS OMNISCIENCE Read/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] Thrice he

had denied his Lord, so thrice he must be questioned concerning his love to the Lord whom he said he did not even know. And then for the third time he was re-commissioned by his Lord.

17-19. Jesus said unto him, Feed My sheep. Verily, verily, I say unto you, When you were young, you gird yourself, and walked where you willed: but when you shall be old, you shall stretch forth your hands, and another shall gird you, and carry you where you would not. This spoke He, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And When He had spoken this, He said unto him, Follow Me. Peters death was to glorify God, so he might well be content, painful though it was to be.

20, 21. Then Peter, turning about, saw the disciple whom Jesus loved   
[See Sermon #1539, Volume 26THE DISCIPLE WHOM JESUS LOVEDRead/download the entire sermon, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.] following; which also leaned on

His breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrays you? Peter seeing him said to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Our Lord never answered such a foolish, inquisitive question as this! And therefore

22. Jesus said unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to you? You follow Me. That is how Christ would answer any similar questions that we might put to Him. We need not concern ourselves so much about what is to happen to others until we have made our own calling and election sure. What is that to you? You follow Me.

23. Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to you? This is only one of many instances in which Christs words have been twisted and made to mean something quite different from what He intended.

24, 25. This is the disciple who testifies of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true. And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written, every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.

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VISITS FROM THE LORD   
NO. 3481

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14, 1915.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, OCTOBER 1, 1871.

**Therefore, that disciple whom Jesus loved said unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment (for he was naked), and plunged into the sea. But the other disciples came in the little boat; for they were not far from land (about two hundred cubits), dragging the net with fishes. John 21:7, 8.**

UNTIL our Lord should pour out the Spirit upon His Apostles, they had to wait. It was expedient for them that He should go away and ascend into His Glory. Then when He had received gifts for men and had distributed those gifts, they would be able to go forth in the power of the Spirit, preaching the Gospel. Until then they must wait, and they must not be idle. Therefore they returned to their ordinary trades and once again the little boat plowed the familiar waves of the sea of Tiberias. There they had many old associations brought up before them. And there, moreover, on the memorable night of which we are now to speak, they learned a lesson which would be instructive to them throughout the whole course of their fishing for men! Their condition and position were very much like our own. We, as a Christian Church, are engaged in the great soul-fishery, seeking by any means to bring some to Christ. Out on the dark waters of the Dead Sea of Sin we seek to bring the souls of men, not to destroy them, but that Christ may save them! This is to be the Churchs perpetual work. She must never cease from it. For this purpose is she kept in the world and if she does not answer this purpose, she is faulty before her Lord.

Just now we are much in the condition of these Apostles. There is upon some of our spirits a dissatisfaction with the success that we have had of latein fact, a dissatisfaction with all the success that either we or the Christian Church generally have had for years past. We cannot quite say, with the Apostles, that we have caught nothing. Glory be to God, there are thousands of souls that have been won to Christ in this house, and in many other places where Christ is preached! But compared with the great mass of mankindcompared with the world that lies in the Wicked Onewe might almost say, We have caught nothing. Relatively, it comes to very, very, very littleand the Gospel-fishery does not grow, today, as it did at the time of Pentecost, or as it has done at other seasons when God has granted revival and refreshing from His Presence. We are, therefore, like the discipleswe are engaged in the fishing, but we are not satisfied with the results! Now we know what they, perhaps, at the time forgotthat there is only one thing that can change the aspect of affairs, and that is for Jesus to appear in our midst and speak to us, giving us the word of direction and, also, Himself acting as the attractive power to the souls of men, that they may come to the Gospel net! I may go round to all our agencies, if Jesus is absent, and ask them, What is your success? The Sunday school will have to say, We have taken nothing. The Evangelists at the street corners will have to say, We have taken nothing. The young men sent forth from the college to preach will have to return the same sorrowful answer! And alas, for us who stand here and preach to this congregation, we, too, shall have to say, if the Master is not with us, We have toiled all night, but we have taken nothing.

Oh, sorrowful account to have to render to God and our fellow men! Yet such it must be. But if Jesus shall come, how changed it all shall be! Then shall the preacher become wise! He shall know where and how to cast the net! He shall select those topics that shall stir the soulthat shall fire the heart! And then, Jesus being present, men shall be as willing to receive the Gospel as the preacher is to preach it! It shall be as much the will of the fish to get into the net, as it is of the fishermen to cast the net! Oh, may the Master come to us! I believe He has come. I think I see Him. Some of my Brothers and Sisters tell me they already perceive it. He has never been entirely absent from us, but we need Him to speak a mighty word, a majestic worda word that shall compel, by sweet constraints of Grace, tens of thousands of souls to come to Him and live!

Now tonight my one subject is to the Church here, and to Gods people elsewhere, who are in the same state of hope and anxiety. I want to speak about Jesus Christs coming. The all-importance of it you all feel. You all, I trust, as workers for Christ, desire it. Now, Beloved, let us notice, first, when Jesus comes

I. WHO WAS THE FIRST TO SEE HIM.   
The first to see Jesus was John. He said, It is the Lord. The other disciples perceived Him by-and-by. We know they did, for it is written, Knowing that He was the Lordbut the first to see Him was John. What do we gather from this?   
Why, first, that the brightest eyes in the Church are the eyes of those who love most. They perceive Christ first who have most affection for Him! If He is gone, these are the first to sigh. If He returns, these are the first to rejoice with unspeakable joy. Knowledge is said to open the eyes, but as for me, the dust of many learned tomes has often beclouded them. It is thought that men of education will be the first to perceive the Savior, but it was not so in the Saviors day, for these things were hidden from the wise and prudentbut they were revealed unto babes! Let love be your education. Grow in love. To love is better than to know, for a man may know, and only eat of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Eviland perish by itbut he that loves, obeys, and he shall eat of the Tree of Life and dwell in the midst of the Paradise of God! Blessed John! Your head had been on the Saviors bosom and, therefore, your eyes were like the eagles. No angel, one would think, could see as well as Miltons angel, Uriel, that dwelt in the midst of the sun. He was familiar with the light. He dwelt in the full blaze of the orb of dayin the very midst of it! And, He that dwells in love dwells in God. And God is Light, so he who dwells in the Light of God sees all things. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. The heart that is purified with the celestial flame of Divine Love is the heart that can see God!   
But note that in the text John does not describe himself as loving Christ. Much more humbly and instructively does he put it. That disciple who loved Jesus said unto Peter, It is the Lord! No, that is my misreading of it! It is, That disciple whom Jesus loved. Oh, yes, and that is the way that Grace in the heart always teaches us to read it! It is not so much that we love Him, as that He loved, and still loves us! Superabundant love in the heart of the Man, Christ Jesus, towards that choice and chosen spirit had made John a loving disciple. He had not loved so much if Christ had not loved more. He would have told you if you had questioned him about his love, as Peter didThe Lord who knows all, knows that I love Him. But if you had spoken about Christs love to him, ah, then his face would have brightened, his eyes would have flashed with delight and he would have said, He loves me. Ah, and I have had many a sweet word from Him. And my head has often been healed of all its aches when I have laid it down upon His breast. He would have ascribed it all to Christs love and had little to say of his own! So, Brothers and Sisters, if the love of God is shed abroad in your hearts, you will be quick to see the same. It will not be so much your love as His love that makes you quick of the eye. Then will your eyes become like the eyes of the spouse in the song, As the eyes of doves by the rivers of water, washed with milk and fitly set. Now the dove, no doubt, can see its home from a very, very long way. Let the pigeon loose and it flies to its dove-cote at once. Ah, those whose eyes Christ has washed with milk and fitly set can see their Lord afar off, and they fly to Him with swift and clipping wingsnor are they satisfied till they roost once more at His feet or on His bosom.   
Thus, then, those that are quick to see the Savior are those who love Himbetter still, those whom He loves much.   
Now note that even John appears to have perceived the Presence of Christ very much through His work. As soon as the fishes were taken in the net, then John said, It is the Lord. And, Brothers and Sisters, if we want to be assured of the Masters Presence in the Church, it must be by the results! I am ashamed of some Christians who are afraid of anything like a holy excitement, or a gracious revival. If there are two or three added to the Church in a year, they say, This is the finger of God, but if there are many, then straightway they begin to question! Now I think this is not reasonable, for surely when there are great fishes, a hundred and fifty and three, then we may say, It is the Lord. We may be pretty sure when there are so many brought that God is at work there, and we may perceive the Presence of Christ. I was noticing the other day some statistics that have been given of certain revivals in different districts of the United States. It has been said that those gathered in during a period of revival are usually an injury to the Church, and more frequently backslide than any otherbut taking a range of some eight years in certain churches, it was found that of those persons added during seasons of refreshing from God, the percentage who afterwards backslid was much less thanscarcely, indeed, one halfthe percentage of backslider in those churches which had not experienced revival, but had only grown at the slow plodding rate which some of our sound Brothers and Sisters so greatly admire! It was found that instead of being worse material, they were better materialand that these stood the fire even better than any other. This I knowthat I would like to run the riskI would like to run the blessed risk of seeing thousands coming forward to profess their faith in Christ! Tis true, we will have some, no doubt, that will turn out to be hypocrites, but I would not refuse some chaff if I could get ten times as much wheat! Who will give up a gold mine because there is quartz in it? Who is it that will shut up a coal pit because there happen to be some slates amidst the coal? No, blessed Master, come! and let us have the net full to bursting if You willand then we shall sayIt is the Lord! His great works reveal Him even to the eyes of love!   
Note, further, that the man who first discovered that Christ was present did not long keep the secret, but, turning round to his neighbor in the boat, he whispered to him, It is the Lord. Ah, and this is a lesson to us. If any of you that are the Kings favorites and have close fellowship with Him, should perceive that He is in the Church, oh, tell it to us, for we are of your mind! We count the Kings Company to be the most grand blessing out of Heaven! Whisper to some of us, for we shall be so rejoiced to hear the blessed news! But John did not tell all of them. He told it to Peter, for Peter was very near to him. I think John had been partly the means of Peters falling. I think so. You notice how John tells us and no one else doesthat he was a kinsman to one who kept the door and he took Peter in? And I fancy that he used to smite himself about that, and say, I ought not to have run the risk of taking Peter there. I ought not to have put him where he would have those questions asked. And he seems always to stick hard and fast to Peter and to be with him, because though he, of course, had none of Peters sin, he felt that somehow, accidentally or unwittingly, he had led Peter into the place where he sinned and so he loved him very much and he gave him the first intimation of the good news. Said he to him, Brother Peter, it is the Lord. Oh, if you perceive the Lord, tonightif you get a good word from His lipshave not you some Beloved one that you can tellone, perhaps, that has been a backslider and is now returning to the Lord with broken bones? Oh, tell him! Tell him! Tell him at once, The Lord is here amidst us. Our Beloved stands and shows His wounds and His pierced hands. Look, my Brother! Look to Him and rejoice with me! Ah, but you may also tell it to whomever you will, for this is a piece of good news that nobody need ever keep secret! Tell it! Tell it wherever you have the opportunitythat Jesus Christ is visiting His Church! Bid poor sinners come and look to Him whom they have pierced, and live! When you have told it to some, tell it to many more and bid them communicate the blessed tidings that Jesus, mighty to save, still waits to receive sinners and to blot out their transgressions   
*Tell it unto sinnerstell   
Jesus Christ can save from Hell,*   
and is present, revealing Himself to His Church and doing wonders in the congregation!   
Thus much upon those who first see Him. Now a few words upon   
II. THOSE WHO FIRST GET AT JESUS CHRIST.  
Peterquick, hot, impulsiveno sooner hears that it is the Lord than he buckles on his coat, plunges into the sea, and swims to shore to reach his Master! They were not all Petersit was a mercy they were not. But there was one Peter and it was mercy that there was. Nobody may blame Peter. Nobody may blame those who did not follow Peter. They were quite as right who stayed in the boat as Peter was, who swam to the shore! But I know that wherever Jesus Christ is truly present, there will be some bold noble spirits that will make a dash to get at Him. They love Him they will be among the first to reach Himto enjoy His Presence. Yet if any of them feel moved tonight to do some deed of enthusiasm, let me take them by the hand a moment. Peter would reach his Master, but he first girds on his coat. There is reverence in Peter, though there is haste and enthusiasm. He will not come before Christ all in a careless mannerunclothed. He has too much respect for His Master. O Soul, if you would serve the Lord, serve Him with holy fear, for though He is very near to you, He is

Godand you are man. Take off your shoes when you would serve Him, for the place where you stand is holy ground! Be not rash in your worship, nor in your vows, nor in your actions! Gird yourself and then serve Him.   
But that once done, Peter commits himself boldly to the waves! Sink or swim, he will be at his Masters side and so he strikes out right gallantly for the shore. Nothing can stop him. He impetuously gets through the breakers and the surf, and is at his Masters feet! Oh, how I wish there were some Peters in this congregation, true lovers of Christ, who, feeling that Christ is come among us, would say, For the love I bear His name, I will be one of the first to serve Him! Here I wrap myself in the garment of zeal. It shall be my cloak and from this day I will give up all for Christ. I will serve Him beyond all others if I can, and if any can exceed me, it shall be my lack of power that makes me second, but not my lack of will! It would not do for me to say who Peter is, nor to suggest to a man who is not Peter that he should act as Peter would, but I have noticed that every so often in the Church there will rise up men and women who will say, We will consecrate ourselves unto the Lord. Sometimes they do it by going forth into the mission field. Perhaps I have a young Peter here who, like Carey of old, and Marshman, and that band of heroes, may feel in his soul the fire burning and say, I must, and I will preach Christ in the regions beyond. Possibly, however, it may be at home that the same gifts and Graces may be exercised, and I have one here, perhaps, who says oh, I would I had many hundreds who are sayingGod helping us, we will enter upon something which, though it is apparently beyond our strength, and rather venturesome, yet shall be done! We will plunge into the sea to reach our Master. We will brave anything so that we may get to Him!   
Ah, there are those who will always repress anything like Divine enthusiasm and yet, mark you, the brightest ages of the Church have been those in which men consecrated to God have risen above the dictates of common prudence and have dared for Christ what others of a cooler temperament could have not dared! Oh, may the Master send the sacred fire into this congregation! I shall never rest content until I have going out of this Church many who count not their lives dear to them to preach the Gospel among the heathen! I wonder how it is this has not broken out among us before? Is it my ministry that is faulty in this respect? It may be so. Then will I cry to Heaven to be taught better. But at Hermansberg, under Pastor Harms, the whole village seemed to be moved with a desire to carry Christs Gospel to Africaand they emigrated in shiploads to become missionaries there! Of course, many said that Harms was infatuated. Blessed infatuation! May it fall upon many of Christs ministers! The Moravian Church in years gone by had scarcely a member who was not a missionary. When they joined the Church, they gave themselves up to the Church and to Christ. Oh, when shall we come to thisif not all of us, yet, at any rate, the Peters who shall throw themselves into the sea that they may get to their Master? Knowing that it is the Lord who is in their midst, they shall be able to do venturesome deeds, brave deeds, for the glory of His name!   
But I will not dwell on that, but just mention next how the rest came to Christ. We have seen who first saw Him. Afterwards they all saw Him. We have seen who first reached Him. Afterwards they all reached Him and I think the second did no worse than the first. For how came the rest of the disciples? In a little boatI suppose in their fishing vessel, dragging the net after them. I feel that to be my particular department and suppose the lot of most of my dear Brothers here. We are tied to this Church, and we have the net. And though I would gladly enter often into fellowship with Christ by a bold dash, somehow or other I generally have to drag a net after me! I want to commune with Christ, but I have about a thousand souls that I have to preach to on the coming Sabbath. I want to rejoice in the Lord with unspeakable joy, but often get cumbered with much serving. There is this poor soul in trouble, and that poor heart who needs consolation. Well, well, if the Master bids us drag the net, we wont leave it, but keep a hold of it and if we come a little more slowly, nevertheless, if we are doing His bidding, our slow pace shall be as accepted as Peters swimming! And many of you, dear Friends, would be very wrong if you were to give up your common callings. You are like the fishermen with the netyou have to drag it. If you should say, I will give myself up to Christ. I will row to shore. I shall renounce my business. I shall leave all my earthly callingsI think, unless I was quite certain you were a Peter, I would say, Brother, go back! Drag the net. It must be brought to shore. There are your children. Oh, what a care they need and how wrong you would be if you neglected them!  
I remember a man, whose children were most neglected, who used to frequently go out preaching in the country villages. I know that once or twice he was spoken to about it, but he never mended matters. While he would be preaching, his children would be in the streets! He lived to see them grow up reprobatesand the sin was at his door. Stick to Christ! Drag your net and bring your family after you. Let this be your vehement desirethat your children shall be brought to Him! Or you have servants, or a little district in some place in London. Dont run away from your work! A Brother wrote to me some time ago telling me how much distressed he was in his mind. He said he thought he should never be happy till he got out of business. I said, Dont run away from Satan. Fight the devil where you are! Tell the devil you will grapple with him where you are, and you mean to beat him right there. Oh, if God in His Providence has made you a servant, very wellbeat the devil as a servant! And if you are a tradesman, dont say, I cannot keep this trade and honor God. Do not let it be said that our God is the God of the hills and not the God of the valleys, and that it is only certain people in certain places who can honor Him! No, in every place you can honor your Master! Keep to your net. Drag it to Christ, however. Oh, what a drag it will be, sometimes, to bring it Christs way!all the business and all the work you have to doto do all for Christ! Yet this is true religionto sanctify not only the vessels of the altar, but the pots and the bells that are upon the horsesto make everything holiness unto the Lord! God grant us Grace to do this! May He send us here and there a Peter and, at the same time, may He keep the bulk of you, while steadfast in your callings and diligent in business, to be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. Oh, blessed Church that shall thus unanimously be drifting towards Christ and be heartily seeking after fellowship with the dear Redeemer some impetuously, all industriouslyand all successfully!   
Now this leads me a little farther on. Supposing we should reach the Savior, as I trust we may, each man after His own order   
III. WHAT WILL BE THE RESULT OF COMING TO CHRIST?   
Three results. The first will be refreshment. He will say to us, Come and dine. Ah, how well fed are those whom Christ feeds! When we go up to the House of Prayer and look to the pulpit, we are disappointed. But if we go and look to the hills from where comes our help, we are never disappointed! What can the pastor do unless the superior Shepherd shall give us the daily food? I might well say to hungry souls, as the King of Israel said to the woman in Samaria, when she spoke of their having eaten her child in famine, and asked the king to help herWoman, if the Lord does not help you, how shall I help you? And so might we all, with the most anxious desire to do good, yet reply, If the Lord does not help you, how can we help you? No, Brothers and Sisters, it is not in the power of ordinances, any more than of ministers, to feed souls! There is nothing in the bread and wine of the Communion Table that can spiritually nourish us. There you have breadno morewineno more. It is only when, through these, you get to Jesuswhen you pass through the doorway of the outward and get into the inward, into the spiritualit is only then that your souls are entertained! And once get there, His banqueting table is better than that of Ahasuerus! There is no such feast as that which Jesus givesof fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees, well refined. By your enjoyments in the past, my Brothers and Sistersby those ravishing moments when your souls have burned within you with intense delightask Him to come to you again! Beseech Him to favor you tonight with this refreshment. And mark you, that prayer need not be a selfish one, for all the strength that is gained in communion with Christ will afterwards be spent in the service of Christ!   
But again. When the disciples had all come to our Lord, and had dined, the next thing was examination. It was addressed to Peter especiallybut it must have been a lesson to all the rest of themDo you love Me? The very first question that we should ask ourselves concerning our Christianity is this, Do you love Me? The second is, Do you love Me? The third is, Do you love Me? Answer that, and all is answered! The old orator said that the first essential of eloquence was delivery or action. The second was delivery. The third was delivery. So we will say that the first essential of a truly healthy Christianity is to love Christ! And the second is to love Christ! And the third is to love Christ! Our Lord would not talk of commonplace things at that time. He selected a vital topic, and this is always vitalDo you love Me? Do you love Me? Do you love Me? Beloved Brothers and Sisters, I hope you will always be sound in the faith but then that is little comparatively to what it is to be sound in loving Christ! I trust, Brothers and Sisters, you will always be holy in lifebut that can only be as you love Him in the heart. Out of the heart the life proceeds! He is the fountainour actions are but the streams. Do, then, pass the question round among you, Do you love Me? I desire to put it to myself. I beg you to put it to yourselves. Pause a moment. Do you love Christ? What say you? With a true love? With a love that is such as He demands, that is above the love of mother or of child? Do you love Me? You are coming to My Table, you are baptizedyou are a member of the Churchbut do you love Me? Is it so? I trust you can reply, Lord, You know all things: You know that I love You.

*Yes, I love You and adore   
Oh, for Grace to love You more!*   
Well, then, lastly, after coming to the Savior, who had given them refreshment and caused them to examine themselves, the next thing was that it ensured for them commissions of service. Before the Lord blesses a Church, He prepares it for the blessing. A number of sailors wrecked on a desert island are thirsting for water, but suppose a shower comes at onceit will be a wasted blessing! They must be so thirsty that they are led to put up an apparatus for catching the water when it comes otherwise the water comes too soon and is lost! I love to see a Church in such state of agony for Gods Grace that it has, as it were, the reservoirs ready to hold the Grace when it cones! They that pass through the Valley of Baca make it a well. They make it a well. The water does not rise in the well. The rain also fills the pools. Yet they dig the wells to hold the rainand the rain comes. Remember that notable incident when Israel and Judah were engaged against the King of Edom! The Prophet said, as he took his harp and began to play by Inspiration, Make this valley full of ditches! And they wondered whybut they dug the trenches and made the troughs all along the valley. By-and-by, the water came and filled the valley, and the host was refreshed! We need to make this valley full of ditches. We need, as a Church, to be ready and waiting for the blessing!   
You see, Christ prepared Peter and all the Apostles by saying to them, Feed My lambs. Feed My sheep. Shepherd My flock. And He says to you, tonight, Are you refreshed by My Presence? Have you examined yourself and seen that you love Me? Now, then, gird up your loins and prepare for the service of the Church. I want, Brothers and Sisters, to see among us men and women who are looking after Christs sheep and lambs! I hope it is not so everywhere, but I met the other day with a good Brother who has attended for a long time this Tabernacle, to whom nobody has ever spoken yet, as he told me. I do not know where he sitsat least, I half think I do, but I shall not tell you, because then somebody or other would find out who he was. But I will suppose he sits anywhere you like, all around you, and your own consciences shall judge. Now ought it to be so? Ought a person to come here Sunday after Sunday, and no one ever give him a brotherly salutation, or say a word concerning his soul? Oh, that you were looking out in the neighborhoods where you live, and in the part of this building where you sit, for opportunities of doing good! I know that there are persons who are longing to be spoken to, and they wonder why you do not speak to them! They are Christs lambs and they need carrying in some kindly bosom. Oh, Look after them and help them! You do not know how half a word said in Christs name during your journeying about your business may be life from the dead! As it is said by Herbert, a verse may strike him whom a sermon flies. So a little word from you may be effectual where the most earnest public ministry might fail!   
Oh, Beloved, the Lord is not slack! We are slack! If we have not a blessing, we are straitened somewhere, but it cannot be in Him! We are straitened in our own hearts and sympathies. What is that memorable text of the Prophet, Bring you all the tithes into the storehouse that there may be meat in My house; and prove Me now herewith, says the Lord of Hosts, if I will not pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it. We are not to say that we are proving the Lord to give us a blessing because we pray. The test He puts us to is bringing the tithes into the storehousethat is to say, what is Gods due! Am I giving less of my substance than I ought to give? Am I giving less of my time than I ought to give? Am I giving less of my talent than I ought to give? If I withhold anything that is really Gods tithe, I am not proving God! But when we are all giving and doing to our utmost, then we prove God and we shall see whether He will not open the windows of Heaven and pour us out a blessing such as we shall not have room enough to receive!   
I charge you, my Belovedyou who have been the flock of my care these many yearsremember the history that God has given us during these 17 years. We were very few when we began, but there was a living seed among us, and there was mighty prayerand a blessing came. By terrible things in righteousness God answered us! But the answer did come. What Prayer Meetings we had at Park Street! How often we sat down and wept under the Divine Influence! Thank God, the Holy Spirit overshadowed us! What ardor there was among you, then, and how many souls were brought to Christ! Since then He has led us on from strength to strength. He has never failed us! Never is this place empty or deserted. Crowds still come to listen to the Word of God! Oh, shall we not have a blessing as we had it before? I trust we may. And we shall if you are all, to the full measure of your obligations, engaged in the service of your blessed Master and seeking strength from on high! By the hands that were nailed for youby the feet that were pierced for youby the head that was crowned with thorns for youby the heart that poured out blood and water for youby the Christ who died for youI implore and beseech you, lay yourselves out upon the altar of God, and say, Henceforth, for us to live is Christ. Christ is all. We desire to say continually, The Lord be magnified.   
Oh, that some here who know little enough about this might desire to know it! Poor Soul, if you desire Christ, Christ desires you! And if you will have Him tonight, you shall have Him! If you believe that Jesus is Christ, and have put your trust in Him as your Savior, you are saved! Look to Him now! God help you to do it, for Christs sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **LUKE 24:13-35.**

Verses 13-15. And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. And it came to pass, that while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus, Himself drew near, and went with them. Where two talk of heavenly things they shall not be long without a third! Jesus loves holy company, and He will join Himself to those who in their conversation join themselves to Him.

16, 17. But their eyes were held that they should not know Him. And He said unto them, What manner of communications are these that you have, one to another, as you walk, and are sad? The first part of that question some professors might be ashamed to answer, What manner of communications are these that you have, one to another, as you walk? It is not always that all Sunday talk is Sabbath talknot always that we converse as we should upon the things of God. We are, many of us, blameworthy here.

18, 19. And one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto Him, Are You only a stranger in Jerusalem, and have not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? And He said unto them, What things? And they said unto Him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a Prophet mighty in deed and in word before God and all the people. Just as a schoolmaster, though he knows more than the children, yet asks them questions to see what they know. So did the Savior, What things?...And they said to Him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a Prophet mighty in word and deed. I ought to have said, in deed and word. You see my mistake. That is how we put it, word and deed, for our words go first, but with Christ, the practical comes first, and then commences the doctrinal.

20-24. And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and have crucified Him. But we trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, today is the third day since these things were done. Yes, and certain women, also of our company, made us astonished, which were early at the sepulcher; and when they found not His body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that He was alive. And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulcher, and found it even so as the women had said: but Him they saw Him not. They made out a very clear case against their own unbelief here. They had the evidence of the women, and they had the evidence of the men of their own company. The women, they knew were honest. About their own company they could have no doubt, but yet they did not draw the inference which was clear enough, namely, that Jesus had risen and that what He said He was, He had proven Himself to be.

25, 26. Then He said unto them. O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the Prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His Glory? Is not this just what He said He would do?

27, 28. And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. And they drew near unto the village, where they went: and He made as though He would have gone further. Never had they had a shorter walk in their lives! His holy talk had made the journey seem as nothing, and sorry they were to see the villageand especially when they found that their Companion had an idea of going further.

29. But they constrained Him saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening and the day is far spent. And He went in to tarry with them. O wise disciple, when you have your Master to hold Him! I held Him, says the spouse; I held Him, and I would not let Him go. So may it be with us.

30, 31. And it came to pass, as He sat at dinner with them, He took bread, and blessed it, and broke it, and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew Him; and He vanished out of their sight. Sometimes when you do not remember a friend who has greatly changed, or from whom you have been long apart, some old familiar sign will bring it all back and as with a rush of memory, you know him at once! Now if this were an ordinary meal, as perhaps it was, Jesus was so in the habit of giving thanks that they knew Him by that. I wish we knew every Christian by the same sign. Or if this were, indeed, a celebration of His own sacred festival, then again they knew, for is not this the sign between Christ and His people? And is not this Table the place where Jesus meets His Beloved? And their eyes were opened, and they knew Him. But they knew Him to see Him no more that night.

32-35. And they said, one to the other, Did not our hearts burn within us, while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures? And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them, Saying, the Lord is risen, indeed, and has appeared to Simon. And they told what things were done in the way, and how He was known of them in breaking of bread. Did they go to their beds? The day was far spentlate traveling was dangerous in Israel. Ah, dangerous or not, they are so overwhelmed with joy that they must go and communicate what they had seen!

Adapted from the C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software.   
PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #2072 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

BREAKFAST WITH JESUS   
NO. 2072

**DELIVERED ON LORDS DAY MORNING, FEBRUARY 24, 1889, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Jesus said unto them, Come and dine. And none of the disciples dared ask Him, Who are you? knowing that it was the Lord.** Or, as we have it in the Revised Version,

**Jesus said unto them, Come and break your fast. And none of the disciples dared enquire of Him, Who are you? knowing that it was the Lord. John 21:12.**

THE Lord Jesus is thoughtful of bodily wants. In His earlier days He fed multitudes of people, on two grand occasions, with bread and fish. And now that He has died and risen from the dead and is in the body of His Glory, He still thinks of the hungering bodies of men and calls to the fishermen, Children, have you any meat? Finding that they have nothing, He makes a breakfast for them. Come and break your fast falls very condescendingly from His lips and it proves to us how He cares for the temporal needs of the poor.

Here is warrant for the servants of God endeavoring to feed the hungry crowd. We are not to buy them with so-called charities, for that our Lord never did. Loaves and fishes are a very poor spiritual bait and catch none of the right sort of fish. The feeding must come because they need it and for the love of God and with no ulterior aim. As the Savior fed the people, so, according to our ability, we may attempt to do without fear that we shall therein be going beyond our legitimate province.

Our Lord and Savior was particularly mindful in this case of the wants of His own people. These seven Apostles were supplied by His care. If any of you are in needy and trying circumstances, catch this fact and be encouraged. He that said to the seven, Come and break your fast, will not forget you in the time of your need. On your part, now is the time for the exercise of faith. And on His part, now is the season for the display of His power. If you look to your fellow men perhaps they may fail to help you they are far too apt to give the cold shoulder to those who are not well-todo. But if you look to Him, you shall have your prayer answered.

In some way or other the Lord will provide. I cannot tell how, any more than I can tell you how our Lord provided that fire of coals, or how he procured the fish which was broiling on the fire. But there was the fire and there was the fish. And so, in the Lords own way, it shall be seen that the Lord will provide. Trust in the Lord and do good; so shall you dwell in the land and verily you shall be fed. He that taught you to say, Give us this day our daily bread did not teach you an empty phrase.

O you whose need presses so closely as even to make you acquainted with hunger, behold how Jesus pities you and look to Him to aid you. For

He is the same now as He was by the lake of Galilee. Go a step further. As Jesus is so careful of the condition of His people that He will have their bodies fed, we may be sure that He will have their souls nourished. I said to myself, as I considered my return among you, The first thing we will do when I get home shall be to feed the servants of God, that they may be in good working order. Our Lord began this third manifestation of Himself not with prayer, but with food. Much had to be said and done. But they must breakfast first.

They were to be questioned, rebuked, instructed, commissioned, warned. But they must first be fed. The essential thing that morning was a fire of coals and broiled fish and bread. For they must be put into good condition, and then they would be ready to hear what their Lord should say to them. Things that were of prime importance must yet be kept back a little while until they could bear them and profit by them. And that they could not do while they were cold and hungry. Therefore fire and food.

Now, if it was so with the body, how much more is it so with the soul? I want you, therefore, this morning, to ask the Lord to spread a table for you in the wilderness. May your song at this time be

*The Lords my Shepherd, Ill not want,   
He makes me to lie down   
In pastures green. He leads me   
There by quiet waters.*

Many things call for your earnest attention. But it will be poor haste if you rush to work without refreshing the inner man. Pause a while and feast with your Lord in order that you may be able to attend to your pressing duties.

If you had a tree to fell, you would count it no loss of time, first, to sharpen your axe. When the axe is sharp, then the tree will come down all the soonersharpen therefore, the axe of your mind. This morning have nothing to do but to attend to the feeding of your soul. The Lords first miracle was at a wedding feast. And in the miracle now before us He provides a breakfast. His is no starveling Gospel, He gives us all things richly to enjoy. Hear His cry, in the ancient Song of SongsEat, O Friends; drink, yes, drink abundantly, O beloved. Dear child of God believe and doubt not. Should a choice morsel come your way, partake of it with a believing confidence.

I. First, I shall invite you TO SEE THE IMPORTANCE OF A FEAST WITH JESUS. Jesus says to you, Come and break your fast. And His words are never without the deepest meaning. See the importance of a meal with Jesus. It was peculiarly needful to these men because they were in a needy condition. They were wet, cold and hungry. A fire of coals was a fine center for them, whereat they could dry their jerseys and warm their hands. The fish, fresh from the sea and from the fire, was most suitable for their hunger. Before them Jesus spreads the old food with which He always fed the peoplefood pleasant and easy to digest.

Bread, with a relish of fish, was the constant menu of all our Lords feasts. Jesus does not like to see His servants wet and cold and hungry. And so He provides for the removal of these discomforts. Depend upon it, what Jesus does not like to see is not good for us. It is not well for us to be unhappy. If, therefore, you feel this morning, in your inmost souls, uncomfortable and much out of sorts, your Lord does not wish you to be so. The thoughts of your own misery will hinder your thoughts of Him and prevent your rendering Him good service. My Master bids me, this morning, to see to it that all hands are provided with good cheer.

Gladly, therefore, do I invite you to the fire of coals which is furnished by His glowing love. Cheerfully do I set before you the holy food of sacred Truth furnished by His Word. And I would thus fulfill His command to me, Feed My sheep. It is important, dear Child of God, that you should be happy. It is important that you should be in a flourishing spiritual condition within. Therefore, come and break your fast with Jesus. Many a battle has been lost because the soldiers were not in good condition for the fight. Let it not be so with you. You need stamina if you are to do hard and long work for Jesus and His Truth. And there is no keeping up the stamina without heavenly food. It is important, considering the condition of many of you, that you should have a meal with Jesus at once.

Besides, they were weary with a nights fruitless toil. As I told you in reading, it was night and nothing while Jesus was away. Have I not before me some servants of God who have not seen any good following their exertions of late? They have fished for men but the nets have remained empty. It is dreary work, toiling all night and taking nothing. I know this, because I know still better the reverse of it. Oh, it is a blessed thing to have a successful season by the little river of retirement, when one is away from the great sea of the city!

In my late seclusion it has seemed to me that the fish kept coming up to my line and biting at my hook, though I had not on purpose baited it! The Lord sent me persons to receive a blessing and they had a quiet word and went on their way rejoicing. Alas, it is not always so. You may have a widespread net cast into the great sea and no end of fishes all around you and yet you may take nothingthat nights work yielded nothing but splash and haul, disappointment and fatigue. If you are in that condition, you evidently need encouragement. Times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord will be your present want. The Savior calls to you, Come and breakfast. Leave the boat and the nets and forget the nights vain toil and come and commune with Me. Weary Worker, worried and weeping, cease your complaining and come to the fire and the food which Jesus provides for you.

You will remind me that before the breakfast the disciples had taken a great number of fish and had counted them. Just so. And that is another reason for calling them to feast with Jesus. Catching fish is a fine business, but being fed is equally needful. No fisherman can live on catching and counting. It is a very deceptive thing for a man to sustain his faith upon the success of his labors. Our tendency in a revival is to rejoice over converts, and count them a hundred and fifty and three. It is not wrong to count your converts if Christ gives them to youthe awkward part of it is that you are apt to count in with the fish a number of frogsI mean a sort of convert that Jesus never sent. You may, if you please, count every convert and say, a hundred and fifty and three. But do not think that this will nourish your own soul. You cannot sustain the life of Divine

Grace upon the grace received by others.

Believe me, you must in secret draw from the Divine storehouse your personal supplies, or you will be famished. You will find it very hungry work if you try to live on catching and counting! You must be yourself watered, or your watering of others will dry up your soul. The most successful Evangelist, if he attempts to live on his own work, will suck up the wind. If a teacher of children, or a conductor of young mens classes makes the food of his soul to be his success in the service of God, he will feed on ashes. O you that have had grand times in preaching or teaching, do not be content with these! Grace for your office is one thingDivine Grace for yourselves is another. It is well to catch fish. But even that would be sorry work if you perished with hunger yourselves.

Again, dear Friends, I think it was a very necessary thing that they should break their fast, for the Lord Jesus Christ was going to search their hearts. When they had dinednotice that, not till thenJesus questioned Peter. When they had breakfasted, Jesus said, Simon, son of Jonas, do you love Me? When they had breakfasted, not before. He would not deal with Peter, or any of them, while they had empty stomachs. I beg you to feed well this morning because you will have to be overhauled before long, and it will be well to have heart to bear it. Truth will be preached to you another day which will blow quite through you, like a mighty windTruth which will burn as an oven and like a refiners fire. Get yourself in good order for Cross-examination.

Prepare your soul for the hour of trial when the business of the hour will be to answer the question, Simon, son of Jonas, do you love Me? Ah, dear Friends, if heart-searching trials come upon us when we are lean and famished, they pull us down dreadfully, for we are out of condition. But the same measure of heart-searching administered to us when soundly nourished by communion with Christ will do us much good

*Though cares like a wild deluge come,   
And storms of sorrow fall;   
When I have fed with Christ at home,   
My soul defies them all.*

He that is right with God can bear to be questioned. He that is nourished and built up with heavenly food can bear to examine the grounds of his faith and to test the foundations of his hope. Such a man can face the inquiry

*Do I love the Lord or no?*

*Am I His, or am I not?*   
So, therefore, because heart-searching times will come before long, I entreat you to comfort your souls with a morsel of bread.

Remember, also, that they were about to receive a commissionthey were to be told to feed Christs lambs and sheep. But I think I hear you say, That commission, like the examination, was directed to Peter. I know it. But I am also sure that when the Lord said to Peter, Do you love Me? the question went home to them all. What the Lord said to Peter especially, He was talking to them all. Have you ever felt, when a word of warning has been addressed to your friend, that it was even more applicable to yourself than to him? An indirect admonition is, to some extent, more powerful than one personally directed. Nathanael, Thomas, James, John and the others were quite as truly addressed by the Savior as Simon, son of Jonas.

The arrow shot at Simon was not lost upon the sons of Zebedee. Certainly they were, all of them, to feed the lambs and pastor the sheep. And the commission which was given distinctly to Peter was meant for all the Lords servants. See, then, the necessity for their breaking their fast. If they are to feed others, they must be fed themselves. The husbandman that labors must be first partaker of the fruits. He that waters others must be himself watered. They made me the keeper of the vineyards. But my own vineyard have I not kept, was a very sorrowful lament. And the Lord would not have His people imitate it.

Jesus was going to give them a blessed work to do, and therefore He would put them into working order before He allotted it to them. O Brothers and Sisters, it may seem a very small thing for you to feed your own selves but it is not so. I would have you strong, yourselves, that you may labor for others. You cannot be made a blessing to those around you till you are blest yourselves. Your usefulness largely depends upon your personal joyThe joy of the Lord is your strength.

Once more, our Lord was going to give to one of them a warning and by that one to hint much the same heritage of trials to the others. Another shall gird you and carry you where you would not. Crucifixion awaited Peter, and a martyrs death, in some form awaited all those who were present except John. This the Master lets them know. But He does not mention it till they have dined. Do not reckon upon an easy journey between here and Heaven. If you do, you will be mistaken. For in the world you shall have tribulation. If the Lord loves you, He will chasten youit is the Covenant mark. Marvel not when you fall into manifold trials. But rather rejoice in this, that you have evidence herein that your Father has not forgotten you but is still training you for His Heaven.

But while we give you that warning, we invite you to come and feed on heavenly bread and refresh your souls with those spiritual luxuries whereby men are made ready for labor and suffering. Eat that which is good and let your soul delight itself in fatness, that you may be prepared to do that which is good and delight yourself in sacrifice. It is no trifling matter, therefore, when I say to you, in the words of the Old Version, Come and dine, or in the more exact phrase of the Revision, Come and break your fast. Thus much for the importance of the matter.

II. Secondly, I want you to SEE JESUS HIMSELF ACTING AS YOUR HOST. It was Jesus who cried to them, Children, have you any meat? It was He that said, Bring of the fish which you have now caught. It is He that gives the invitation, Come and break your fast. Jesus is Master of the feast. He condescends to the feast. Is it not wonderful that the Holy Lord should have communion with His faulty followers? Yet He will breakfast with uswith us who doubted Him, as Thomas did. With us who denied Him, as Peter did. With us who forsook Him and fled, as all the rest did.

He, always sinless, was now without physical necessities. He had risen from the dead and He did not need to eat, yet did He still have familiar fellowship with sinful man. On one occasion He ate a piece of a broiled fish

and honeycomb. And I suppose that on this occasion He also ate with them. For one does not ask others to come and dine and then Himself refrain from eating. He communed with them by that bread and by that fish. It was wonderful condescension. But will the Lord still come and commune with us? Will He, without whom was not anything made that was made, have fellowship with a sinful mortal like I?

Take comfort, you who are conscious of sin, from the fact that His last close companion here below was a thief! And the first that passed the pearly portal with Him and entered into His kingdom was that self-same justly executed one. Come along with you, you child of God, conscious of your gross unworthinesscome, for He invites you now to feast with Him. This shall be your nourishment, not only the food which He prepares for you, but His company, too.

Notice that Jesus, as the Host, prepared the feast. We shall never know how that fire of coals was kindledsome speak confidently of it as the work of angels. But why introduce angels where they are not needed? They can kindle fires, doubtlessbut so can the Savior without their aid. There was the fire of coals and there was the fish. Where did He get the fish? All sorts of idle speculations have been raised about His having bought it from a passing boat. There is no need of such inventions. Doubtless both fire and fish were the products of creative power. We have before us one of those miracles which were commonplace to the Savior. He spoke and there was the fire and the fish laid thereon and a crisp cake hot from the coals.

Dear Friends, your soul can never feed except upon what Jesus has prepared for you. His flesh is meat indeed. But there is no other meat for souls. He has not to kindle a fire for your comfortit is burning nowit has been kindled long ago. There was never a morsel of manna in the mouth of any child of God but the Word of the Lord supplied it. There was never food yet for a true heart but what it came from Him who is our life and the food of our life. How can this man give us His flesh to eat? said they of oldbut that is exactly what He does. All that He gives to us of spiritual nourishment is of His own preparing.

What is equally wonderful to me is thisafter the Lord had prepared it, He Himself was the waiter at the feast. Read verse thirteenJesus then came and took the bread and gave it to them and likewise the fish. When there are seven at table, a host might well be justified in saying, Dear friends, you are welcome to all that is before you, help yourselves. But we cannot help ourselvesHe who prepares the feast must also bring the food to us. Jesus then came and took the bread and gave it to them and likewise the fish. Only one serving the food and that the Lord Himself!

O Master, we know there is good spiritual food in Your Word but we are not able to appropriate it. Come Yourself and lay home the promise to the heart. You know what a way our Lord has of making us to lie down in green pastureswe do not even lie down of ourselves. He places the nourishing Word in the heart. Remember that passage in Hosea which in the original says, Behold, I will allure her and bring her into the wilderness and speak to her heart. I can speak to your ears but Jesus speaks to the heart.

The Lord Jesus, by the work of the Holy Spirit, has a way of conveying the heavenly food into us so that we receive and inwardly digest it. And it then enters into the secret part of the soul and is assimilated and we are truly built up. I pray that the Holy Spirit may thus work at this time. Look at your Host. It is the Lord Himself who lovingly condescends to commune with you and in a wonderful way prepares the feast and with boundless condescension Himself helps you to it.

All the while He was doing this He showed Himself. This is now the third time that Jesus showed Himself to His disciples. The chapter opens by saying, And on this wise showed He Himself. When the Lord was handing out that bread He was showing Himself and they could see Him serving them. And when He brought them the fish to eat, they saw Him revealed as the very Christ. They saw more of Him in giving the bread and the fish than they would have seen if He had stood still to be gazed upon. Jesus feeding us is Jesus revealed. If He had stretched out His hand for them to examine the nail-prints, they would not have seen Him so well as when that hand gave them food.

Oh, if the Lord Jesus will come to you individually, as I pray He may, and bring you heavenly food this morning, you will see Himsee Him with eyes full of tears. Are there not times with you when Divine Truth comes home to you in such a sweet, comforting, nourishing way that you have said, It is the Lord. He is Himself the sum and substance of His own blessed Gospel. He has Himself brought me into His banqueting house and His banner over me is His own love? A vision of Christ is the most filling thing in the world. If we may but see Him in Glory, that shall be the Heaven of Heaven.

If I were the dying thief I would be happy to die with Him side by side on the Cross and count it bliss to be with Him there. But what must it be to pass through the pearly gate with Him and to be with Him in His kingdom, as that same dying thief was? This is your mornings portiondo not miss it. He showed Himself. Is it weeks since you have seen your Lord? Oh, then, heave a great sigh and say, Lord, show Yourself to me. Is it days since you have had actual fellowship with Jesus? Oh, that your heart might break after Him now! Do not be satisfied to let this mornings sitting break up without your having seen the Lordeveryone of you who are His true disciples.

O dear Friends, you that hear about Christ and just let it glide by what are you worth? What sort of Christians are those who do not know the vitals of Christianity, the secret enjoyments of rapturous love? Outside, in merely external religion, everything is cold and dreary and I do not wonder at people getting weary of it and giving it up. The glory lies within the veil. We must see Jesus. Our home is where God reveals Himself to His people. Little drops of religion are poor things. Oh, for Madame Guyons torrents! Oh, that the sacred torrent would bear us away! That mighty river, not the river Kishon, but what if I call it Kedron?the Kedron of His suffering love, which is a torrent indeed! Oh, to be borne along by the stream of Free Grace and dying love until one is conscious of

nearing the unfathomable depths of love unsearchable!

Thus much about our Host. Mine is a poor talk. God grant that, by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, you may get far beyond me and see Him whom having not seen we love!

III. Now, SEE THE PROVISION. I have tried to call you to the feast and I have also tried to point out our Host. Now, attentively regard the provisions. There are two parts. First, there was what He had mysteriously preparedthe fish laid upon the coals. And, secondly, what He had graciously given. For He said, Bring of the fish which you have now caught. It was the same sort of fish, no doubt. But it came in two ways.

First, let us note the mysteriously prepared provision. Look at the fish which is broiling on the coals! Mysterious fish! Mysterious coals! Feed now with all your hearts upon the mystery of everlasting love. I have loved you with an everlasting love. Feed on the mystery of the Covenant of Grace, when, on your behalf, the blessed Son of God stood Sponsor and Surety before the great Father and the Father covenanted for His Sons sake to bless His chosen. Oh, the mystery of the eternal gift of the elect to Jesus and the gift of Jesus to His elect! Before the world began all this was provided for our need. Cannot you feed on this?

Think, next, of the kinship of Christ to you. He came to Bethlehem that He might take our nature. He lay an Infant on a womans breast. He was cradled as a Child. He abode here a suffering, wayworn man. Was not that a beautiful verse we sang just now, which began

*Jesus, our Kinsman and our God,   
Arrayed in majesty and blood   
You are our life, our souls in You   
Possess a full felicity?*

Yes, He is Brother to youof your nature, of your flesh and of your bonesyour next of kin, sworn to redeem you and even espoused to you. Jesus is Brother to you who are in adversity. Feed on that.

Here is another fish of the kind found only in the sea of mysterious loveI point you to His effectual atonement. He has finished His lifework for you and poured forth the price of your redemptionminting it from His own heart. He has washed you from your sins in His own blood. He has made you kings and priests unto God. He has bought you with a price, so that you are not your own. The dying Christ bore your penalty the living Christ has ensured your acceptance and your immortality. Because I live, says He, you shall live also.

While He shows Himself to you this morning, He gives you these ancient things to feed upon. Come, feast upon the love that had no beginning, the love that can know no end, nor change, nor be measured. Remember your living and everlasting union with Him. The union between you and the Ever-blessed is inseparable. Who shall separate us? Come, I pray you! Break your fast, you who are most weary and worn and sad! Stay not back from the table but eat to the full. My Beloved, eat of these fish laid on the coalsthese mystic, marvelous thingsin the preparation of which you have had no hand but which Jesus before time began has prepared for you.

But the feast was also made of what the Lord had graciously given and they had drawn out of the deep. The Lord has caused us to obtain many precious things by His own Spirit. And these we have made our own, taking them in our net and dragging them to shore. Let us feed on mercies experienced. Just now to myself these are very manya hundred and fifty and three. I can scarcely count the favors the Lord has given me of late. My net is not broken but I wonder it is not. For the draught of benefits is so greatHe daily loads me with benefits. I desire abundantly to utter the memory of His great goodness. Cannot you do the same and in the memory find a feast for love? A hundred and fifty and threean odd number but largea number which, if you have been careful in your gratitude, may be very exact for all thateven the last three must not be forgotten

*Streams of mercy never ceasing*

*Call for songs of loudest praise.*   
How precious, also, are Your thoughts unto me, O God! The Lord has dealt well with His servants, according to His Word. Let us rejoice in His name as He has revealed it to us.

Have you not a net full of answers to prayer? Some here present have received such blessings that they may be compared to great fishes. When we have many fishes we expect them to be small but ours are all great fish. Oh, the great goodness of a great God to great sinners in the times of their great need! Let us be satisfied with the Lords great goodness to us when in trouble we have sought His face. This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. I sought the Lord, and He heard me. Come, feed upon what you have already tasted and handled, both of His Word and work. Rejoice in what you have seen Him do in you, and for you. Why, here are great fishes, a hundred and fifty and three.

The provision on the lake shore was more than enough for seven men, however hungry they might be. Was it not? They might eat as much as they liked without any fear of exhausting the supply. And after the meal, they would not have left twelve baskets full alone, as there had been at the former feast, but a superabundance for their Brethren, or for any wanderers along the shore. Now, dear Friends, try for a minute or two to dwell upon the wonders of Gods Truth and Grace to you. Think of what He did in your conversion. What He has done in the time of temptation how He has supplied your needs. And how He has given you enjoyments of His love.

I was looking back through former volumes of my sermons and I noticed how often a sermon occurs without a date upon it. I know what that denotes. It means that I was ill and in great pain. Two or three times in almost every year I have to hear the Lord preach to me in the chamber of sickness and I am unable, therefore, to preach to you. These were bitter things at the time. But I bless the Lord for them all and for raising me up again and again and renewing my strength. He will not leave me now. Cannot you also turn to your diaries and remember the loving kindness of the Lord and speak well of His name? All this will be to you a fire of coals and fish drawn from the deep sea.

I am almost done. I do not know whether you have been fed. But I hope you have. I would again invite you in Wisdoms name, saying, Come, eat of My bread and drink of the wine which I have mingled.

IV. But, lastly, SEE HOW THE GUESTS BEHAVED THEMSELVES. I hope if you are fed well, you will behave in the same way. These guests of our Saviors, we find, dared not ask Him, Who are you? knowing that it was the Lord. Come, let us get close up to our Lord.

When a soul draws near to Jesus, its words are few or none. Notice what the disciples said to the Master on this occasion. They only spoke one word and that word was No. John spoke to Peter but not to the Lord. All the time before breakfast and all the time they were at breakfast, they never said anything to Him but, No. That one deep No betrayed the vacuum, the emptiness, the hungerthat was all they had to say. You, also, may say as much to your Lord as thatLord, I am nothing, nobody. I have nothing. I can do nothing without You. Not another word is recorded as coming from them.

That devotion which must always show itself by shouting may be very genuine but it is to be feared that it is superficial. Deep waters run silently. Great feeling is dumbthere is a frost of the mouth when there is a thaw of the soul. Words are often a wall between our spirit and the Great Spirit. I think I remember reading of George Fox sitting down with a crowd of people round him and for a long time he never said a word. They were all watching and waiting. And if it had been myself, I should have stood up full soon and have said something, like a fool.

But he was a wise man and he sat still. It takes a very wise man to hold his tongue so long. George Fox kept silent that he might famish the people from words. A grand lesson for them and one that might be useful to some of you. You must have words! Fine words! Wonderful words! A big mouthful of words is fine food for fools. Some preachers seem to think that saints can feed on their eloquence but they need more substantial meat. Could we not put things prettily if we were to try and throw out to you great bouquets of flowers? What would be the good of it? You want food. You want Christ. And if you could get Jesus Himself, words would be an impertinenceyour own words as well as mine.

As there were no words, so there could be no doubtful questions. Whenever a man gets away from communion with Christ, he begins to ask a host of questions. Persons who have no religion have always a selection of religious questions, varying from the stupidity of, Who was Cains wife? onward to, What will man become by evolution? When a soul has drawn near to Jesus and has been fed by Him, it is no more troubled with doubts than a man at the equator is bitten by frost.

I believe in the Bible, said one. How can you do that? sneered another. Because I know the Author, was the fit reply. If you are walking in the light with your Lord, questions and doubts are heard no more. You adore in deep restfulness of soul, knowing that it is the Lord. How did the disciples know this? By reason? Well, the knowledge is not unreasonable. But we rise higherwe know Jesus by contact, by conversation and by a consciousnessor shall I call it an overpowering conviction?which needs no supporting argument. When we fall at His feet in lowliest reverence of joyful love, we believe and are sure. We become doubt-proof. As an iron-clad throws off the ball which is hurled at it, so a love-clad heart defies all the suggestions of skepticism.

They ate the bread and fish that morning, I doubt not, in silent selfhumiliation. Peter looked with tears in his eyes at that fire of coals, remembering how he stood and warmed himself when he denied his Master. Thomas stood there, wondering that he should have dared to ask such proofs of a fact most clear. All of them felt that they could shrink into nothing in His Divine Presence, since they had behaved so cowardly. Yet were they also silent for joy.

Did you ever feel the bliss of dying to self? As you near the vanishing point of self?the glory of the Lord dawns on you with immeasurable splendor! To grow bigger and bigger and bigger until you fill the halls of fame and your name echoes round the world, is the ambition of the vain and it is an abomination. But to grow less and less, till the Lord God is All in Allthat is the joy of saints and it is a sweet smelling offering

*The more Your glories strike mine eyes,   
The humbler I shall lie   
Thus, while I sink, my joys shall rise   
Immeasurably high.*

They were silent in wonder as they gazed on the risen One. He was all over wonder to thema world of beauties and of miracles. When He fed them, when He gave them the bread, when He gave them the fishit was a melting season. They remembered how He washed their feet. But then He was in His state of humiliation. And they marveled yet more that now He was risen He would still be among them as One that serves. They were dumb with surprise and gratitude and love.

I suppose they could not speak because they felt such deep, unutterable reverence for His majesty. They felt, with Jacob, How dreadful is this place! God was manifest in the flesh and they beheld His Glory. Therefore Peter speaks of himself as a witness of the sufferings of Christ and also a partaker of the Glory that shall be revealed. What could they do but, while they apprehended that Glory, remain quiet and inwardly adore? The practice of occasional quiet affords healthy nourishment to the soul. A sitting silently at the feet of Jesus is of more worth than all the clatter of Marthas dishes.

Communion with Christ will teach you a reverence which words cannot express. There is an exceeding weight of glory which would break the backs of all the words of all languages should we essay to load them therewith

*Come, then, expressive silence,   
Muse His praise.*   
Praise waits for You, O God, in Sion: and unto You shall the vow be performed.

Brethren, have you fed? Have you had breakfast with Jesus? If so, I am well content. But I would remind you that when you come here again, you must hear what your Lord has to say by way of question and command. For, when they had dined, solemn business began. It must not be with us as with IsraelThe people sat down to eat and to drink and rose up to play. But we rise to work and suffer and to go far towards Heaven in the

strength of the meat we have enjoyed.

Someone will ask, Have you not a word for the unconverted this morning? Indeed, I have something better than words. When we set forth the provisions of Divine Grace before the godly, we are really inviting poor hungry sinners. The sight of food is a fine creator of appetite. When the prodigal returned to his father they brought forth the best robe and put it on him. And they put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet. But when it came to the eating, what was done? The father did not say, Bring forth the fatted calf and feed my son with it. His words wereLet us eat and be merry.

Why, I thought he was caring most for his returning child? Yes, but he was faint and sick at heart and needed to have his appetite aroused. One sure way to induce another to eat, is to eat, yourself. If he stands there and his sadness has taken away his appetite, you eat and be merry and you will soon find that his mouth will begin to water and he will be ready to feed with you. I do hope some people will feel an appetite coming to them this morning and will cry, I long to feed on heavenly bread and to have my heart refreshed in the Presence of the Lord Jesus.

O poor Heart, believe in Jesus and He is yours! Children of God, just as you can enjoy Christ and show that enjoyment in your lives, you will be fascinating others to your Lord and thus by your means I shall not have preached in vain to the unconverted.

O you who would gladly come to Jesus, look at the first chapter of this Gospel of John. The word is there, Come and see. While in this last chapter of John it is, Come and dine. Remember that the first thing to do is to Come and see, or look to Jesus. He says, Look unto Me and be you saved, all the ends of the earth. Look to Jesus, see Him dying in your place to put away your guilt. Look with the appropriating glance of faith, trusting in Him. And then before long you shall feed on him, to your hearts delight. The Lord send his blessing upon this word, for His names sake! Amen.

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TWO LOVING INVITATIONS

NO. 633

**A SERMON PREACHED   
BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE NEWINGTON.

**Come and see.   
John 1:39.   
Come and dine.   
John 21:12.**

THE one text is in the beginning and the other at the end of Johns Gospel. There is a mystery here. Here is typified a growth which it were well for us to understand. Come and see, is for babes in GraceCome and dine, is for strong men in Christ Jesus. We must notice the order. Come and see, is the beginning of spiritual life as it is the beginning of this Gospel. Come and dine, is a high after-privilege of the spiritual life and a blessed result of it. Come and see, is the Gospels cry to those outside its paleit has nothing to conceal, it wears no mask, it has no most holy place into which entrance is forbidden. It has a sanctum sanctorum, but the way into it is open. Open and above-board in all its doings, the Truth as it is in Jesus bares its bosom secrets and cries to every passerby, Come and see.

The seals of the book are broken, the darkness is rolled away, the vision is open and with clarion note the invitation is issued, Come and see. Romanism may conceal its worship under the Latin tongue. Difficult phraseology and polished periods may hide from the multitude the teaching of professed Protestants, but the true preacher of Christ declares, I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of mans wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.

The shutters of every window are open. The key is put into every lock and every door is thrown wide open. Investigation is courted upon every pointthe Gospel stands at her door and says, Come in here, come and see. You have this short sentence, Come and see, as, first of all, an encouragement to enquirers. Many of you are like Johns disciples. They had heard John preach and they believed his word and when they saw Christ, to whom John pointed, they followed Him. But not knowing Him, they followed Him with a question upon the tip of their tonguesMaster, where do You dwell? He said, Come and see. You also are anxious to know Christ. You have heard His Word preached by some of His witnesses and you want to know Him personally for yourselves. You have a pressing question to put tonight and Jesus encourages you to ask. Noto come and get your own answer with your own eyes. Come, He says, Come and see.

There are three ways, I think, by which persons are to, Come and see. One is by observation. We ought to give attention to the teaching of the

Gospel, to weigh it and prove it. If it is found false we are to cast it away with decision. But if it is found worthy of our attention we are to hold it fast and never let it go. Many persons are careless. They will consider the last new novel, or they have been clamoring to get the Life of Julius Caesar, to see what the Emperor of the French can have to say upon that subject. But concerning Christ Crucified they have no curiosity. They frequent their place of worship without feeling enough interest in the affair to ask themselves why they go. They do not expect to understand what they hear, or if they understand it they care not whether the thing is true or not. It is nothing to them that Jesus should die.

Now surely a theme which involves eternal consequences, a matter which deals with my immortal spirit ought not to be put into the background and left to careless inadvertence. I ought, at least, to give it something like the consideration which it claims at my hands. But some look at it through colored spectacles. They are prejudiced against the Gospel. They observe it, they say, but their observation is tinctured by themselves and by their own character. Some persons make up their minds as to what the Gospel ought to be before they try to find out what it is. They do not come to the Bible, nor to the hearing of the Word in order to discover what the Truth of God is. No, they sit down and dream and fashion in their own minds just such a sort of concoction as they imagine Gospel Truth should be and everything which is contrary to this they will kick against, like the foolish ox which kicks against the goad.

It would be no use for me, in astronomy, to make an hypothesis and then go out with a telescope and say, That star ought not to be where it is. According to my theory Jupiter ought not to have moved as he has moved and therefore I do not believe in Jupiter, nor in the stars, for I do not like their goings on. Who but madmen talk thus? I must always shape my views to facts, and regarding the Bible as the great storehouse of facts, I must take care that I go to it with a candid and unbiased judgment. May God help me to do so. To find out what the Truth of God is, Come and see, but ask God to open your eyes that you may behold the wondrous things which are written in His Law.

Does anyone enquire how he can come and see in the matter of observation? We invite you, dear Friends, to a diligent reading of Scripture as one means of seeing. The worst-read book in England is the Bible. People read a verse of it, or half a chapter in the morning and think they understand it. Suppose anyone were to read a poet in that way. Let the worlds favored poet, Shakespeare, be treated in such a style as that and what man could ever appreciate his beauties? If you get a poet, say Cowper you read The Task through. You do not think of snatching a line or two here and thereif you did you would be like the Greek teacher who carried a brick about as a specimen of a house which he had for sale.

If you read Youngs, Night Thoughts, it is true that almost every line is noteworthy and is as fine-tuned as a distinct proposition. But still he who would appreciate the beauties of Young must read the Night Thoughts through, or, at least, read a book at a time. Yet there are thousands of you who never did read one of the Gospels through, never read one of the Epistles through with a studious mind desiring to catch the drift and to understand the sense. And do you dream you will ever know what the Bible teaches by just recalling a portion here and a portion there? Impossible! Absurd! If you have any care to, Come and see, read the Bible in a common-sense way and sit down with the determination that, as far as the human mind can find out what God means, you will know what He has revealed concerning His Son. I am not afraid of what the consequences will be if you do that! If, moreover, you seek the aid of the Divine Spirit, your search cannot be in vain. You shall see Jesus and rejoice in His great salvation.

Then next, I earnestly desire you to hear the Gospel as well as read it only take care that what you hear is the Gospel. It is very easy to find Divines of flowery speech and flowing tongue, from whom, in a course of seven years, you would probably learn nothing whatever of the doctrines of the Covenant of Grace. It has been said that if you were to hear a lecturer on geology or astronomy deliver some twelve or thirteen lectures you would be able to pick up a pretty clear idea of the system of geology or astronomy, which the lecturer meant to teach. But I declare and protest, and will prove it by sermons printed by sundry authors, that you might hear thirteen thousand sermons of some men without knowing what system of Divinity they taught, if, indeed, they have any system of Divinity at all!

What do you go to Gods House for? Is it to have your ears tickled? Do you go to the place of worship that you may admire the eloquence of man? Go to your theater or your senate if this is your desire! Such places are the legitimate arena for displaycome not to Gods House for that. There we should resort to learn to pray. We should come that we may, in the words of our text, see. See ourselves, and better still, see the Lord Jesus! This should be the first enquiry as we go up the steps into the place of meetingSirs, we would see Jesus. And if Jesus is not to be seen there, no matter how brilliant the display of fireworks with which the sermonizer may indulge youthat is not the proper place in which to spend the precious hours of Sunday!

We would see Jesus! We would know what we must do to be saved! Observe then, observe carefully. Keep your eyes open, not only to the world of Nature, but to the Book of God and the lives of His people and thus, Come and see. Truly, Enquirer, there is a better way of coming and seeing and that is by believing. If you can at once believe Gods Word, you shall see far better than if you are merely a seeker and, surely, the revelation of God in Christ may well demand your implicit faith. See how true others have found it. If the proposition is, can Christ forgive sin?hear what others say who can sing of pardon bought with blood and of promises applied to their souls with power breathing peace and pardon to their hearts!

Do you remember your mother? Do you remember the glitter of her eyes in deaths dark hour? Do you remember how she bore her dying testimony that all that God had said concerning Christ was true? That He was able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him? She was no woman given to deception! If I remember rightly you can say of her that she was a common-sense, shrewd womannot easily deceived and yet in that last article of deathwhen every sham comes crumbling down

and all that is mere paint and tinsel is broken and dashed away, she found the solidity of her hopes and rejoiced in them!

You have other friends. In business they are not second-rate men. With regard to matters of common sense you would trust them as well as any that you know. They are not hot-headed and enthusiastic. They are not likely to be carried away by the multitude, after some hare-brained prophet. And yet steadily and solemnly they tell you that Christ has given them new hearts and right spirits. That He has changed their lives. That He has given them a peace and a joy they never knew before. They tell you that they have answers to prayerthat whenever they spread their case before God, their heavenly Father hears them and sends them speedy relief. They tell you that they find in religion a spring of moral action such as was never found in the mere precepts and teachings of law and conscience.

Now believe these men. If they were the worst men in the neighborhood. If they were the felons and rogues of trade, I would recommend you not to believe thembut since they are the best in the world and rank high in your esteemat least trust them so far as to come, yourself, to a candid observation of these things and believe that at least there is some truth in them. I would to God, dear Friends, that you would believe these things to be true concerning Christs ability to save because you have Cods Word for it. And if you ask me how I know it is Gods Word, I can take you in vision to Nineveh.

See the excavated cities and palaces, the winged bulls and lions buried in the rubbishall which tell us that that Book which spoke of them before they were discoveredmust have a high antiquity. And the volume which, written in the times of their glory, yet told of their tremendous fall, must have had an inspiration in it not belonging to common books. The best proof of this inspiration is, perhaps, to be found in thisthat we know that God wrote another book, the book of Nature. And as the two works of one author are quite sure to exhibit some common points in which you may find out the authors idioms, so every student of Nature and Revelation has been able to say that the two volumes bear marks of the same Writer. And the more they have studied both books, the more they have said, We find the same God in the one as in the other.

The God of Nature is kind and good. So is the God of Revelation. The God of Nature is the terrible God of the avalanche and thunderbolt, the tempest and the whirlwind. And the God of this Book is terrible out of His holy place when He comes to judge the sons of men. We find that the very same imprimatur which is set upon the book of Nature is also stamped upon the Book of God. We should be glad, therefore, if you could believe this and believing this you would soon, come and see. For mark you, the best way of knowing about Christ is to try Him, to experience Him! And since you want to know if He can forgive sins, trust Him to forgive yours. You want to know if He can change the human hearttrust Him to change yours.

You long to know if there is a peace that passes all understanding which will still the throbs of your guilty heart. Try Him and see! You pant to learn if there is a joy which can gild your darkest hours with sunlight and make the dreary passage through the shades of death to be full of life and hopetry Him and see! We are not afraid to stake all upon the trial. I will cheerfully be bondsman for my Lord and Master. If there can be a soul that does sincerely trust Him that shall not find, even in this life, salvation, and in the world to come, eternal joy, then I am content to be deceived, or content to suffer the deceivers doom!

Beloved, if we only promised you something to be had in the next world, you could not make the test at once. But that which we hold out to you is present salvation. It is not some future joy merely, but

present joy! Oh, if you trust Jesus Christ you shall, come and see, that sin is mastered as well as pardoned! That the guilty conscience is pacified forever and that your joy and peace can begin this side of the grave. Enquirer, come and see! Oh, pass not by! Neglect not the exhibition of Divine love and Grace, but, come, oh, come and see! May the Holy Spirit bring you, for His names sake.

Very hurriedly let me notice the next point. I think this invitation may be well addressed to every beginner in the school of Christ as well as to every enquirer. We ought not to be satisfied with merely being saved. As soon as ever we are savedthe moment we believe in Christour next business is to learn more of Christ. You want to know the doctrines, dear Friends. It is well to be thoroughly established in the faith. Come and see. Search the Scriptures! See what God has revealed and be established in His Divine Truths. Every precept as well as every doctrine cries to you, Come and see!

Every promise says, Come and see! Do not run short of promises! It is bad when a man is out of money. And the Christian, when he is without a promise in his hand is somewhat like a person without ready money in his purse. Study the promises. Come and see. As to experience, too, the Lord says, Come and see. Do not talk of Tabors height, as though you could never climb it. From the top of it there comes a voice, Come and see. Do not speak of Pisgah, as though your feet might never tread its consecrated summit. The voice says, Come and see. If there is any point of communion, or height of fellowship as yet unreached by you, there peals forth from its excellent glory the endearing exhortation, Come and see. No boundary is set about the Mount of God! No fiery wall conceals the secret of the Eternal. The Spirit of the Lord is with them that fear Him. He will show them His Covenant. All Revelation cries with one voice, Come and see!

I think this is the cry of the Gospel to every sinner, Come and see. Perhaps it is easier to use the eyes than any other organ except the ears. This I know, it is more pleasing to use the eyes than the ears. You can keep a set of children as happy as the birds of the air with a picture bookwhen they would probably go to sleep if you were to talk to them. The eye has the greatest power of conferring pleasure. Whether it conveys truth to the heart more rapidly than the ear does, I cannot say. At any rate it does so most pleasingly and for this reason, among others, Christ bids us to use the eyes. He hangs upon His Cross before you and cries, Come and see. And He adds this promiseLook unto Me and be you

saved, all you ends of the earth.   
What is there to see? God made flesh! He that made the heavens veiling  
Himself in manhood! Is not this something? God came down to you, poor   
Sinner, that He might take you up to Himself! What is there to see? There   
is the Son of God bleeding for human sin! His griefs are such that no   
tongue can explain them and no pen can write thembut they are not for  
Himselffor in Him is no sin. Come and see, for if you see the griefs of   
Jesus and take them to be your trust, you shall be saved! Come and see.   
Do you ask what there is to see? This same Jesus rises from the tomb! He  
could not have risen if He had not been God, or if He had not completed   
the great work of His peoples redemption!   
He ascends. The clouds receive Him! Up there in Heaven He stands   
pleading for sinners, pleading for us and, He is able also to save them to  
the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever lives to make   
intercession for them. Come and see! Come and see! I am often asked,  
Sir, how can I get faith? I believe that faith comes from Christ and is His   
gift to sinners. Sit down in your chamber tonight when you get home, you   
that want to believe, and just think over thisGOD made flesh! If you will   
think of that, I pray the Holy Spirit visit you and then the thought will  
strike youThat is wonderful! Who could have dreamed of it? God suffering instead of man that the justice of God might be fully satisfied and the   
mercy of God might have full scope!   
While you are thinking of this wonder and picturing the wounds and   
looking to the blood and thinking that you almost hear the dropping of the   
blood upon the Mount of Calvary, I think you will, you scarcely know how,   
find yourself ready to sing *I do believeI will believe   
That Jesus died for me;   
And on the Cross He shed His blood   
From sin to set me free.*   
You cannot make yourself believe. Faith is the gift of God and the work of  
the Holy Spirit. But it comes through hearing, and hearing is principally  
blessed to the working of faith, because it gives you a sight of Christ in  
meditation and, as some say, seeing is believing. Certainly such a sight   
as hearing gives is often made the channel by which the soul believes in  
Christ. Come and see!   
Oh you worldlings! Turn your eyes here and see the Savior die! Maybe   
the spectacle will cool your hot blood and drive away your fever of worldliness and care! Oh, you giddy, careless men and women, look here and see   
your Redeemer bleed! Possibly you may be sobered by the sight. Oh young   
men and maidens in your early youth! Since you may soon feel the arrows  
of death, look here and make your immortality secure! You grey-headed   
ones who have lost your vigor and spent your strength in sin, yet may the   
Holy Spirit bring youCome and see! Oh, there is mercy yet, Come and   
see!   
The great sight is not withdrawnit is no dissolving view that melts   
awayit is no burning bush from which you are bid to keep off by the   
words, Draw not near here. But here, over the Cross, hangs the motto and from the Mount of Calvary rings the silvery trumpet note, Come and see! Come and see!   
**There is life in a look at the Crucified One; There is life at this moment for you.**   
II. The second text is, COME AND DINE. That is betterthat is closer,   
nearer, dearermore substantial than come and see. That may be done   
at a distance, though come seems to invite us to make the distance less.   
But, Come and dinethat implies the same table, the same meatyes,   
and sometimes it means to sit side by side and lean our head upon the   
Saviors bosom. Here is nearness familiar and domesticcome and dine. Understand that while we are sinners faith brings us into a justified  
state by simply looking to Christ though the soul has had no enjoyment of  
Him. But after believing, faith then assists us really to enjoy Christ. I   
know some of you are wishing and expecting to enjoy Christ first, and believe him afterwards. I would correct your error. You must take Gods   
mercies in their order and season. And you will not find, come and dine,  
in the first chapter of Johnthere it is, come and see. Believe Jesus first  
and you shall feed on Him afterwards!   
Certain of you seem to me to be content to believe Christ and to say, I   
am safe, without wishing to know the blessed enjoyment which is to be   
found in Him. It should not be so. You are not to be content with the first   
chapter of John. But go on to the last and be not satisfied so long as there   
is a yet beyond. If you have seen Christif you have touched Christif   
you have put your finger into the print of the nails, be not satisfied till you   
know the meaning of the text, Except a man eat My flesh and drink My   
blood, there is no life in him. Come and dine, then, implies greater enjoyment than, come and see.   
Come and see gives peace, but, come and dine, gives ecstasy  
rapturewhat shall I call it? It gives Heaven on earth, for it gives Christ.   
Come and dine must be experimentally understood before you can read  
the Book of Solomons Song with profit. Come and see can read the   
Evangelists. Come and see can read many of the Epistles. Come and   
see may wander delightfully through the Book of Psalms. Come and see   
may enrich itself with Proverbs. But the Tree of Life, which is in the midst   
of the gardenthat is, the Book of Canticles [Song of Solomon]is not to   
be eaten of except by those who have heard the Master say, Come and   
dine. I would to God that all the Lords people were not merely delivered  
from the chains of sin and washed in the Saviors blood but brought into   
the banqueting house, where waves the banner of redeeming love! There is more enjoyment, then, in the one than in the other. And there   
is also more nearness. When I first believed in Christ I felt a distance between myself and Him and the only nearness that I could get was to lay  
my hands upon His head and confess my sins. But I hope some of us, after a few years of believing, know what it is to sit at His feet with Mary! To   
lean upon His bosom with John! Yes, and to say with the spouse, Let  
Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth, for His love is better than   
wine. O Beloved, there is a nearness to Christ which the worldling can  
only laugh at if he should hear us talk of it!   
Read Rutherfords Letters, and you get glimpse of what it is to dine   
with Christ. Turn to Hawkers Morning and Evening Portions, or even, if you will, wander amidst the quaint rhymes and sweet poetry of dear George Herbertthere you have, come and dine carried out in sweetest prose. Oh, to get so close to Christ that you can sing with a modern hymn writer *So near, so very near to God, I cannot nearer be; For in the Person of His Son I am as near as He! So dear, so very dear to God, I cannot dearer be; The love wherewith He loves His Son   
Such is His love to me!*   
This is a high attainment, but rest not satisfied till you have gained it.   
Yet, once more, come and dine, gives us a vision of union with Jesus because the only meat that we can eat when we dine with Christ is Himself.   
We do not provide the supper. When He dined on that occasion with His  
disciples, Peter dragged a net full of fishes out of the sea. But when they  
came on shore they found a fire already kindled and fish laid on it, so that  
the fish they ate did not come out of the seaby their netat any rate.   
Christ found the fish and lit the fire. And He found the bread and then

said, Come and dine. Ah, and the fire that warms our heart when we   
have fellowship with Him comes from Himself! And the fish that we eat is   
His own and the wine that we drink flows from His own heart. Oh, what union is this! It is a depth that reason cannot fathom, that we   
eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ! Here we stand and look and   
look and look and though the water is clear as crystal, like the sea of glass   
before the Throne of God, yet to the bottom of it angelic sight can never   
reach! One with Jesusby eternal unionone! What does this mean, Believer?   
*One when He died. One when He rose;   
One when He triumphed over His foes!   
One when in Heaven He took His seat,   
And angels sang of Hells defeat.*   
Can you comprehend it?   
*This Covenant stands secure,   
Though earths old columns bow,   
The strong, the feeble and the weak   
Are one in Jesus now.   
Oh, sacred union, firm and strong,   
How great the Grace, how sweet the song, That worms of earth should ever be   
One with Incarnate Deity!*   
And yet it is so. And he that has listened to the Saviors voice, Come   
and dine, knows it to be so and rejoices! In this, also, you find an invitation to enjoy fellowship with the saints. You are not to eat your morsel   
alone, but in company. We sit down in Heaven with Abraham, Isaac and   
Jacobat the marriage supper of the Lamband no small part of the  
heavenly bliss is connected with the fellowship which exists among the   
saints in Gory. So also with our present feasting on the fat things full of  
marrow which Christ spreads before His chosen ones. We enjoy the company as well as the feast and find our happiness augmented by the society  
of kindred minds. The Supper of the Lord is the table of communion, not  
only with the Master but also with all who love Him in sincerity and truth. One of the surest ways of introducing discord into the midst of a  
Church is for the minister to starve the people. Hungry men are sure to be quarrelsome. On the contrary, to unite a flock in closest bonds of love let the minister say, Come and dine!and then put before them the finest of the wheat, honey out of the rock and wine upon the lees well refined. If you would have sweetest fellowship with each other, live on Christ! Enter into the banqueting house, sit beneath the banner of love and you will find that sacred commingling of spirit with spirit which will prove that you   
are one in Christ Jesus.   
Christians may differ on a variety of points. They may not see eye to eye   
on this thing and on that, but they have all one spiritual appetite and if  
we cannot all feel alike, we can all feed alike on the Bread of Life sent  
down from Heaven. Get nearer to Christ and eat of His flesh and drink of  
His blood and you will find yourself linked more and more in spirit to all   
who are like yourself, supported by the same heavenly manna. We do not  
expect to see all Christians agreeing, but we are sure that one of the most  
likely plans for cultivating a brotherly spirit is to listen to Christs words,   
Come and dine.   
We see in these words the source of strength for every Christian. To   
look at Christ is to live, but for strength to serve Him you must come and   
dine. When our Lord had raised the daughter of Jairus He commanded   
them to give her meat so that she might be strengthened. And so He says   
to all of us, Come and dine. We need as much food for the soul as for the   
body and unless we eat we shall be fainting by the way. Are there not   
many Christians who allow themselves to suffer a great deal of unnecessary weakness on account of neglecting this precept of the Master? I hold  
that we are bound to lift up the feeble knees and drooping handsand in  
order to do this we must live by faith on the Son of God and listen to His   
voice as He says, Eat, oh My Friends, yes, drink, oh My Beloved. If you want to be as Mr. Feeblemind, I can give you the receipt. Take   
only a small portion of spiritual food morning and night in your closets.  
Neglect family prayer. Never attend a Prayer Meeting. On no account  
speak about religious matters during the week. Go late to the House of   
God and fall asleep when you get there. As soon as you leave the place of  
worship talk about the weather. Confine yourself to these rules for a few   
weeks and you will very soon be reduced low enough to allow Satan to attack you with every chance of giving you a severe and dangerous fall. Doctors tell us that nowadays the classes of disease most prevalent are   
those which indicate a low condition of the vital forces. And I think that   
we are suffering in the Church from the same sort of maladies. You never   
hear of anyone who is too zealous, too rash in venturing himself for Christ!  
There was a time when the Church had to censure her young converts because they courted persecution and invited martyrdom! Now we need to  
stir up the Church and to urge on our people to more self-sacrifice for the   
cause of Christ.   
You need never fear that anyone will kill himself with too much work  
we must rather lament that there seems so little exuberance of spirit and   
vital force among Christians. We, none of us, need to put ourselves on a  
low dieton the contrary, we ought to accumulate strength and urge   
every power to its full dimension in the Masters service! For this purpose,   
Come and dine. All your strength depends upon union with Christ! Away from Him you must wither as a branch severed from the vine. Feeding on Him, you will be like the branch which is drinking up the sap from the parent stem. You will be strong enough to bring forth fruit and fill your   
post among the other members of the one great band of Christians! We can see, moreover, in these words the foundation of the Christians   
growth and progress in spiritual things. To see Christ is to begin the  
Christians life, but to grow in Divine Grace we must, come and dine.   
The early history of the first disciples is by no means satisfactory. They  
were evidently only babes in spiritual things. How little they seemed to  
comprehend the Saviors mission. He liked to say, Have I been so long  
time with you and yet have you not known Me, Philip? They misunderstood the nature of His Kingdom and were continually displaying a carnal   
and selfish spirit. It is evident that the early dawn of spiritual life is all   
they had then received. They had seen Jesus. They loved Him and followed Him even unto trial and disgracebut yet they were far from possessing the Spirit of Christ.   
Now after they had reached this stage of living on Christ they became   
new men. It is no longer mere sight, but an inward appropriation of Christ  
Jesus by faith and the consequences are manifest. They are seen developing themselves under the blessed outpouring of the Holy Spirit into   
workmen that needed not to be ashamed. They endured hardness as good   
soldiers of the Cross. They fought a good fight and they finished their   
course with joy. A higher order of life is clearly theirs. They have risen in  
the scale of spiritual existence! A clearer light shines around them and   
they have manifestly grown in Grace and in the knowledge of our Lord   
and Savior, Jesus Christ! Beloved, we long for your edification! We covet  
for you the best gifts, and therefore we say, Come and dine. Many Christians remain stunted and dwarfed in spiritual things so as   
to present the same appearance year after year. No springing up of   
thought and feeling is manifest in them. They exist but do not grow. The   
reason is evidentthey are not taking of Christand they neglect to appropriate to themselves the blessing which He is waiting to bestow. Why   
should you rest content with being in the tender green blade when you   
can go on and reach the ear and eventually the full corn in the ear? I   
would that all Gods servants were more in earnest to develop that good  
thing which has been implanted in them by the Holy Spirit!   
It is all very well to keep other mens vineyards, but you must not neglect your own. Why should it ever be winter in our hearts? We must have  
our seed time, it is true, but oh, for a spring timeyes, a summer seasonwhich shall give promise of an early harvest! Now if you would ripen  
in Grace you must live near Christin His Presencebasking in the sunshine of His smiles. You must hold sweet communion with Him. You must   
leave the distant view of His face and come near, as John did, and pillow   
your head on His breast. Then you will find yourself advancing in holiness, in love, in faith, in hopeyes, in every godly gift! What a joy it is to   
see men and women daily living on Christ! You may watch them grow as   
you have watched the flowers and trees in the gardens expanding under  
the genial showers and sunshine of the last few weeks.   
It robs a deathbed of its terrors to see the aged Christian rapidly preparing for Glory, but I would rather the man grew before he was about to be taken from us so that we might be the better for his expanded Graces and enjoy his beauty of holiness a few years here on earth. We do not grudge the saints in Glory anythingbut it would be a mercy to us if Christians would try and get as much of perfection and maturity as possible a few years soonerso as to gladden our eyes with some bright blossoms as well as the somber green blades. It is all very well, the fresh verdure in early spring, but I like also the russet hues of autumn and the rich clusters of the vintage with the songs of the reaper and the shout of   
harvest home!  
The golden grain is a goodly and pleasant thing to see as the field waves   
in the autumn breeze. So, also, I like to mark maturity in Christs fields,   
as well as in the earthly ones. It is a glorious sight, an experienced saint  
a man who has been much with Jesus and learned of Himwho has   
caught the Masters spirit and reflects it brightly to all around! As the sun   
rises first on mountaintops and gilds them with his light and presents one   
of the most charming sights to the eyes of the traveler, so is it one of the   
most delightful contemplations in the world to mark the glow of the

Spirits light on the head of some saint who has risen up in spiritual stature, like Saul, above his fellows! For then, like some mighty Alp, snowcapped, he reflects, first of all, the beams of the Sun of Righteousness and   
bears the sheen of His brilliance high aloft for all to seeand seeing itto   
glorify His Father which is in Heaven! That you may thus grow in Grace,   
listen to the Masters voiceCome and dine.   
We notice one more thought and then must conclude. Here is preparation for service. Come and dine, says the Master. But before the feast is   
concluded, He says to Peter, Feed My lambs. And again, Feed My   
sheep. Further adding, Follow Me. All the strength supplied by Christ is   
for service and for use in His vineyard. When the Prophet Elijah found the   
cake baked on the coals and the cruse of water placed at his head as he   
lay under the juniper tree, he had a commission to go forty days and forty   
nights in the strength of it, journeying towards Home, the mount of God.   
So also with uswe eat so as to be able to expend our strength in the   
Masters service. We come to the Passover and eat of our Paschal Lamb   
with loins girt and with our staff in our handso as to start off at once   
when we have satisfied our spirits.   
Some Christians are for living on Christ but are not so anxious to live   
for Christ. Now I rejoice to know that I can spend and be spent for the   
Lord. And I find in labor for Christ that, it is more blessed to give than to   
receive. I never feel so like the Master as when I go about trying to do  
good. Heaven is the place where saints feast most and work most. They sit  
down at the table of our Lord and they serve Him day and night in His   
Temple. They eat of heavenly food and render perfect service. Now earth   
should be a preparation for Heavencome and dineand then go and labor! Freely you receivefreely give! Gather up all the fragments of your  
feast and go and carry it to Lazarus at the gate! Yes, carry the loaves and   
fishes to othersas the disciples did when the Lord had multiplied their little supplyto satisfy the thousands who were famishing for want of   
food.   
We have yet to learn more concerning the design of our Lord in giving   
us His Grace. We are not to hold the precious grains of Truth like a   
mummy does the wheat, for ages, without giving it a chance of growing.   
No, feed yourself and then go forth and bid others come and eat and   
drink. Go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in,   
that there may be many more rejoicing with you in the Light and Life of   
Christ! Why does the Lord send down rain upon the thirsty earth and give  
sunshine and genial refreshing breezes? Is it not that these may all help   
the fruits of the earth to yield food for man and beast? Even so the Lord   
calls us in to enjoyment and feasting that we may afterwards go out to labor and service.   
My dear Hearers, I always seek to see you fruitful in all good works, to   
do His will who provides all things for us richly to enjoy. You are aware  
that our Father is glorified if we bring forth much fruit and so shall we be   
His disciples. Eat, then! Spare notyou are welcome to as much as you   
can consume! But when you have eaten the fat and drunk of the sweet, go   
and tell of it to sinners round that the starving may come and find wine   
and milk, without money and without price. You are to preach the Gospel  
to every creatureproclaim the good news of water from the Rock Christ  
Jesus which flows in the midst of the worlds wilderness, so that all may  
drink and live. Tell of the finest of the wheat on which you have feasted. Bid the prodigal leave the husks which the swine eat and return to the   
Fathers house, there to eat of the fatted calf and feast at the parental  
board. Tell them there is room in the Saviors heart! And never cease proclaiming His matchless love and power and His willingness to say to all,  
Come unto Me all you that are weary and heavy laden and I will give you   
rest. Come and dine.   
I send you away, however, wishing to make the first part of the sermon   
the more telling to most of youCome and see. You are black with sin,   
but blackness does not blind the eye. Your righteousness is nothing better   
than filthy rags, but the most ragged beggar may look. Our strange old   
proverb says, A cat may look at a king, and the blackest sinner out of  
Hell may look at Christ! And though he has sin well near as devilish as   
that of Lucifer, yet, looking to Christ all manner of sin and of iniquity  
shall be forgiven him!   
Look, Sinnerlook! May the Holy Spirit now open those eyes of yours   
and turn them to the Saviors Cross and make you live! May the best of   
Heavens blessings be yours tonight and in eternity! Amen and Amen.

Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307 Sermon #1684 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

FEED MY LAMBS A SUNDAY SCHOOL SERMON   
NO. 1684

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, OCTOBER 15, 1882, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**So when they had dined, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, do you love Me more than these? He said unto Him, Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.   
He said unto him, Feed My lambs.   
John 21:15.**

READ the whole chapter and observe the change of scene. First, they are on the lake fishing, casting their nets at Christs command, and dragging to land a multitude of great fishes. They have all come on shore and when they have breakfasted, their faces are not turned to the sea, but to the pastures on the hillside. These are clothed with flocks and the Master says no more about fishermen and fish, but speaks of shepherds and sheep. Herein lies a parablethe servants of the Lord Jesus are first, fishermen, and then shepherds. The first work of Christs servants is comprised in that commission, Go you into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature, or, Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a draught.

They begin their heavenly vocation as fishers, even as Jesus said to them at the first, Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men. Their earliest work is to preach the Gospel, which is like the letting down of a great seine net, enclosing life of all kinds. They are not to make a selection of characters so as to preach only to likely personsthat would be comparable to anglinga figure which is used in the Old Testament in connection with destructionand not in reference to salvation, even as Amos says, The Lord God has sworn by His holiness, that, lo, the days shall come upon you, that He will take you away with hooks, and your posterity with fishhooks.

In Gospel fishing we let down the big net and thus encompass many of all sorts. In the act of preaching the Gospel, all are fish that come to the netthe sorting of the good from the bad is to be done another day. Our urgent workI mean yours and mine, my Brothersis to go out into the world and proclaim the blessed Gospel of salvation to all who care to hear us. We are to go into every place to which we can gain accessinto all the world, into the streets and lanes of the city, into the highways and hedgesanywhere and everywhere the world over. Our one instrument as fishers for Christ is the Gospel of the Grace of God. God forbid that we should use any other. May the Lord help us to keep to our fishing and may we come and instantly receive Divine direction as to how and where to cast the net so that we may have a full net, and yet a net unbroken, with which we may fish again.

After this is done, and while it is being done, another art is to be practiced. Fishing is not all, as many seem to think. It is a great part of our service and would God it were more attended to, but after it has been attended to, shepherding comes in, and is a work of equal weight. Our Lord Jesus Christ would have His servants attend to this second task with all their hearts. If souls are converted, they have been brought up from the depths of sin and the scene changeswe see a flock, the Church of God which He has purchased with His own blood. This flock needs as much care as any other, yes, it needs to be tended with the utmost labor and watchfulness.

The Lord Jesus, Himself, is the Good Shepherd who laid down His life for the sheep, the Great Shepherd who is brought, again, from the dead and the Chief Shepherd under whom He has appointed shepherds to watch for the souls of men. He will have those of us whom He calls to His service to shepherd those who are convertedleading, protecting, feeding, comforting and succoring them. He will call us to account if we neglect this charge, for He will require His flock at our hands, saying, Where is the flock that was given you, your beautiful flock? This shepherd work is so important that three times the Savior bids us attend to it, saying first, Feed My lambs, then, Feed My sheep, or, as some old manuscripts have it, My little sheep, and then, again, Feed My sheep.

We are to feed the babes in Grace; to shepherd the young men in Christ Jesus; and to feed the older ones who feel many growing infirmities and need, again, the comforts of their earliest days. Three times over are we thus bid! Are we, then, so apt to fail in this? Jesus spoke but once to Death, and Lazarus came forth. Are we more deaf than the grave and must we be thrice commanded? Let us no longer be disobedient to the heavenly mandate! We must never so evangelize the outside mass as to forget to fold and feed those within! We are to disciple all nations and then to teach them all things whatever Christ has commanded us!

Not every man that can haul in a net is ready, at once, to tend a flock. We need much Grace, for the Lord Jesus Christ spent years in most industriously educating the 12, training the 70 and getting ready a band of followers who were not only saved, but educated, so as to teach others. We must not be indifferent to this matter. The quiet work of building up Believers must be steadily pursued, even though those who sound a trumpet before them may despise such ministries.

I shall speak, this morning, upon work within the foldthe feeding of the sheep and lambsand this I shall do in order that I may help our beloved Sunday school teachers. This is their day and if I do not seem to speak directly or exclusively to them, I hope I shall, nevertheless, say much to stimulate and direct them in their invaluable labors. I ask for them your most earnest prayers and loving sympathiesand of many I would beg a more practical cooperation with them. Concerning this shepherding for Christ, let us first note the sphereMy lambs. Secondly, the man for itone like Simon, son of Jonas. Thirdly, his preparation for it. Fourthly, the work itself and, fifthly, the motive under which the feeding is to be carried out. Briefly on each point. Oh for help from the Spirit of God!

I. First, think of THE SPHERE. Although in the other instances, Jesus says, Feed My sheep, yet in this first instance, He says, Feed My lambs. To whom does He refer? I think, first, to such as are little in Grace. They have but a grain of mustard seed of faith as yettheir love is not a flame, but a sparkthe leaven of Grace within them has begun to work, but all the measures of meal are not yet leavened. The spiritual life in these is like a candle newly lit, apparently in danger of being suddenly blown out and, therefore, needing great care.

Weakness is an idea in the word, lambs, and so, in the Church of God, all such as are weakand, alas, how many there areall such as are doubting, all such as are slenderly instructed, all such as are easily bewildered in doctrine, cast down in spirit and apt to be staggeredall such, I say, are to be watched over with special care and, therefore, Jesus mentions them particularly and separately and in the first place. If our kindness should neglect the strong, it would be a sad pity, but it might not entail so much damage as if we neglect the weak! What says the Apostle? Comfort the feeble-minded; support the weak; be patient towards all men.

In our numbers we always have a few who wear the weeds of spiritual widowhood. These are very sincere, but sadly anxious, scarcely knowing what full assurance means, but yet true and resolute. Their faith is a trembling one, crying, Lord, I believe; help You my unbelief. Such are not to be blamed, nor avoided, nor despised, nor in the least degree discouraged. But, inasmuch as we, ourselves, may also be tempted with like fears, we are to console them. We ought to know that if we are strong, our strength lies not in ourselves, for our own strength is perfect weakness and, therefore, we should deal graciously and tenderly with the weak of the flock. I think this is the reason why the weak were committed to Simon Peter in this particular casebecause he had been very weak, himselfhe had denied his Master through his fears and thus he was taught to have compassion on other trembling ones.

He who is, himself, compassed with infirmities, knows the heart of the weaklings. He can enter with sympathy into their doubts and their distresses, for he has felt the same. I say, therefore, this morning, in the name of the Lord Jesus, to all of you who love Him, Look well to the weak ones of the Church. But I cannot think, as some expositors do, that weakness is the main idea in the word, lambs, for the notion of a lamb is not confined to the thought of weakness, since full-grown sheep may be weak and lambs may be vigorous. But the most prominent thought is that of youth. The lambs are the young of the flock, So, then, we ought to look specially and carefully after those who are young in Divine Grace. They may be old in years and yet they may be mere babes in Grace as to the length of their spiritual life and, therefore, they need to be under a good shepherd.

As soon as a person is converted and added to the Church, he should become the object of the care and kindness of his fellow members. He has but newly come among us and has no familiar friends among the saints. Therefore let us all be friendly to him. Even should we leave our older comrades, we must be doubly kind towards those who are newly escaped from the world and have come to find a refuge with the Almighty and His people. Watch with ceaseless care over those newborn babes who are strong in desires, but strong in nothing else! They have but just crept out of darkness and their eyes can scarcely bear the lightlet us be a shade to them until they grow accustomed to the blaze of Gospel Day. Addict yourselves to the holy work of caring for the feeble and despondent.

Peter, Himself, that morning, must have felt like a newly enlisted soldier, for he had, in a sense, ended his public Christian life by denying his Lord, and he had begun it, again, when he went out and wept bitterly. He was now making a new confession of his faith before his Lord. And Brothers and, therefore, because he was thus made to sympathize with recruits, he is commissioned to act as a guardian to them. Young converts are too timid to ask for our help and so our Lord introduces them to us and with an emphatic word of command He says, Feed My lambs. This shall be our reward, Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these, you have done it unto Me.

But surely we must include in this those who have been converted while young in years. We thank God exceedingly that we have among us and round about us many dear children that already know Christ. We have never, as a Church, thought that a certain number of years must have passed over a child before it can confess its faith in Christ and be received into the Church. It is sometimes said that we teach adult Baptism. We do nothing of the sort! We practice Believers Baptism, and baptize all who confess faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, whether they are children or adults! Our enquiry as to fitness does not refer to age, but to faith.

The number or the fewness of days or years is no consideration, whatever, with us! Our question is, Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ? If that is fairly answered, we say at once, What hinders you to be baptized? However young a Believer may be, he should make an open confession of his faith and be folded with the rest of the flock of Christ. We are not among those who are suspicions of youthful pietywe could never see more reason for such suspicions in the case of the young than in the cases of those who repent late in life. Of the two, we think the latter are more to be questioned than the former, for a selfish fear of punishment and dread of death are more likely to produce a counterfeit faith than mere childishness would. How much has the child missed which might have spoiled it! How much it does not know which, please God, we hope it never may know! Oh, how much there is of brightness and trustfulness about children, when converted to God, which is not seen in elder converts!

Our Lord Jesus evidently felt deep sympathy with children and he is but little like Christ who looks upon them as a trouble in the world and treats them as if they must necessarily be either little deceivers or foolish simpletons! To you who teach in our schools is given this joyous privilege of finding out where these young disciples are who are truly the lambs of Christs flock! And to you, He says, Feed My lambs. That is, instruct such as are truly gracious but young in years. It is very remarkable that the word used here for, feed My lambs, is very different from the word employed in the precept, feed My sheep. I will not trouble you with Greek words, but the second, feed, means exercise the office of a shepherd, rule, regulate, lead, manage them, do all that a shepherd has to do towards a flock. But this first, feed, does not include all thatit means distinctly feedand it directs teachers to a duty which they may, perhaps, neglect, namely, that of instructing children in the faith.

The lambs do not so much need keeping in order as we do who know so much and yet know so littlewho think we are so far advanced that we judge one another and contend and emulate. Christian children mainly need to be taught the doctrine, precept and life of the Gospelthey require to have Divine Truth put before them clearly and forcibly. Why should the higher doctrines, the doctrines of Grace, be kept back from them? They are not, as some say, bonesor if they are bones, they are full of marrow and covered with fatness! If there is any doctrine too difficult for a child, it is rather the fault of the teachers conception of it than of the childs power to receive it, provided that child is really converted to God.

It is ours to make doctrine simplethis is to be a main part of our work. Teach the little ones the whole Truth of God and nothing but the Truth, for instruction is the great need of the childs nature. A child has not only to live as you and I have, but also to grow, therefore he has double need of food, When fathers say of their boys, What appetites they have! they should remember that we, also, should have great appetites if we have not only to keep the machinery going, but to enlarge it at the same time. Children in Grace have to grow, rising to greater capacity in knowing, being, doing and feeling, and to greater power from God. Therefore, above all things, they must be fed. They must be well fed or instructed, because they are in danger of having their cravings perversely satisfied with error.

Youth are susceptible to evil doctrine. Whether we teach young Christians the Truth of God or not, the devil will be sure to teach them error. They will hear of it, somehow, even if they are watched by the most careful guardians. The only way to keep chaff out of the childs little measure is to fill it to the brim with good wheat. Oh that the Spirit of God may help us to do this! The more the young are taught, the betterit will keep them from being misled. We are specially exhorted to feed them because they are so likely to be overlooked. I am afraid our sermons often go over the heads of the younger folk, who, nevertheless, may be as true Christians as the older ones. Blessed is he that can so speak as to be understood by a child! Blessed is that godly woman who, in her class, so adapts herself to girlish modes of thought that the Truth of God from her heart streams into the childrens hearts without let or hindrance!

We ought, especially, to feed the young because this work is so profitable. Do what we may with persons converted late in life, we can never make much of them. We are very glad of them for their own sakes, but at 70, what remains, even, if they live another 10 years? Train up a child and he may have 50 years of holy service before him! We are glad to welcome those who come into the vineyard at the 11th hour, but they have hardly taken their pruning-hook and their spade before the sun goes downand their short days work is ended. The time spent in training the late convert is greater than the space reserved for his actual service. But you take a child-convert and teach him well and, as early piety often becomes eminent piety, and that eminent piety may have a stretch of years before it in which God may be glorified and others may be blessed, such work is profitable in a high degree!

It is also most beneficial work for ourselves. It exercises our humility and helps to keep us lowly and meek. It also trains our patience. Let those who doubt this, try it, for even young Christians exercise the patience of those who believe in them and are therefore anxious that they should justify their confidence! If you want big-souled, large-hearted men or women, look for them among those who are much engaged among the young, bearing with their follies and sympathizing with their weaknesses for Jesus sake!

You see the sphere which is presented to your zealous activity. Will you not occupy it? Many of you are already engaged in itsee to it that you fulfill your high callingand to the utmost, feed the lambs!

II. Secondly, let us speak of THE MAN who is to do this. I look upon my text as addressed, not to Peter, only, but to those who are like Peter. What if I say it is addressed to us all? As servants and lovers of Jesus, He says to us, Feed My lambs. Who should do it? Christ selected Simon Peter as a leading man. He was one of the chief of the Apostles, if we may use such a word. He was one of the triumvirate that led the vanPeter, James and John. But though a leading man, he was to feed the lambs, for no man may think himself too great to care for the young.

The best of the Church are none too good for this work. And, dear Friends, do not think because you have other service to do, that, therefore, you should take no interest in this form of holy work, but kindly, according to your opportunities, stand ready to help the little ones and to cheer those whose chief calling it is to attend to them. To us all this message comesFeed My lambs. To the minister and to all who have any knowledge of the things of God, the commission is given. See to it that you look after the children that are in Christ Jesus. Peter was a leader among Believers, yet he must feed the lambs.

But he was especially a warm-hearted man. Simon Peter was not a Welshman, but he had a great deal of what we know as Welsh fire in him. He was just the sort of man to interest the young. Children delight to gather round a fire, whether it is on the hearth or in the heart. Certain persons appear to be made of ice and, from these, children speedily shrink awaycongregations or classes grow smaller every Sunday when cold-blooded creatures preside over them! But when a man or a woman has a kindly heart, the children seem to gather readily, just as flies in these autumn days swarm on a warm sunny wall. Therefore Jesus says to warm-hearted Simon, Feed My lambs. He is the man for the office!

Simon Peter was, moreover, an experienced man. He had known his own weaknesses. He had felt the pangs of conscience. He had sinned much and had been much forgiven and now he was brought, in tender humility, to confess the love and loveliness of Jesus. We need experienced men and women to talk to converted children and to tell them what the Lord has done for them, and what have been their dangers, their sins, their sorrows and their comforts. The young are glad to hear the story of those who have been further on the road than they have. I may say of experienced saintstheir lips keep knowledge. Experience lovingly narrated is suitable food for young Believers, instruction such as the Lord is likely to bless to their nourishing in Grace.

Simon Peter was now a greatly indebted man. He owed much to Jesus Christ, according to that rule of the Kingdomhe loves much to whom much has been forgiven! Oh, you that have never entered upon this service for Christ and yet might do it well, I beseech you, consider your obligation to Jesus! The state of our schools at the present moment is a strong argument for your aid! We have plenty of children and few teachersaround this place of worship many schools are doing their work in a lame and halting manner for lack of teachers. O you who owe so much to Christ, will you not feed His lambs? Ought you not to be forward to offer yourselves? Will you refuse Him? Come forward at once and say, I have left this work to younger hands, but I will do so no longer. I have experience and I trust I yet retain a warm heart within my bosom. I will go and join these workers who are steadily feeding the lambs in the name of the Lord!

So far as to the man who is called to feed the lambs.   
III. Thirdly, when the Lord calls a man to a work, He gives him THE PREPARATION necessary for it. How was Peter prepared for feeding Christs lambs? First, by being fed, himself. The Lord gave him a breakfast before giving him a commission. You cannot feed lambs or sheep, either, unless you are fed yourself. It is quite right for you to be teaching a great part of the Lords-Day, but I think a teacher is very unwise who does not come to hear the Gospel preached and get a meal for his own soul. First be fed, and then feed!   
But especially Peter was prepared for feeding the lambs by being with his Master. He would never forget that morning and all the incidents of it. It was Christs voice that he heardit was Christs look that pierced him to the heart! He breathed the air which surrounded the risen Lord and this fellowship with Jesus perfumed Peters heart and tuned Peters speech, that he might afterwards go forth and feed the lambs. I commend to you the study of instructive books, but above all I commend the study of Christ! Let Him be your library! Get near to Jesus. An hours communion with Jesus is the best preparation for teaching either the young or the old.   
Peter was also prepared in a more painful way than that, namely, by self-examination. The question came to him thrice over, Simon, son of Jonas, do you love Me? Do you love Me? Do you love Me? Often the vessel needs scouring with self-examination before the Lord can fitly use it to convey the Living Water to thirsting ones. It never hurts a true-hearted man to search his own spirit and to be searched and tried by his Lord. It is the hypocrite who is afraid of the truth which tests his professionhe dreads trying discourses and trying meditationsbut the genuine man wants to know for certain that he really does love Christ and, therefore, he looks within him and questions and cross-questions himself.   
Mainly, dear Friends, that examination should be exercised concerning our love, for the best preparation for teaching Christs lambs is lovelove to Jesus and to them. We cannot be priests on their behalf unless, like Aaron, we wear their names upon our breasts. We must love or we cannot bless! Teaching is poor work when love is goneit is like a blacksmith working without fire, or a builder without mortar. A shepherd that does not love his sheep is a hireling and not a shepherd! He will flee in the time of danger and leave his flock to the wolf. Where there is no love, there will be no lifeliving lambs are not to be fed by dead men!   
See, Brothers and Sisters, we preach and teach loveour subject is the love of God in Christ Jesus! How can we teach this if we have no love, ourselves? Our objective is to create love in the hearts of those we teach and to foster it where it already exists. But how can we convey the fire, if it is not kindled in our own hearts? How can we promote the flame whose hands are damp and dripping with worldliness and indifference, so that he acts on the childs heart rather as a bucket of water than as a flame of fire? These lambs of the flock live in the love of Christshall they not live in ours? He calls them His lambs and so they areshall we not love them for His sake?   
They were chosen in love; they were redeemed in love; they have been called in love; they have been washed in love; they have been fed by love and they will be kept by love till they come to the green pastures on the hilltops of Heaven! You and I will be out of gear with the vast machinery of Divine Love unless our souls are full of affectionate zeal for the good of the beloved ones! Love is the grandest preparation for the ministry, whether exercised in the congregation or in the class. Love and then feed! If you love, feed! If you do not love, then wait till the Lord has quickened you and lay not your unhallowed hand to this sacred service!   
Thus I have described the sphere, the man, and his preparation.   
IV. Let us now consider THE WORK, Feed My lambs. I have already given you the gist of this subject. With the weak of the flock, with the new converts in the flock, with the young children in the flock, our principal business is to feed. Every sermon, every lesson should be a feeding sermon and a feeding lesson. It is of little use to stand and thump the Bible and call out, Believe, believe, believe! when nobody knows what is to believe! I see no use in fiddles and tambourinesneither lambs nor sheep can be fed upon brass bands! There must be doctrinesolid, sound, Gospel doctrine to constitute real feeding. When you have meat on the table, then ring the dinner bellbut the bell feeds nobody if no food is served up.   
Getting children to meet in the morning and the afternoon is a waste of their steps and yours if you do not set before them soul-saving, soulsustaining Truth of God. Feed the lambsyou need not pipe to them, nor put garlands round their necksbut feed them. This feeding is humble, lowly, unostentatious work. Do you know the name of a shepherd? I have known the names of one or two who follow that calling, but I never heard anybody speak of them as great men. Their names are not in the papers, nor do we hear of them as a trade with a grievance, claiming to be noticed by the legislature. Shepherds are generally quiet, unobtrusive people. When you look at the shepherd, you would not see any difference between him and the plowman, or the coal miner. He plods on uncomplainingly through the winter and in the early spring he has no rest, night or day, because the lambs are needing himthis he does year after yearand yet he will never be made a Knight of the Garter, nor even be exalted to the peerage, albeit he may have done far more useful work than those who are floated into rank upon their own beer barrels.

So in the case of many a faithful teacher of young children! You hear but little about him, yet he is doing grand work for which future ages will call him blessed. His Master knows all about him and we shall hear of him in that Dayperhaps not till then. Feeding the lambs is careful work, too, for lambs cannot be fed on anything you please, especially Christs lambs. You can soon poison young Believers with bad teaching. Christs lambs are all too apt to eat herbs which are deleteriousit is necessary that we are cautious where we lead them. If men are to take heed what they hear, how much more should we take heed what we teach? It is careful work, the feeding of each lamb, separately, and the teaching of each child, by itself, the Truth of God which it is best able to receive.   
Moreover, this is continuous work. Feed My lambs, is not for a season, but for all time. Lambs could not live if the shepherd only fed them once a week. I reckon they would die between Sunday and Sunday therefore, good teachers of the young look after them all the days of the week as they have opportunityand they are careful about their souls with prayer and holy example when they are not teaching them by word of mouth. The shepherding of lambs is daily, hourly work. When is a shepherds work over? How many hours a day does he labor? He will tell you that in lambing-time he is never done. He sleeps when he can, taking much less than forty winks, and then rousing himself for action. It is so with those who feed Christs lambsthey rest not till God saves and sanctifies their dear ones.   
It is laborious work, too. At least he who does not labor at it will have a terrible account to render. Do you think a ministers life is an easy one? I tell you that he who makes it so will find it hard enough when he comes to die. Nothing so exhausts a man who is called to it, as the care of souls, and so it is, in measure, with all who teachthey cannot do good without spending themselves. You must study the lessons. You must bring forth something fresh to your class. You must instruct and impress. I have no doubt you are often driven very hard for material and wonder how you will get through the next Lords-Day.   
I know you are sorely pressed, at times, if you are worth your salt. You dare not rush to your class unprepared, to offer to the Lord that which costs you nothing. There must be labor if the food is to be wisely placed before the lambs, so that they can receive it. And all this has to be done in a singularly choice spiritthe true shepherd spirit is an amalgam of many precious Graces! He is hot with zeal, but he is not fiery with passion. He is gentle and yet he rules his class. He is loving, but he does not wink at sin. He has power over the lambs, but he is not domineering or sharp. He has cheerfulness, but not levity; freedom, but not license; solemnity, but not gloom. He who cares for lambs should be a lamb, himself, and, blessed be God, there is a Lamb before the Throne of God who cares for all of us and does so the more effectually because He is in all things made like unto us!   
The Shepherd spirit is a rare and priceless gift. A successful pastor or a successful teacher in a school will be found to have special characteristics which distinguish him from his fellows. A bird, when it is sitting on its eggs, or when the little ones are newly-hatched, has about it a motherspirit, so that it devotes all its life to the feeding of its little ones. Other birds may be taking their pleasure on the wing, but this bird sits still the whole day and night, or else its only flights are to provide for gaping mouths which seem to be never filled!   
A passion has taken possession of the bird and something like it comes over the true soul-winner! He would gladly die to win souls! He pines, he pleads, he plods to bless those on whom his heart is set. If these could but be saved, he would pawn half his Heaven for it! Yes, and sometimes, in moments of enthusiasm, he is ready to barter Heaven altogether to win souls and, like Paul, he could wish himself accursed, so that they were but saved! This blessed extravagance many cannot understand because they never felt itmay the Holy Spirit work it in us, so we shall act as true shepherds towards the lambs. This, then, is the work, Feed My lambs.   
V. Lastly, let us consider THE MOTIVE. Our Lord Jesus heard Peters assurance of love and then He said, Feed My lambs. The motive for feeding the lambs was to be his Masters and not his own. Had Peter been the first Pope of Rome and had he been like his successors, which, indeed, he never was, surely it would have been fitting for the Lord to have said to Him, Feed your sheep. I commit them to you, O Peter, Vicar of Christ on earth. No, no, no! Peter is to feed them, but they are not his, they are still Christs. The work that you have to do for Jesus, Brothers and Sisters, is in no sense for yourselves. Your classes are not your children, but Christs. This is not my Church, but Christs.   
The exhortation which Paul gave was, Feed the Church of God, and Peter, himself, wrote in his Epistle, Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind. Let these lambs turn out what they may, the Glory is to be to the Master and not to the servant! And the whole time spent, labor given and energy put forth is, every particle of it, to redound to His praise whose these lambs are. Yet while this is a selfdenying occupation, it is sweetly honorable, too, and we may attend to it feeling that it is one of the noblest forms of service!   
Jesus says, My lambs: My sheep. Think of them and wonder that Jesus should commit them to us! Poor Peter! Surely when that breakfast began, he felt awkward. I put myself into his place and I know I should hardly have liked to look across the table at Jesus, as I remembered that I denied Him with oaths and curses. Our Lord desired to set Peter quite at his ease by leading him to speak upon his love which had been so seriously placed in question. Like a good doctor, He puts in the knife where the anxiety was festeringHe enquires, Do you love Me? It was not because Jesus did not know Peters love, but in order that Peter might know for sure and make a new confession, saying, Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.   
The Lord is about to hold a tender controversy with the erring one for a few minutes that there might never be a controversy between Him and Peter again. When Peter said, Yes, Lord; You know that I love You, you half thought that the Lord would answer, Ah, Peter, and I love you. But He did not and yet, He did. Perhaps Peter did not see His meaning, but we can see it, for our minds are not confused as Peters was on that memorable morning. Jesus did, in effect, say, I love you so that I trust you with that which I purchased with My hearts blood. The dearest thing I have in all the world is My flock. Look, Simon, I have such confidence in you; I so wholly rely on your integrity as being a sincere lover of Me, that I make you a shepherd to My sheep. These are all I have on earth, I gave everything for them, even My life, and now, Simon, son of Jonas, take care of them for Me.   
Oh, it was kindly spoken. It was the great heart of Christ saying, Poor Peter, come right in and share My dearest cares. Jesus so believed Peters declaration that He did not tell him so in words, but in deeds! Three times He said it, Feed My lambs; feed My sheep; feed My sheep, to show how much He loved him. When the Lord Jesus loves a man very much, He gives him much to do or much to suffer. Many of us have been plucked, like brands, from the burning, for we were enemies to God by wicked works. And now we are in the Church among His friends and our Savior trusts us with His dearest ones! I wonder, when the prodigal son came back and the father received him, whether when market-day came, he sent his younger son to market to sell the wheat and bring home the money. Most of you would have said, I am glad the boy is back, but at the same time, I shall send his elder brother to do the business, for he has always stuck by me.   
As for myself, the Lord Jesus took me in as a poor prodigal son and it was not many weeks before He put me in trust with the Gospel, that greatest of all treasuresthis was a grand token of love! I know of none to excel it. The commission given to Peter proved how thoroughly the breach was healedhow fully the sin was forgivenfor Jesus took the man who had cursed and sworn in denial of Him and bade him feed His lambs and sheep! Oh, blessed work, not for yourselves, and yet for yourselves! He that serves himself shall lose himself, but he that loses himself does really serve himself after the best possible fashion! The master motive of a good shepherd is love. We are to feed Christs lambs out of love. First, as a proof of love. If you love Me, keep My Commandments. If you love Me, feed My lambs. If you love Christ, show it and show it by doing good to others, by laying yourself out to help others that Jesus may have joy of them.   
Next, as an inflowing of love. Feed My lambs, for if you love Christ a little, when you begin to do good, you will soon love Him more! Love grows by active exercise. It is like the blacksmiths arm which increases in strength by wielding the hammer. Love loves till it loves more and it loves more till it loves moreand it still loves more till it loves most of alland then it is not satisfied, but aspires after enlargement of heart that it may copy yet more fully the perfect model of love in Christ Jesus, the Savior! Besides being an inflowing of love, the feeding of lambs is an outflow of love. How often have we told our Lord that we loved Him when we were preaching? And I do not doubt you teachers feel more of the pleasure of love to Jesus when you are busy with your classes than when you are by yourselves at home.   
A person may go home and sit down and groan out

*Tis a point I long to know   
Oft it causes anxious thought,*   
and wipe his forehead and rub his eyes, and get into the dumps without end. But if he will rise up and work for Jesus, the point he longs to know will soon be settled, for love will come pouring out of his heart till he can no longer question whether it is there! So let us abide in this blessed service for Christ that it may be the delight of love, the very ocean in which love shall swim, the sunlight in which it shall bask! The recreation of a loving soul is work for Jesus Christ! And among the highest and most delicious forms of this heavenly recreation is the feeding of young Christiansendeavoring to build them up in knowledge and understanding that they may become strong in the Lord. The Lord bless you, dear fellowlaborers in the Sunday school, from this time forth and for evermore! Amen.

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DO YOU LOVE ME?   
NO. 117

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON SABBATH MORNING, FEBRUARY 15, 1857, REV. C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT NEW PARK STREET CHAPEL, SOUTHWARK.

**Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, Do you love Me more than these? He said unto Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said unto him, Feed My lambs. He said to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, do you love Me? He said unto Him, Yes,**

**Lord You know that I love You. He said unto him, Feed My sheep. He said unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, do you love Me? Peter was grieved because He said unto him the third time, do you love Me? And he said unto Him, Lord You know all things. You know that I love You. Jesus said**

**unto him, Feed My sheep.   
John 21:15-17.**

How very much like Christ before His crucifixion was Christ after His Resurrection! Although He had lain in the grave and descended into the regions of the dead and had retraced his steps to the land of the living, yet how marvelously similar He was in His manners and how unchanged in His disposition. His Passion, His death and His Resurrection could not alter His Character as a Man any more than they could affect His attributes as God. He is Jesus forever the same. And when He appeared, again, to His disciples, He had cast aside none of His kind manners. He had not lost a particle of interest in their welfare. He addressed them just as tenderly as before and called them His children and His friends. Concerning their temporal condition He was mindful, for He said, Children, have you any meat? And He was certainly quite as watchful over their spiritual state, for after He had supplied their bodies by a rich draught from the sea, with fish (which possibly He had created for the occasion), He enquires after their souls health and prosperity. He began with the one who might be supposed to have been in the most sickly condition, the one who had denied his Master thrice and wept bitterlyeven Simon Peter. Simon, son of Jonas, said Jesus, Do you love Me?

Without preface, for we shall have but little time this morningmay God help us to make good use of it!we shall mention three things. First a solemn questionDo you love Me? Secondly, a discreet answer, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. And thirdly, a required demonstration of the fact. He said unto him, Feed My lambs. Or again, Feed My sheep.

I. First, then, here was a SOLEMN QUESTION which our Savior put to Peter, not for His own information, for, as Peter said, You know that I love You, but for Peters examination. It is well, especially after a foul sin, that the Christian should well probe the wound. It is right that he should examine himself, for sin gives grave cause for suspicion and it would be wrong for a Christian to live an hour with a suspicion concerning his spiritual estate unless he occupies that hour in examination of himself! Self-examination should more especially follow sin, though it ought to be the daily habit of every Christian and should be practiced by him perpetually. Our Savior, I say, asked this question of Peter, that he might ask it of himself. So we may suppose it is asked of us, this morning, that we may put it to our own hearts. Let each one ask himself, then, in his Saviors name, for his own profit, Do you love the Lord? Do you love the Savior? Do you love the ever-blessed Redeemer?

Note what this question was. It was a question concerning Peters love. He did not say, Simon, son of Jonas, do you fear Me. He did not say, Do you admire Me? Do you adore Me? Nor was it even a question concerning his faith. He did not say, Simon, son of Jonas, do you believe in Me? But He asked him another question, Do you love Me? I take it that is because love is the very best evidence of pietylove is the brightest of all the Divine Gracesand hence it becomes the best evidence. I do not believe love to be superior to faith. I believe faith to be the groundwork of our salvation. I think faith to be the mother Grace and love springs from it. Faith I believe to be the root Grace and love grows from it. But then, faith is not an evidence for brightness equal to love. Faith, if we have it, is a sure and certain sign that we are Gods children and so is every other Grace a sure and certain one, but many of them cannot be seen by others. Love is a more sparkling one than any other. If I have a true fear of God in my heart, then am I Gods child. But since fear is a Grace that is more dim and has not that halo of glory over it that love has, love becomes one of the very best evidences and one of the easiest signs of discerning whether we are alive to the Savior! He who lacks love, must also lack every other Grace in the proportion in which he lacks love. If love is little, I believe it is a sign that faith is little, for he who believes much, loves much. If love is little, fear will be little and courage for God will be little. Whatever Graces there are, faith lies at the root of them all, yet do they so sweetly hang on love, that if love is weak, all the rest of the Graces most assuredly will be so. Our Lord asked Peter, then, that question, Do you love Me?

And note, again, that He did not ask Peter anything about his doings. He did not say, Simon Peter, how much have you wept? How often have you done penance on account of your great sin? How often have you on your knees sought mercy at My hand for the slight you have done to Me and for that terrible cursing and swearing wherewith you did disown your Lord, whom you had declared you would follow even to prison and to death? No, it was not in reference to his works but in reference to the state of his heart that Jesus said, Do you love Me? He did this to teach us that though works do follow after a sincere love, yet love is more excellent than worksand works without love are not evidences worth having. We may have some tears, but they are not the tears that God shall accept if there is no love to Him. We may have some works, but they are not acceptable works if they are not done out of love to Him. We may perform very many of the outward ritual observances of religion, but unless love lies at the bottom, all these things are vain and useless! The question, then, Do you love Me? is a very vital questionfar more so than one that merely concerns the outward conduct. It is a question that goes into the very heart and in such a way that it brings the whole heart to one questionfor if love is wrong, everything else is wrong! Simon, son of Jonas, do you love Me?

Ah, dear Beloved, we have very much cause for asking ourselves this question! If our Savior were no more than a man like ourselves, He might often doubt whether we love Him at all. Let me just remind you of sundry things which give us very great cause to ask this questionDo you love Me? I will deal only with the last week. Come, my Christian Brothers and Sisters, look at your own conduct. Do not your sins make you doubt whether you love your Master? Come, look over the sins of this week when you were speaking with an angry word and with a sullen look, might not your Lord have touched you and said, Do you love Me? When you were doing such-and-such a thing, which you right well know in your conscience was not according to His precept, might He not have said, Do you love Me? Can you not remember the murmuring words because something had gone wrong with you in business this week and you were speaking ill of the God of Providence for it? Oh, might not the loving Savior, with pity in His languid eyes, have said to you, Do you love Me? I need not stop to mention the various sins of which you have been guilty. You have sinned, I am sure, enough to give good ground for self-suspicion, if you did not still hang on thisthat His love to you, not your love to Him, is the seal of your discipleship! Oh, do you not think within yourselves, If I had loved Him more, would I have sinned so much? And oh, can I love Him when I have broken so many of His Commandments? Have I reflected His glorious Image to the world as I should have done? Have I not wasted many hours within this week that I might have spent in winning souls to Him? Have I not thrown away many precious moments in light and frivolous conversation which I might have spent in earnest prayer? Oh, how many words have I uttered, which if they have not been filthy (as I trust they have not) yet have not been such as have ministered Grace to the hearers? Oh, how many follies have I indulged in? How many sins have I winked at? How many crimes have I covered over? How have I made my Saviors heart bleed? How have I done dishonor to His cause? How have I in some degree disgraced my hearts profession of love to Him? Oh, ask these questions of yourself, Beloved and say, Is this your kindness to your Friend? But I hope this week has been one wherein you have sinned little openly as to the world, or even in your own estimation, as to open acts of crime.

But now let me put another question to you, Does not your worldliness make you doubt? How have you been occupied with the world, from Monday morning to the last hour of Saturday night? You have scarcely had time to think of Him. What corners have you pushed your Jesus into to make room for your bales of goods? How have you stowed Him away into one short five minutes, to make room for your ledger or your daybook? How little time have you given to Him! You have been occupied with the shop, with the exchange and the farmyardand you have had little time to commune with Him! Come, just think! Remember any one day this weekcan you say that your soul always flew upward with passionate desires to Him? Did you pant like a hart for your Savior during the week? No, perhaps there was a whole day went by and you scarcely though of Him till the winding up of it. And then you could only upbraid yourself, How have I forgotten Christ today? I have not beheld His Person. I have not walked with Him, I have not done as Enoch did! I knew He would come into the shop with me. I knew He is such a blessed Christ that He would stand behind the counter with me. I knew He was such a joyous Lord Jesus that He would walk through the market with me! But I left Him at home and forgot Him all the day long. Surely, surely, Beloved, when you remember your worldliness, you must say of yourself, O Lord, you might well ask, Do you love Me?

Consider again, I beseech you, how cold you have been this week at the Mercy Seat. You have been there, for you can not live without it. You have lifted up your heart in prayer, for you are a Christian and prayer is as necessary to you as your breath! But oh, with what a poor asthmatic breath have you lived this week! How little have you breathed? Do you remember how hurried was your prayer on Monday morning, how driven you were on Tuesday night? Can you not recollect how languid was your heart when on another occasion you were on your knees? You have had little wrestling this weeklittle agonizing. You have had little of the prayer which prevails! You have scarcely laid hold of the horns of the altar. You have stood in the distance and seen the smoke at the altar, but you have not laid hold of the horns of it. Come, ask yourself, do not your prayers make you doubt? I say, honestly before you all, my own prayers often make me doubt and I know nothing that gives me more grave cause of disquietude. When I labor to prayoh, that rascally devilfifty thousand thoughts he tries to inject to take me off from prayer! And when I will and must pray, oh, what an absence there is of that burning fervent desire! And when I would come right close to Godwhen I would weep my very eyes out in penitence and would believe and take the blessing oh, what little faith and what little penitence there is! Verily, I have thought that prayer has made me more unbelieving than anything else! I could believe over the tops of my sins, but sometimes I can scarcely believe over the tops of my prayersfor oh, how cold is prayer when it is cold! Of all things that are bad when cold, I think prayer is the worst, for it becomes like a very mockeryinstead of warming the heart, it makes it colder than it was before! It seems even to dampen its life and spirit and fills it full of doubts whether it is really a heir of Heaven and accepted of Christ. Oh, look at your cold prayers, Christian! And say is not your Savior right to ask this question very solemnly, Simon, son of Jonas, do you love Me?

But stop! Againjust one more word for you to reflect upon. Perhaps you have had much prayer and this has been a time of refreshing from the Presence of the Lord. But maybe you know you have not gone so far this week as you might have done in another exercise of godliness that is even better than prayerI mean communion and fellowship. Oh, Beloved, you have this week had but little sitting under the apple tree and finding its shadow great delight to you! You have not gone much this week to the banquet house and had its banner of love over you! Come, think about it, how little have you seen your Lord this week? Perhaps He has been absent the greater part of the time. And have you not groaned? Have you not wept? Have you not sighed after Him? Surely, then, you cannot have loved Him as you should, or else you could not have borne His absence! You could not have endured it calmly if you had the affection for Him a sanctified spirit has for its Lord! You did have one sweet visit from Him in the week and why did you let Him go? Why did you not constrain Him to abide with you? Why did you not lay hold of the skirts of His garment and say, Why should You be like a wayfaring man and as one that turns aside and tarries for a night? Oh, my Lord, You shall dwell with me! I will keep You. I will detain You in my company. I cannot let You go! I love You and I will constrain You to dwell with me this night and the next day. As long as I can keep You, I will keep You. But no, you were foolish. You did let Him go! Oh, Soul, why did you not lay hold of His arm and say, I will not let You go? But you did lay hold on Him so feebly, you did allow Him to depart so quickly, He might have turned round and said to you, as He said to Simon, Simon, son of Jonas, do you love Me?

Now, I have asked you all these questions because I have been asking them of myself. I feel that I must answer to nearly everyone of them, Lord, there is great cause for me to ask myself that question, and I think that most of you, if you are honest with yourselves, will say the same. I do not approve of the man who says, I know I love Christ and I never have a doubt about it. Because we often have reason to doubt ourselves, a Believers strong faith is not a strong faith in his own love to Christit is a strong faith in Christs love to him! There is no faith which always believes that it loves Christ. Strong faith has its conflicts and a true Believer will often wrestle in the very teeth of his own feelings. Lord, if I ever did love You, nevertheless, if I am not a saint, I am a sinner! Lord, I still believe. Help You my unbelief! The disciple can believe when he feels no love, for he can believe that Christ loves the soul. And when he has no evidence, he can go to Christ without evidence and lay hold of Him, just as He is, with naked faith and still hold fast by Him! Though he sees not His signs, though he walk in darkness and there is no light, still may he trust in the Lord and stay upon His Godbut to be certain at all times that we love the Lord is quite another matter. About this we have need continually to question ourselves and most scrupulously to examine both the nature and the extent of our evidences.

II. And now I come to the second thing which is A DISCREET ANSWER. Simon son of Jonas, do you love Me? Simon gave a very good answer. Jesus asked him, in the first place, whether he loved Him better than others. Simon would not say thathe had once been a little proudmore than a littleand thought he was better than the other disciples. But this time he evaded that question. He would not say that he loved better than others. And I am sure there is no loving heart that will think it loves even better than the least of Gods children. I believe the higher a man is in Grace, the lower he will be in his own esteem and he will be the last person to claim any supremacy over others in the Divine Grace of love to Jesus! But mark how Simon Peter did answerhe did not answer as to the quantity but as to the quality of his love. He would assert that he loved Christ, but not that he loved Christ better than others. Lord, I cannot say how much I love You, but You know all things, You know that I love You. So far as I can assertas to the quantity of my love, I cannot say much about it.

But just notice, again, the discreet manner in which Peter answered. Some of us, if we had been asked that question, would have answered foolishly. We would have said, Lord, I have preached for You so many times this week. Lord, I have distributed of my substance to the poor this week. Blessed be Your name, You have given me Grace to walk humbly, faithfully and honestlyand therefore, Lord, I think I can say, I love You. We have brought our good works before our Master as being the evidences of our love. We should have said, Lord, You have seen me during this week. I say as Nehemiah did of old, Forget not my good works. O Lord, I thank you. I know they are Your gifts, but I think they are proofs of my love. That would have been a very good answer if we had been questioned by our fellow man and he had said, You do not always love your Savior. But it would be foolish for us to tell the Master that! Peters answer was wiseLord, You know that I love You. You know the Master might have said to Peter, had he appealed to his works, Yes, you may preach and yet not love Me. You may pray, after a fashion, and yet not love Me. You may do all these works and yet have no love to Me. I did not ask you what are the evidences of your loveI asked you the fact of it. Very likely all my dear friends here would not have answered in the fashion I have supposed. But they would have said, Love You, Lord? Why, my heart is all on fire towards You! I feel as if I could go to prison and to death for You! Sometimes, when I think of You, my heart is ravished with bliss. And when You are absent, O Lord, I moan and cry like a dove that has lost its mate! Yes, I feel I love You, O my Christ. But that would have been very foolish, because although we may often rejoice in our own feelingsthey are joyful thingsit would not do to plead them with our Lord, for He might answer, Ah, you feel joyful at the mention of My name. So, no doubt, has many a deluded one, because he had a fictitious faith and a fancied hope in Christ. Therefore the name of Christ seemed to gladden him. You say, I have felt dull when You have been absent. That might have been accounted for from natural circumstances. You had a headache, perhaps, or some other ailment. But, you say, I felt so happy when He was present that I thought I could die. Ah, in such manner Peter had spoken many a time before, but a sorry mess he made of it when he trusted his feelings, for he would have sunk into the sea but for Christand eternally damned his soul, if it had not been for His Grace, when, with cursing and swearing he thrice denied his Lord! But no, Peter was wise. He did not bring forward his frames and feelings, nor did he bring his evidencesthough they are good in themselveshe did not bring them before Christ. But, as though he shall say, Lord, I appeal to Your Omnipotence. I am not going to tell You that the volume of my heart must contain such-and-such matter, because there is such-andsuch a mark on its cover, for, Lord, you can read inside of it. And, therefore I need not tell You what the title is, nor read over to You the index of the contents. Lord, You know that I love You.

Now, could we, this morning, dear Friends, give such an answer as that to the question? If Christ should come here. If He were now to walk down these aisles and along the pews, could we appeal to His own Divine Omniscience, His Infallible knowledge of our hearts, that we all love Him? There is a test-point between a hypocrite and a real Christian. If you are a hypocrite, you might say, Lord, my minister knows that I love You. Lord, the deacons know that I love You. They think I do, for they have given me a ticket. The members think I love You for they see me sitting at Your Table. My friends think I love You, for they often hear me talk about You. But you could not say, Lord, You know that I love You. Your own heart is witness that your secret works belie your confession, for you are without prayer in secret and you can preach a 20 minute prayer in public! You are stingy and parsimonious in giving to the cause of Christ, but you can sport your name to be seen! You are an angry, petulant creature, but when you come to the House of God, you have a pious whine and talk like a canting hypocrite, as if you were a very gentlemanly man and never seemed angry! You can take your Makers name in vain, but if you hear another do it, you would be mighty severe upon him! You appear to be very pious and yet if men knew of that widows house that is sticking in your throat and of that orphans patrimony which you have taken from him, you would leave off trumpeting your good deeds! Your own heart tells you that you are a liar before God! But you, O sincere Christian, you can welcome your Lords question and answer it with holy fear and gracious confidence! Yes, you may welcome the question. Such a question was never put to Judas. The Lord loved Peter so much that He was jealous over him, or He never would have thus challenged his attachment. And in this kind does He often appeal to the affections of those whom He dearly loves. The response likewise is recorded for you, Lord, You know all things. Can you not look up, though scorned by menthough even rejected by your minister, though kept back by the deacons and looked upon with disesteem by somecan you not look up and say, Lord, You know all things, You know that I love You? Do it not in brag and bravado. But if you can do it sincerely, be happy! Bless God that He has given you a sincere love to the Savior and ask Him to increase it from a spark to a flame and from a grain to a mountain. Simon, son of Jonas, do you love Me? Yes, Lord, You know all things. You know that I love You.

III. And now here is a DEMONSTRATION REQUIREDFeed My lambsfeed My sheep.   
That was Peters demonstration. It is not necessary that it should be our way of showing our love. There are different ways for different disciples. There are some who are not qualified to feed lambs, for they are only little lambs themselves. There are some that could not feed sheep, for they cannot at present see afar off. They are weak in the faith and not qualified to teach at all. They have other means, however, of showing their love to the Savior. Let us offer a few words upon this matter.   
Do you love Me? Then one of the best evidences you can give is to feed My lambs. Have I two or three little children that love and fear My name? If you want to do a deed which shall show that you are a true lover and not a proud pretender, go and feed them! Are there a few little ones whom I have purchased with My blood in an infant class? Do you want to do something which shall give evidence that you are, indeed, Mine? Then sit not down with the Elders, dispute not in the temple! I did that Myselfbut go and sit down with the young orphans and teach them the way to the Kingdom. Feed My lambs.   
Dearly Beloved, I have been of late perplexing myself with one thoughtthat our Church government is not Scriptural. It is Scriptural as far as it goes. But it is not according to the whole of Scripture! Neither do we practice many excellent things that ought to be practiced in our Churches. We have received into our midst a large number of young persons. In the ancient Churches there was what was called the Catechism ClassI believe there ought to be such a class now. The Sabbath school, I believe, is in Scripture. And I think there ought to be on the Sabbath afternoon, a class of the young people of this Church, who are already members, to be taught by some of the elder members. Nowadays, when we get the lambs, we just turn them adrift in the meadow and there we leave them. There are more than a hundred young people in this Church who positively, though they are members, ought not to be left alone! But some of our Elders, if we have Eldersand some who ought to be ordained Eldersshould make it their business to teach them further, to instruct them in the faith and so keep them hard and fast by the Truth of Jesus Christ. If we had Elders, as they had in all the Apostolic Churches, this might in some degree be attended to. But now the hands of our deacons are fullthey do much of the work of the eldership but they cannot do any more than they are doing, for they are toiling hard already. I would that some here whom God has gifted and who have time, would spend their afternoons in taking a class of those younger Brothers and Sisters who live around them, to their houses for prayer and pious instruction, that the lambs of the flock may be fed. By Gods help I will take care of the sheep. I will endeavor under God to feed them, as well as I can, and preach the Gospel to them. Yonder that are older in the faith and stronger in it need not that careful cautious feeding which is required by the lambs. There are many in our midst, good pious souls who love the Savior as much as the sheep do. But one of their complaints which I have often heard is, Oh, Sir, I joined your Church. I thought they would be all Brothers and Sisters to me and that I could speak to them and they would teach me and be kind to me. Oh, Sir, I came and nobody spoke to me. I say, Why did you not speak to them, first? Oh, they reply, I did not like. Well, they should have liked, I am well aware, but if we had some means of feeding the lambs, it would be a good way of proving to our Savior and to the world that we really do endeavor to follow Him! I hope some of my friends will take that hint. And if, in concert with me, my Brothers in office will endeavor to do something in that way, I think it will be no mean proof of their love to Christ. Feed My lambs, is a great dutylet us try to practice it as we are able!  
But, Beloved, we cannot all do that. The lambs cannot feed the lambs. The sheep cannot exactly feed the sheep. There must be some appointed to these offices. And therefore, in the Saviors name, allow me to say to some of you that there are different kinds of proof you must give. Simon son of Jonas, do you love Me? He said unto Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. Then preserve that Prayer Meeting. Attend to itsee that it is kept going and that it does not fall to the ground. Simon son of Jonas, do you love Me? See to your servantssee that they go to the House of God and instruct them in the faith. There is a Sister \_\_\_\_\_. Do you love Christ? Yes, Lord. Perhaps it is as much as you can do perhaps it is as much as you ought to doto train up your children in the fear of the Lord! It is of no use to trouble yourselves about duties that God never meant you to do and leave your own vineyard at home to itself. Just take care of your own children. Perhaps that is as good a proof as Christ wants of you that you are feeding His lambs. You have your own office, to which Christ has appointed youseek not to run away from it but endeavor to do what you can to serve your Master therein! But, I beseech you, do something to prove your love! Do not be sitting down doing nothing. Do not be folding your hands and arms, for such people perplex a minister most and bring the most ruin on a Church such as do nothing! You are always the most ready to find fault. I have marked it here, that the very people who are quarrelling with everything, are the people that are doing nothing, or are good for nothing! They are sure to quarrel with everything else, because they are doing nothing themselvesand, therefore, they have time to find fault with other people! Do not, O Christian, say that you love Christ and yet do nothing for Him! Doing is a good sign of living. And he can scarcely be alive unto God that does nothing for God! We must let our works evidence the sincerity of our love to our Master. Oh, you say, but we are doing a little. Can you do any more? If you can, then do it! If you cannot do more, then God requires no more of you. Doing to the utmost of your ability is your best proof. But if you can do more, inasmuch as you keep back any part of what you can do, in that degree you give cause to yourselves to distrust your love to Christ! Do all you can to your very utmost. Serve Him abundantly. Yes and superabundantlyseek to magnify His name! And if ever you do too much for Christ, come and tell me of it. If you ever do too much for Christ, tell the angels of itbut you will never do that! He gave Himself for yougive yourselves to Him!  
You see, my Friends, how I have been directing you to search your own hearts and I am almost afraid that some of you will mistake my intention. Have I a poor soul here who really deplores the listlessness of her affections? Perhaps you have determined to ask yourself as many questions as you can with a view of reviving the languid sparks of love. Let me tell you, then, that the pure flame of love must be always nourished where it was first kindled. When I admonished you to look to yourself, it was only to detect the evil. Would you find the remedy, you must direct your eyes, not to your own heart, but to the blessed heart of Jesusto the Beloved Oneto my gracious Lord and Master! And would you be ever conscious of the sweet swellings up of your heart towards Him, you can only prove this by a constant sense of His tender love to you! I rejoice to know that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Love and the ministry of the Spirit is endeared to me in nothing so much as thisthat He takes of the things of Jesus and shows them to me, spreading abroad the Saviors love in my heart until it constrains all my passions, awakens the most tender of all tender emotions, reveals my union to Him and occasions my strong desire to serve Him! Let not love appear to you as a stern duty, or an arduous effort! Rather look to Jesus, yield yourself up to His gracious charms till you are ravished with His beauty and preciousness! But ah, if you are slack in the proofs you give, I shall know you are not walking with Him in holy communion.   
And allow me to suggest one profitable way of improving the ordinance of the Lords Supper. That iswhile you are partaking of it, my Friends, renew your dedication to Christ. Seek this morning to give yourselves over afresh to your Master. Say with your hearts, what I shall now say with my lipsOh, my precious Lord Jesus, I do love You! You know I have in some degree given myself to You up to this time, thanks to Your Grace! Blessed be Your name that You have accepted the deeds of so unworthy a servant. O Lord, I am conscious that I have not devoted myself to You as I ought. I know that in many things I have come short. I will make no resolution to live better to Your honor, but I will offer the prayer that You would help me to do so. Oh, Lord, I give to You my health, my life, my talents, my power and all I have! You have bought me and bought me whollythen, Lord, take me this morning, baptize me in the Spirit. Let me now feel an entire affection to Your blessed Person. May I have that love which conquers sin and purifies the soulthat love which can dare danger and encounter difficulties for Your sake! May I henceforth and forever be a consecrated vessel of mercy, having been chosen of You from before the foundation of the world! Help me to hold fast that solemn choice of Your service which I desire this morning, by Your Grace to renew. And when you drink the blood of Christ and eat His flesh spirituallyin the type and in the emblem, then I beseech you, let the solemn recollection of His agony and suffering for you inspire you with a greater love, that you may be more devoted to His service than ever! If that is done, I shall have the best of Churches. If that is done by us, the Holy Spirit helping us to carry it out, we shall all be good men and true, holding fast by Himand we shall not need to be ashamed in the awful day.

As for you who have never given yourselves to Christ, I dare not tell you to renew a vow which you have never made! Nor dare I ask you to make a vow which you would never keep. I can only pray for you, that God the Savior would be pleased to reveal Himself unto your heart, that a sense of blood-bought pardon may dissolve your hearts of stone. That you may be brought to give yourselves to Him, knowing that if you have done that, you have the best proof that He has given Himself for you! May God Almighty bless youthose of you who depart, may He dismiss with His blessingand those who remain, may you receive His favor, for Christs sake. Amen.

Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software.   
PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #1281 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

DO YOU LOVE ME?   
NO. 1281

**A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, FEBRUARY 27 1876, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**Simon, son of Jonas, do you love Me?   
John 21:16.**

This is a very short and simple text and some would think it very easy to say all that can be said upon it, but, indeed, it is a very large text and too full of meaning for me to attempt to expound it all. The words are few, but the thoughts suggested are very many There are subtle meanings, too, in the original Greek well worth considering, and allusions which deserve to be followed out. I intend, at this time, to confine myself to one point, and to ask your consideration of one thought only. May the Spirit of God prepare our hearts for our meditation and impress the Truth of God upon them. My one point is thisour Lord asked Peter whether he had a love to His Person. The inquiry is not concerning his love to the kingdom of God, or the people of Godit begins and ends with his love to the Son of God.

Simon, son of Jonas, do you love Me? He does not say, Do you now perceive the prudence of My warnings when I bade you watch and pray? Simon, son of Jonas, will you, from now on, cease from your selfconfidence and take heed to My admonitions? It is not even, Do you now believe My doctrines? Do you now trust in One whom, the other day, you denied? Neither is it asked, Are you pleased with My precepts? Are you a believer in My claims? Will you still confess Me to be the Son of the Highest? No, these matters are not brought under question, but the one inquiry is, Do you love Me? Have you a personal attachment for Me, to My very Self?

He calls him by his old, unconverted name, Simon, son of Jonas, to remind him of what Grace had done for him and then He asks only about his love. The question deals with personal attachment to a personal Christand that is my sole subject. Observe that our ever wise and tender Savior questioned Peter about his love in plain terms. There was no beating about the bush. He went at once to the point, for it is not a matter about which ambiguity and doubt can be endured. As the physician feels his patients pulse to judge his heart, so the Lord Jesus tested, at once, the pulse of Peters soul. He did not say, Simon, son of Jonas, do you repent of your folly? Repentance is a very blessed Grace and very necessary, but it was wiser to look, at once, to Peters love, because it is quite certain that if a disciple loves his master he will deeply grieve for ever having denied him.

The Lord does not even ask His follower about his faith which might well have been put under question, for he had with oaths said, I know not the Man. It would have been a highly important question, but it was

answered when Peter avowed his love, for he who loves, believes, and no man can love a Savior in whom he does not believe. The Lord left every other point out of His question, or perhaps I ought, rather, to say concentrated every other point into this one inquiryDo you love Me? Learn from this fact that one thing is necessarylove to Jesus is the chief, the vital point to look to.

This question the Lord asked three times, as if to show that it is of the first, of the second and of the third importanceas if it comprised all else and, therefore, He would again and again and again insist upon itas orators dwell with repetitions and emphatic sentences upon topics which they would urge home upon their hearers. This nail was meant to be well fastened, for it is struck on the head with blow after blow. With unvarying tone and look, the Lord enquired, Simon, son of Jonas, do you love Me? It shows what weight our Savior attached to the matter of his love, that He asked him about that, about that only and about that three times over.

When you are examining yourselves, look mainly to your hearts and make thorough inquisition into your love. Is Jesus really loved by you? Have you a deep attachment to His Person? Whatever else you trifle with, be earnest here! Remember that the Lord Jesus, Himself, asked the question and He asked it until He grieved Peter. So long as he was but recognized as a disciple, Peter must have felt ready to receive the severest possible rebuke and think himself gently treated. Therefore it was not easy to grieve him. Our Lord was slow at all times to cause pain to any true heart, yet on this occasion, for wise reasons, He reiterated His inquiry till He touched Peters unhealed wounds and made them smart. Had he not made his Masters heart bleed? And was it not fit that he should feel heart-wounds himself? A threefold denial demanded a threefold confessionand the grief he had caused was fitly brought to his memory by the grief he felt.

Now, this morning, if I press this question until I grieve some of you, till I grieve myself, also, I shall not be censurable for having done so. To comfort you would be a good work, but sometimes it may be better to grieve you. Not always is sweet food the best thing we can bring youbitter medicine is sometimes more important. I shall not have pushed the question beyond its legitimate sphere if I should so present it as to stir your hearts even to anguish! True love has more or less of pain about it. Only the mere pretender passes through the world without anxious inquiry and heart-searching. Better far that you should be grieved today and be found right at last, than that you should presumptuously feel yourselves secure and be deceived in the end!

We remarked that the question was put by our Lord Himself. What if the Lord Jesus should meet you today and should say to each one of you, Do you love Me? If the question came at the end of one of our sermons, or just as we had done teaching, I should not wonder if it startled us. Found, as we are, in His House, having just sung sweet hymns in His honor, having united in prayer and heartily joined in His worship, it would seem strange to be questioned as to our love to Him and yet it would not be unnecessary. Imagine, then, that your Lord has found you quite alone and is standing before you. Think of Him touching you with His hand and gently asking, After all, do you love Me?

How would you feel under such a question? Would you not be struck with it and, perhaps, with shame begin to tremble and think over a dozen reasons why such a searching question was suggested to you just now? And if the Lord were to repeat it three times and each time put it distinctly to you, and to you only, would you not feel great searchings of heart? Yet would I have you so receive the question. Let it come to you now as from Jesus. Forget that it is spoken by the minister, or written in the text. Bear it only as spoken by Jesus, by that same Jesus who has redeemed you from death and Hell by His most precious blood!

He addresses it to you rather than to othersis there not a cause? Singling you out of the company, He gazes on you fixedly and says, Simon, son of Jonas, do you love Me?you know why there is such cause to question you. Answer for yourself, alone, for He puts the enquiry only to you. Never mind Nathanael, now, nor Thomas, nor the two sons of ZebedeeDo you love Me? Really, truly does your heart beat true towards Jesus of Nazareth? Come, Peter, yes or no? You say, Yes, but is it so? Is it so? Is it so? I want the enquiry to come to my own soul and to yours this morning, as if Jesus really stood before each one of us and said, Do you love Me?

May the Lord grant us Grace to make solemn enquiry as to this matter, to bear honest witness and to give a true answer which shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

I. Our first observation shall be thisLOVE TO THE PERSON OF CHRIST MAY BE ABSENT FROM OUR HEARTS. Unhappy thought and yet most certainly true! Even in our hearts there may be no love for Christ! I know of nothing which can screen any one of us from the necessity of the question. Our gifts and apparent Graces may prevent our fellow creatures questioning us, but nothing should prevent our questioning ourselves, for certainly there is nothing which will prevent the Lord, Himself, from putting the enquiry to us.

No outward religiousness renders this enquiry needless . Are we professors of religion? Are we very constant in attending to outward forms of worship? Do we enter very heartily into all the public exercises of Gods House? Yes, but there are thousands who do that, hundreds of thousands who do that every Lords-Day and yet they do not love Christ! My Brothers and Sisters, are not multitudes wrapped up in forms and ceremonies? If the service pleases the eyes and the ears, are they not quite content? Love to the Person of Christ has not occurred to the mass of avowed worshippers of Jesus!

We know others to whom the end-all and be-all of religion is an orthodox statement of doctrine. So long as the preaching is according to the confession of faith and every word and act is piously correct, they are well pleased. But no love to Jesus ever stirs their heartsreligion to them is not an exercise of the heart at allit is mere brain work and hardly that.

They know nothing of the living soul going out towards a living Person, a bleeding heart knit to another bleeding heart, a life subsisting on another life and in love with it. We know Brothers and Sisters who carry this very far and if the preacher differs from them in the merest shade, they are overwhelmed with pious horror at his unsoundnessand they will not hear him againeven if he preaches Christ most preciously in all the rest of his discourse, it is nothing, because he cannot say correctly their Shibboleth.

What is orthodoxy without love, but a catacomb to bury dead religion in? It is a cage without a bird! The gaunt skeleton of a man, out of which the life has fled! I am afraid that the general current of Church life runs too much towards externals and too little towards deep burning love to the Person of Christ. If you preach much about emotional religion and the heart-work of godliness, cold-blooded professors label you as rather mystical and begin to talk of Madame Guyon and the danger of the Quietist school of religion. We would not mind having a little spice of that, even if we were blamed for it, for, after all, the realizing of Christ is the grand thing! The faith which is most blessed is faith which deals most fully with the Person of Jesus Christ. The truest repentance is that which weeps at the sight of His wounds and the love which is most sweet is love to the adorable Person of the Well-Beloved.

I look upon the Doctrines of Grace as my Lords garments and they smell of myrrh, aloes and cassia. I look upon His precepts as His scepter and it is a rod tipped with silver. And I delight to touch it and find comfort in its power. I look upon the Gospel ordinances as the Throne upon which He sits and I delight in that Throne of ivory overlaid with pure gold. But oh, His Person is sweeter than His garments, dearer than His scepter, more glorious than His Throne! He, Himself, is altogether lovely, and to love HIM is the very hearts core of true religion! But perhaps you may not love Him, after all. You may have all the externals of outward religiousness and yet the secret of the Lord may not be with you. It will be vain to reverence the Sabbath if you forget the Lord of the Sabbath! It is vain to love the sanctuary but not the Great High Priest, vain to love the wedding feast but not the Bridegroom! Do you love ME? That is the question. Simon, son of Jonas, do you love ME?

Nor, Brothers and Sisters, would the highest office in the Church render it unnecessary to ask the question. Peter was an Apostle and not a whit behind the very chief of them. In some respects he was a foundation stone of the Church and yet it was necessary to say to him, Do you love Me? There was once an Apostle who did not love the Lord. There was an Apostle who coveted 30 pieces of silvera goodly price was that at which he sold his Master. The name of Judas should sound the death-knell of all presumptuous confidence in our official standing! We may stand very high in the Church and yet fall to our destruction! Our names may be in the list of religious leaders and yet they may not be written in the Lambs Book of Life. So, my Brother minister, deacon, or elderit is necessary to put to ourselves the question, Do you love the Lord?

The enjoyment of the greatest Christian privileges does not render this question unnecessary. Peter and James and John were the three most favored of all the Apostles. They witnessed certain of our Lords miracles which were done in secret and beheld by no other human eyes. They beheld Him on the Mount of Transfiguration in all His Glory and they saw Him in the Garden of Gethsemane in all His agony and yet, though thus favored, their Lord felt it necessary to ask of their leader, Do you love Me? O my Brother, you have had high enjoyments, you have been on Tabor, illuminated with its transporting light and you have also had fellowship with Christ in His sufferings, or, at any rate, you think you have.

You are familiar, alike, with inward agonies and spiritual joys! You have been the friend of the Lord and eaten bread with Him and yet, remember, there was one who did this and yet lifted up his heel against Him! Therefore it is necessary to say to you, my Brother, Do you love the Lord? Do you really love Him, after all? For it is not certain that you do just because of what you have seen and enjoyed. It is easy to invent a remarkable experience, but the one thing necessary is a loving heart. Take heed that you have this.

Nor, my dear Brothers and Sisters, does the greatest warmth of zeal prevent your necessity of this question. Peter was a red-hot disciple. How ready he was both to do and to dare for his Master! How impetuously he cried when he was on the lake of Galilee, Lord, if it is You, bid me come to You on the water. What daring! What faith! What vehement zeal! And here, too, in the narrative before us, when the Lord was by that same Sea of Tiberias, Peter, in his headlong zeal, cannot wait until the boat touches the shore. He girds on his fishers coat and plunges in to meet the Master whom he loves and yet, with that headlong zeal before Him, the Lord says, Do you love Me?

Yes, young man, you are earnest in the Sunday school, you have sought the conversion of the little ones and succeeded above many! You encourage others and give impetus to every movement in which you engage. And yet you need to enquire whether you do, in very deed, love the Lord or not. Perhaps, my dear Brother, you stand up in the corners of the streets and face the ungodly throng and delight to talk of Jesus, whether men oppose or not. Yet are you sure you love Jesus? My Sister, you visit the poor and care for the needy. You lay yourself out to do good to young people and are full of warmth in all things which concern the Redeemers cause. We admire you and hope your zeal will never grow lessbut for all that, even to you must the question be putDo you love the Lord Jesus?

There is a zeal which is fed by regard to the opinions of others and sustained by a wish to be thought earnest and useful. There is a zeal which is rather the warmth of nature than the holy fire of Grace. This zeal has enabled many to do great things and yet, when they have done all, they have been as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal because they did not love Jesus Christ! The most zealous actions, though they naturally lead us to hope that those who perform them are lovers of Jesus, are not conclusive

evidence and, therefore, we must still enquire, Do you love the Lord?

Yes, dear Friends, and I will go a little further the greatest self-denial does not prove it. Peter could say, Lord, we have left all and followed You. Though it was not very much, yet it was all Peter had and he had left it all for the good cause, without having gained any earthly good in return. He had been frequently abused and reproached for Jesus sake and he expected to be reproached still more, yet he was loyal and willing to suffer to the end. Yet the Lord, knowing all that Peter had sacrificed for His sake, nevertheless said to him, Do you love Me? For sadly, strangely true it is that men have made considerable sacrifices to become professed Christians and yet have not had the root of the matter in them.

Some have even been put into prison for the Truth of God and yet have not been sincere Christians. It is not for us to say, but it is to be feared that in the martyr days some have given their bodies to be burned, yet because they had not love, it profited them nothing. Love is essential. Nothing can compensate for its absence. And yet this precious thing may not be in your hearts! O God, I tremble as I remember that perhaps it is not in mine! Let each one hear the question, Simon, son of Jonas, do you love Me? I must press the point still a little further. It is often necessary for us to ask this question because there are other points of religion besides the emotional. Man is not all hearthe has a brain and the brain is to be consecrated and sanctified. It is, therefore, right that we should study the Word of God and become well instructed scribes in the kingdom of Heaven.

Peter went to college three years, with Jesus Christ for a tutor, and he learned a great dealwho would not from so great a Teacher? But after he had been through his course, his Master, before He sent him to his lifework, felt it necessary to inquire, Do you love Me? Brother, you may turn over the pages of your book. You may digest doctrine after doctrine. You may take up theological propositions and problems and you may labor to solve this difficulty and expound that text. You may answer the questions, till, somehow or other, the heart grows as dry as the leaves of the volume and the book-worm feeds on the soul as well as the paper, eating its way into the spirit. It is, therefore, a healthy thing for the Lord to come into the study and close the book and say to the student, Sit still a while, and let Me ask you, Do you love Me? I am better than all books and studies. Have you a warm, human, living love for Me?

I hope many of you are very diligent studentsif you teach in the Sunday school you ought to be. If you preach in the streets or in cottage meetings you ought to be. How shall you fill others if you are not full yourselves? But, at the same time, look most of all to the condition of your heart towards Christ. To know is good, but to love is better. If you will study, you can solve all problems. Yet, if you love not, you have failed to comprehend the mystery of mysteries and to know the most excellent of sciences. Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. Look well, then, to the question, Do you love Me?

Much of Christian life, also, ought to be spent in active labor. We are to be up and doing! If there was anything to do, Peter was the man to do it. He had gone forth to preach the Gospel and even the devils had been subject to him! Peter had worked marvels in Jesus name and he was ordained to work yet greater wonders. Yet, despite all that Peter had done, his love needed to be examined. Even though those feet of Peters had walked the sea, which no other mans feet had done, yet Peter must be asked, Do you love Me? He had just dragged that huge net to the shore with all that host of fishes, a hundred and fifty and three! With great skill and mighty effort he had drawn the whole catch on shore, yet this did not prove his love.

There are preachers of the Gospel among us who have dragged a full net to shorethe great fishes have been many! They have been great and successful workers, but this does not prevent its being necessary for the Lord to examine them as to their

hearts. He bids them put aside their nets for awhile and commune with Him. Shut up the Church Book. Fold up the membership roll and have done counting your fishes! Come into your chamber, Jesus means to ask you something! In My name you have cast out devils, but did you love Me? You cast the net on the right side of the ship, as I told you, but did you love Me? You drew to shore that catch of fishes, but did you love Me? Brothers and Sisters, this is the solemn fear, Lest after having preached to others I myself should be a castaway. Lest after bringing others to Jesus and serving God well in the school, or in some other sphere, you should, nevertheless, make a dead failure of it, because you have not loved Jesus Himself!

I must press the question again and again, and I pray the Holy Spirit to let its power be felt by every one of us. Possibly we may have been called to contend earnestly for the faith. And we may have been battling with the Kings enemies on this side and on that and standing up for the Truth of God even as for dear life. It is well to be a good soldier of Jesus Christ, for this age needs men who are not afraid to bear reproach for speaking out the Truth of God with strong, stern words. But to this spirit it is most important that the question should come, Do you love Me? A man may be a very firm Protestant but may not love Christ. He may be a very earnest advocate of Divine Truth, but he may not love Him who is the Truth, itself! He may maintain Scriptural views as to Baptism and yet he may never have been baptized into Christ.

A man may be a staunch Nonconformist and may see all the evils against which Nonconformity is a protest, but still he may be conformed to the worldand be lost, notwithstanding all his dissent! It is a grand thing for every Christian warrior to look well to this breastplate and to see that he can promptly reply to the question, Simon, son of Jonas, do you love Me? Putting all together, let me say to you, Belovedhowever eminent you may be in the Church of God and however distinguished for services or for sufferingdo not evade this question! Bare your heart to the inspection of your Lord! Answer Him with humble boldness while He says to you, again and again, even till He grieves you, Simon, son of Jonas, do

you love Me?   
II. We will now turn to a second head. WE MUST LOVE THE PERSON   
OF CHRIST OR ALL OUR PAST PROFESSIONS HAVE BEEN A LIE. It is  
not possible for that man to be a Christian who does not love Christ. Take  
the heart away and life is impossible. Your very first true hope of Heaven  
came to you, if it ever did come at all, by Jesus Christ. Beloved, you heard   
the Gospel, but the Gospel, apart from Christ, was never good news to   
you. You read the Bible, but the Bible, apart from a personal Christ, was   
never anything more than a dead letter to you. You listened to many earnest entreaties, but they all fell on deaf ears until Jesus came and compelled you to come in.   
The first gleam of comfort that ever entered my heart flashed from the   
wounds of the Redeemer. I never had a hope of being saved until I saw  
Him hanging on the tree in agonies and blood. And because our earliest  
hope is bound up, not with any doctrine or preacher, but with Jesus, our  
All in All, therefore I am sure, even if we have only lately received our first  
hope, we must love Jesus, from whom it has come. Nor do we merely begin with Him, for every Covenant blessing we have received has been connected with His Person and could not be received apart from Him. You   
have obtained pardon, but that pardon was through His blood. You have   
been clothed in righteousness, but He is the Lord, your Righteousness. He  
is, Himself, your glory and your beauty.   
You have been cleansed from many sins by conversion, but it was the   
water from His opened side which washed you. You have been made the   
child of God, but your adoption has only made you feel more akin to the   
Elder Brother, through whom you are made heirs of God. The blessings of   
the Covenant are, none of them, separate from Christ, and cannot be enjoyed apart from Him any more than light and heat can be divided from   
the sun. All blessings come to us from His pierced hands and, therefore, if   
we have received them we must love Him. It is not possible to have enjoyed the golden gifts of His unbounded love without being moved to love  
Him in return. You cannot walk in the sun without being warmed, nor receive of Christs fullness without being filled with gratitude. Every ordinance of the Christian Church, since we have been converted, has either been a mockery, or else we have loved Christ in it. Baptism, for instancewhat is it but the mere washing away of the filth of the   
flesh and nothing more unless we were buried with Christ in baptism   
unto death? Like as He rose from the dead by the Glory of the Father,   
even so we, also, might rise to newness of life! The Lords Supper, what is   
it? What but a common meal for the eating of bread and the drinking of  
wine, unless Christ is there? But if we have come to the Lords Supper as   
true men and not as false-hearted hypocrites, we have eaten His flesh and  
drunk His bloodand is it possible to have done that and not to love Him?  
It cannot be!   
That communion with Christ which is absolutely essential to ordinances is also sure to produce in the heart love towards Him with whom we commune. And so, Beloved, it has been with every approach we have made towards God in all the long years of our Christian life. Did you pray, my Brother? Did you really speak with God in prayer? You could not have done it except through Jesus the Mediator. And if you have spoken to God through the Mediator, you cannot remain without love to One who has been your door of access to the Father. If you have made a profession of religion, how can it be a true and honest one unless your heart burns with attachment to the Great Author of salvation? You have great hopes, but what are you hoping for? Is not all your hope wrapped up in Him? Do   
you not expect that when He shall appear you shall be like He is? You are hoping to die triumphantly, but not apart from His making   
your dying bed soft as a pillow of down. You are hoping to rise again, but  
not apart from His Resurrection, for He is the first fruits of the Resurrection harvest. You expect to reign upon earth, but it is with Him. You do   
not expect a millennium apart from the King. You expect a never-ending  
Heaven, but that Heaven is to be with Jesus where He is and to behold  
His Glory. Since, then, everything that you have obtainedif, indeed, you   
have received it from the Lordhas Christs name stamped on it and   
comes to you direct from His pierced hands. And it cannot be that you  
have received it unless you love Him.   
Now, when I ask the question, remember that upon your answer to it   
hangs this alternativea hypocrite or a true man, a false professor or a   
genuine converta child of God or an heir of wrath. Therefore answer the   
enquiry, but answer it with deliberation. Answer it conscientiously, as   
though you stood before the bar of Him who now so tenderly enquires of  
you, but who will then speak in other tones and look with other glances,  
even with those eyes which are like a flame of fire. Simon, son of Jonas,  
do you love Me?  
III. Our third consideration is thisWE MUST HAVE LOVE TO THE   
PERSON OF CHRIST OR NOTHING IS RIGHT FOR THE FUTURE. We have  
not finished life yeta long pilgrimage may possibly lie before us. Now all   
will go right if we love Christ, but nothing can proceed as it should if love   
to Jesus is absent. For instance, Peter is called to feed the lambs and feed  
the sheep, but for a true pastor, the first qualification is love to Christ. I   
gather from this incident and I am sure I do not press it unduly, that Jesus Christ, meaning to make Peter a feeder of His lambs and sheep, acts   
as a tester to see whether he has the proper qualifications. And He does   
not so much inquire about Peters knowledge or gifts of utterance, as  
about his love, for the first, second and third qualification for a true pastor is a loving heart.   
Now, mark, what is true of a pastor is true of every useful worker for   
Christ. Love is essential, my dear Friend. You cannot work for Christ if   
you do not love Him. But I can teach in the school, says one. No, not as   
school should be taught, without love to Jesus. But I am connected with   
an interesting society, which is doing much good. But you are not glorifying God unless you are connected with that society because you love Jesus Christ. Put down your tools, for you cannot work profitably in my Lords vineyard unless your heart loves Him. His vines had better be untrimmed than be pruned by angry hands. Let the lambs alone, Sir, you will never rear them if your heart is hard and ungentle. If you do not love the Master, you will not love His work, or His servants, or the rules of His Houseand we can do better without you than with you. To have an unloving worker grumbling about the Lords House and vineyard would be distressing to the whole family. Love must be in the heart, or true service   
cannot come from the hands.   
Then, again, perhaps suffering lies before youand if your heart is not   
true to Christ, you will not be able to patiently endure for His names   
sake. Before long the time came for Peter to glorify God by death. Peter   
has to be girded and to be taken where he would not. Now, can he be fit   
for martyrdom if he does not love Jesus? Tradition says that he was crucified with his head downwards because he felt it too much honor to be put  
to death in the same position as his Lord. It may be so. No doubt he was   
put to death by crucifixion and it was his strong, deep love which made   
him more than a conqueror. Love makes the hero. When the Spirit of God   
inflames love, He inspires courage.   
See then, O Believers, how much you need love for the future. Young  
Christian, you will have to run the gauntlet before you enter Heaven. I do   
not care what sphere of life you occupy, you are very particularly favored

if somebody does not mock at you and persecute you. Between here and   
Heaven you will be tried and, perhaps, your foes will be the men of your  
own household! Many will watch for your stumbling and even place stumbling blocks in your way. To walk steadily you will need to carry the fires  
of love in your heart. If you do not love Jesus intensely, sin will get the  
mastery over you. Self-denials and humiliations, which would be easy   
with love, will be impossible without it. Rightly to work or to suffer, or to   
die, we must love Jesus with all our hearts.   
Look, my Brothers and Sisters, if we have no love for Jesus Christs   
Person, our piety lacks the adhesive element. It fails in that which will   
help us to stick to the good old way to the end and hold out to the end.   
Men often leave what they like, but never what they love. Men can deny  
what they merely believe as a matter of mental conviction, but they will  
never deny that which they feel to be true and accept with heartfelt affection. If you are to persevere to the end, it must be in the power of love.  
Love is the great inspiriting force. Many a deed in the Christian life is impossible to anything but love. In serving Christ you come across a difficulty far too great for judgment, far too hard for prudence, and unbelief   
sits down and weighs and calculates. But love, mighty love, laughs at the   
impossibility and accomplishes it for Jesus Christ.   
Love breaks through troops. Love leaps over walls and, hand-in-hand  
with Faith, she is all but Omnipotent! No, through the power of God which  
is upon her, she can do all things for Jesus Christ her Lord. If you lack   
love, your energy is gone. The force which nerves the man and subdues  
his foes is lacking. Without love, too, you are without the transforming   
force. Love to Christ is that which makes us like He is. The eyes of love, like windows, let in the Saviors image and the heart of love receives it as upon a sensitive plate until the whole nature bears its impression. You are like that which you love, or you are growing like it. If Christ is loved, you are growingly becoming like He. But without love you will never bear the image of the heavenly. O Spirit of God, with wings of love, brood over  
us till Christ is formed in us!   
My Brothers and Sisters, there is one other reflectionwithout love for   
Christ we lack the perfecting element. We are to be with Him soon. In a few  
more weeks or months, none of us can tell how few, we shall be in Glory.  
Yes, you and I. Many of us shall be wearing the white robes and bearing   
the palm branches. We shall only buy two or three more almanacs, at the  
outside, and then we shall keep no more reckoning of days, for we shall be   
where time, with its little eddies and currents, shall be forgotten in the   
eternal rainbow of the ages. But if we do not love Jesus, we shall not be   
where He is. There are none in Heaven that have not first learned to love   
Him here below. So we must have love for Jesus, the future imperiously   
demands it and, therefore, I put the question with all the greater seriousness and vehemence, Simon, Son of Jonas, do you love Me? IV. But now I will suppose I have received an answer from you and you   
are able to say you do love Jesus. Then my fourth and closing head must  
be, IF WE DO LOVE HIM, WHAT THEN? Why then, if we do love Him, let  
us do something for Him, for Jesus Christ replied to Peter the moment he   
said, You know all things, You know that I love YouFeed My sheep.   
Very kind, it was, of the Savior, because He knew from His own heart that  
wherever there is love there is a desire for activity. Because Jesus loved so  
much, therefore it became His meat and his drink to do the will of His   
heavenly Father.   
And so thinks JesusPeter loves Me and his heart will ache if I do not  
give him something to do. Go and feed My lambs, go and feed My sheep.   
Brother, Sister, if you love Christ, do not idle away this Sunday afternoon!   
If you love Christ, get to work! What are you doing? Attending the means   
of Grace and getting a good feed. Is that all? Well, that is doing something   
for yourself. Many people in the world are very busy at feedingamong   
the most active with knife and forkbut I do not know that eating a mans  
bread is any proof of love to him. A great many professing Christians give   
no proof of love to Christ except that they enjoy sermons. But now, if you   
love Jesus Christ as you say you do, prove it by doing good to others  
Feed My sheep.  
I see a company of Brethren met together to hold a conference and to   
grow in Grace. Very excellent, indeedgrow away, Brothers and Sisters,   
as fast as ever you canI like to see you as a flower garden, all a-growing,   
all a-blowing. But when you have done all that, I pray you do not congratulate yourselves as though you had done a mighty fine thing, because   
there is nothing in it unless it leads you to work for others. To publish accounts of such happy gatherings is like telling the poor people of Whitechapel that the Lord Mayor and Aldermen had a fine banquet of turtle   
soup. Suppose I read that you have had a splendid series of meetings? Well, I am glad you enjoyed yourselves, but the point is thisif there is   
anything in it, get to work!   
If you love Christ, feed His sheep and lambs. If it is not all talk. If it is   
not all much ado about nothing. If it is not all fussget to soul-winning!   
Get down among the poor and needy! Get down among the lost and wandering! Get down among the dark and ignorant and hold forth Jesus  
Christ as the balm of Gilead and the Savior of sinners! After all, this is the   
test of how much you have grown in Gracethis is the test of your higher   
lifethis is the proof of how much you have become like Jesus. What will  
you do for Him? For if you do not go, now, and feed His sheep and feed  
His lambs, it does not matter what you say or what you think you enjoy  
you do not give that proof of love which Jesus asks for.   
I put it in this final wordwhen next you teach your classes, or your  
own familiesdo it for love of Jesus. Say to your heart, I love Christ and   
now I am going to teach for love of Him. Oh, there will be a grand class  
this afternoon, my Sister! You will get on mightily if you teach for love of  
Himevery word you say will be powerful since it is suggested by love of   
Him! That girl who makes so much noise and troubles you so much, you   
will bear with her for love for Him. That restless young urchin, you cannot  
get the truth into himyou tell him many tales and when you have done   
he wants another. You will patiently give him another for the love of   
Christ.   
When you pray with the little ones, pray because you love them for   
Christs sake. You are going to preach, do the preaching for love of Christ.   
We sometimes do it because it is our turn to do it, but it should never be   
so. You know how delightfully servants will wait upon you if they do it for  
love. You have been out for a few weeks and at last you come home. Look   
at the room! What a welcome it is before you! They have half destroyed the   
garden to bring in the flowers to make the table look nice for you! That   
supperwell, it is just the same supper that any Mary or Jane would   
have cooked, but see how it is put upon the table! Everything seems to   
say it is done for love of master and mistress, to show our affection and   
respect for themand you enjoy it indescribably, because it tells of love! Now, tomorrow and as long as you live, do everything out of love to   
Christ! It will spread flowers over your work and make it look beautiful in   
His eyes. Put loves fingers to work, loves brains, loves eyes, loves   
handsthink with love, pray with love, speak with love, live with love and   
in this way you will live with power and God will bless you for Jesus sake.   
Amen.

**PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMONJohn 21.** HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK786, 787, 640. Adapted from The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307.  
Sermon #3211 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

FEED MY SHEEP   
NO. 3211

**A SERMON   
TO MINISTERS AND STUDENTS,  
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, AUGUST 18, 1910.**

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE PASTORS COLLEGE CONFERENCE,  
ON FRIDAY MORNING, APRIL 13, 1877.

**He said unto him, Feed My sheep.   
John 21:16.**

THOSE whom the Lord addressed, and especially Simon, had become fishermen. Simon Peter went up and drew the net to land, full of great fishes. In the early part of your career most of you were fishermen, or men-catchers and, truly, to be fishers of men should be your ambition all your lives. But you have now become something morethe fisher has developed into a shepherd. The fisherman represents the Evangelist who casts the net into the waters and draws the fish to land, but it is not to him that Christ says, Feed My sheepthat is reserved for those of greater maturity and experience. Many of you have now for years been settled in one sphere and while you will continue to fish, I trust that more and more you will remember that you now have other duties to performyou have to feed as well as to fish, to handle the crook as well as the net. We now leave the sea wherein we were drifted to and fro, and we abide among our own flocks, standing and feeding in the strength of the Lord. We cease not to do the work of an Evangelist, but we pay special attention to the duties of the pastor, for He who once said, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, now says to us, Feed My sheep. I am addressing disciples to whom the Lord has shown Himselfmay He now at this happy season commission us anew and send us home with the Word which He spoke to Peter resting in our hearts!

I. This was a sort of ordination of Peter to the pastorate. He needed to be publicly recognized, for he had publicly offended. And his ordination commenced with AN EXAMINATION BEARING ON THE WORK. Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, do you love Me? Our Lord does not admit any to the oversight of His flock without first of all questioning them as to their inner condition. Neither should any man dare to accept such an office without great self-examination and searching of heart. Many questions should be put to our hearts and answered as in the sight of God, for no man rightly takes this honor upon himself but he that is called thereuntoneither is every man fitted for the work but he, alone, who is anointed of the Lord. You will observe that the examination was directed to the state of Peters heartand so

it touched the innermost spring of all his religionfor if love is absent, all is vainthe heart of godliness is missing where love is lacking.

Love is the chief endowment for a pastor. You must love Christ if you mean to serve Him in the capacity of pastors. Our Lord deals with the most vital point. The question is not, Simon, son of Jonas, do you know Me? though that would not have been an unreasonable question, since Peter had said, I know not the Man. He might have asked, Simon, son of Jonas, do you know the deep mysteries of God? He did know them, for his Lord had called him blessed for knowing that which flesh and blood had not revealed to him. Our great Bishop of souls did not examine him with regard to his mental endowments, nor upon his other spiritual qualifications, but only upon this one, Simon, son of Jonas, do you love Me? If so, then, Feed My sheep. Does not this plainly show us that the chief endowment of the pastor is to love Christ supremely? Only such a man as that is fit to look after Christs sheep. You will fulfill that office well if you love Jesusyour love will keep you in your Lords company, it will hold you under His immediate supervision and will secure you His help. Love to Him will breed a love for all His sheep and your love for them will give you power over them. Experience testifies that we never gain a particle of power for good over our people by angry words, but we obtain an almost absolute power over them by all-enduring loveindeed, the only power which is desirable for us to have must come in that way! I have had the high pleasure of loving some of the most objectionable people till they loved me. And some of the most bitter I have altogether won by refusing to be displeased, and by persisting in believing that they could be better. By practical kindnesses I have so won some men that I believe it would take a martyrdom to make them speak evil of me. This has also been the experience of all who have tried the sacred power of love!

My Brothers, learn the art of loving men to Christ! We are drawn towards those who love us and when the most callous feel that man loves us, they are drawn to you at onceand as you are nearer to the Savior than they areyou are drawing them in the right direction. You cannot look after Gods people and properly care for them in all their sins, temptations, trials and difficulties, unless you love them. You will grow sick and weary of pastoral work unless there is a fresh spring of love in your heart welling up towards them. A mother tires not of watching by the bedside of her sick child because love sustains hershe will outlast the paid nurse by many an hour! Love props her drooping eyelids. Even so, the hireling flees because he is an hireling and cares not for the sheep, but, the good Shepherd gives His life for the sheep. If you really love the sheep, you will be ready to spend your life for them or even to lay it down for their sakes. Love, then, I take to be the chief endowment of the pastoralthough having that, I trust you will not fall short in any other respect but be thoroughly furnished unto every good work. Do not forget what you have been told about study and culture, but remember at the same time that the heart has more power in pastoral work than the head. In this ministry, a humble, godly, ill-educated man with a great, warm, heart will be blessed far more than the large-headed man whose heart is a little diamond of rock-ice which could not be discovered without a microscope even if he were dissected!

The Lord Jesus Christ connected His examination upon the matter of love with the commission, Feed My sheep, because our work in feeding the flock of God is the proof of love to the Lord. Do we not tell our people that love must be not in word, only, but also in deed? We judge whether any man has love to Christ by testing what he will do for Christ. What suffering or reproach will he endure for Him? What of his substance will he consecrate to His service? What of himself will he use for the Lord? We can tell which of us, as a minister, is proving his love to Christ by ascertaining who is really shepherding Christs flock and laying out himself for the benefit of the Lords redeemed. The man to whom Jesus said, Do you love Me? was the same who before had said Lord, if it is You, bid me come unto You on the water. Some among us would readily venture upon that water-walking, for it would be something extraordinary and brief, and this would suit us, for we are not given to plodding perseverance. Our zeal is great and we dash off as Peter did, though soon, like he, we begin to sink! Note well that Christ does not say, Simon, son of Jonas, do you love Me? Go and walk the water. The Master seems to say, You have done enough of that in your young days, now go and quietly feed My sheep. It is hard, tiring, quiet workand if you have no love to Me, you will soon weary of it. Feed My sheep, Feed My sheep, Feed My sheep. Three times I bid you do it, that you may continue in the work as long as you live, for thus will you have given proof of the reality of your affection for Me. Brothers, go back to your flocks and feed them well, and so give fresh evidences of your love to your Lord!

This pastoral work for Christ is the craving of love in every heart that is set apart for the Lord. Every soul that truly loves Him longs to do something for Him. It cannot do otherwiselove must serve its Belovedit yearns to go and lay its offering at His feet! No pressure was needed to make the forgiven sinner wash Christs feet with her tears, wipe them with the hairs of her head and anoint them with precious ointment. Her heart suggested it and she hastened to obey. And if you, my Brothers, are true pastors, you cannot help looking after the wandering sheep. You naturally care for your people. You have a sacred instinct which compels you to be lovers of mens souls. You see how little girls, as if it were naturally in them to act as nurses, will kiss their dolls and fondle, caress, dress and care for them as mothers do for their childrenand just so we have seen mere lads converted to Christ and intended by the Lord to become pastors, who, before they have been out of their teens, have begun to speak of Jesus to their little friends and companions. The Lord has caused them even from their new birth to feel a shepherds propensities strong within them! It was so with some of uswe could not have helped preaching even if we couldwe were born to preach when we were bornagain! Let us, then, indulge the sacred passion to the fullest!

Brothers, since we have been at this work, it has been to us the stimulus of love. The way to love another more is to do more for Him. When a man has done a kindness to you, he will love youthe receiver may be unmindful of the favor, but the giver has a better memory! There is no fear of our Lords ceasing to love us, since for us He has suffered even unto death! The supreme Sacrifice made once for all renders it impossible that He should do otherwise than rest in His love. Even so, if we labor and pray, and practice self-denial for others, we are sure to love them all the more. Then, too, as you go on feeding Christs sheep, building up His people and cheering His discouraged ones, you will love your Master moreand your love for Him will act again upon you and cause increased love to the peopleand so on evermore! Those over whom you have most agonized have delighted you most when at last they have been converted. Your joy has been increased as you have waited for the realization of your hope!

This feeding of the sheep is to the love which is the matter in question, a sphere of communion. Feed My sheep unites us in service with Jesus. Love longs to be with Jesus and in fellowship with Him. The Lord was about to ascend to Heaven when He said to Simon, Feed My sheep, and Simon could not as yet go with Him. But if he would accompany his Lord while abiding here, he must follow on his Lords work and abide with his Lords flocks. If we will undertake labors of love for those whom He has redeemed. If we will go wherever His sheep are lost, seeking

*With cries, entreaties, tears, to save,*

*To snatch them from the fiery wave*   
we shall soon find ourselves where Jesus is! He is always at that business. He still seeks poor sinners and if we are engaged in the same search, we shall be with Himwe shall enter into His feelings, we shall share His desires and feel His sympathies! When thus with Him, we shall witness His heart-breaking throes and almost see His bloody sweat streaming down when He was agonizing for souls, for we shall in some feeble measure feel the same! You cannot understand your Lord till you have wept over your congregations! You will understand Him then, as you see Him weeping over Jerusalem. If you feel towards your hearers that you could die to save their souls, you will then have fellowship with the death of your Lord. In grief over backsliders and joy over penitents you will commune with the Redeemer in the most practical manner. You must feel a shepherds feelings and give practical proof of it by daily feeding the flockotherwise your fellowship with the Great Shepherd be will mere sentiment and not fact.   
So much about the previous examination of the candidate for the pastorate. But it is worth noting that the examination is often needed in later life, for we need to be kept right as well as to be made so. Our Lord comes to us, this morning, with the old question. He pauses at each man and questions Him just as at the first. He seems to say, You have read many mens books, do you still love Me? You have heard many conflicting opinions, do you still love Me? You have been very poor and worked, do you still love Me? Your people have treated some of you very badly, you have had to go from place to place, you have been slandered, reviled, maligneddo you still love Me? You have been sorely put to it to find sermons. I have sometimes left you, as you thought, to make you acknowledge your weaknessdo you still love

Me?

Imagine that He changes His tone and says, Simon, son of Jonas, you have not been all that you promised. You thought you would go to prison and to death with Me, and you never dreamed that you could have been so cold-hearted in My service as you have beenand have lived at so great a distance from Me as you have done. But do you still love Me? If so, remember that in going back to your ministry, you must gather renewed strength from renewed love! Love Me more and then feed My sheep. We rejoice as we listen to His gracious voice! And each one of us answers, Lord, You know all thingsYou know that I love Youand by Your Grace, I will feed Your sheep.

II. Secondly, let us LOOK AT THE PERSON EXAMINED IN RELATION TO THE WORK. Perhaps he may bear the same relation to you as he does to me. Painfully do I know myself to be a successor of one of the Apostlesnot of Judas, I hope, but certainly of Peter. I could have wished that it had been John whom I had succeeded, but although it is only Peter, it is some consolation to know that he was also an Apostle of Jesus Christ notwithstanding his terrible fall.

Why did the Savior examine Peter rather than any other? Because Peter was in peculiar need of a re-ordination. Had he not received it from his Lord, some would have asked in later days, Was he really an Apostle? And others would have replied, He thrice denied his Master, surely he is not one of the twelve. We cannot help feeling that blindness has seized the church of Rome when she boasts of the commission to feed Christs sheep having been given to the Apostle Peter, when, with half an eye anyone can see that our Lord addressed these words to Peter because at that time he was the least of the twelve! He had denied his Master. The others had not and, therefore, he was the one concerning whose Apostleship distrust was most likely to arise! The sheep would in all probability have refused to recognize himthey might have said, We cannot receive food at your hands, for we remember how you were frightened by a silly maid, how you denied your Lord and supported your denial with oaths and curses. Therefore, came the Voice to Peter, who needed it. If there is one with us now who feels like conscience-stricken Peter, let him hear the text! Dear Friend, if you have any doubt about your call, and even if there should be as grave cause for that doubt as there was in Peters case, yet still, if you feel that you love the Lord, hear Him again commission you with, Feed My sheep. In your present condition, which is rather that of the weeping penitent than of the assured Believer, it will be well to go to your work very steadily, for it will comfort you, deepen your piety and increase your faith.

Our Lord called Peter to this work because it would be peculiarly beneficial to him. He knew how sincere his repentance was and how hearty was his grief on account of his great sin and, therefore, lest he should be overtaken with too much sorrow, He said to him, Feed My sheep. If nothing had been spoken personally and especially to Peter, he might have mourned heavily, saying, Alas, I denied my Master, I swore that I never knew Him. And when the Lord was gone up again into Glory, instead of standing up as he did on the day of Pentecost to preach that memorable sermon, he might have been found at home weeping. Instead of going up to the Temple with John at the hour of prayer, he might have stayed in his chamber and there mourned all day. Grief is best expelled by other thoughts. When you have been cast down, it is well when some important engagement has called off your attention from your trouble. And I think the compassionate Master raised Peter out of what might have grown into a morbid condition of continual grief by bidding him feed His sheep. He seemed to say, Come here, My dear disciple. I know you are sincerely penitent, and I have fully forgiven you for denying Me as you did. Mourn no longer, but go and feed My sheep. Then, as the Lord fed the sheep by him and blessed him to the conversion of others, he would feel certain that his Lord did not remember his faultsand thus he would learn how perfect was the pardon he had received! I do not know that there is a Brother with us, this morning, who is in the condition of Peter, but if I did know such an one and could read his heart, I would go out to him and say, Come, Brother, we are not going to cast you outwe consider ourselves lest we, also, be tempted. You have been converted, once, as a sinneryou must now be converted as a minister. And when you are converted, strengthen your Brothers. Yes, my Brother, go back to your Lord and Master and then, with all your soul inflamed with love for Him, feed His sheep and the Lord bless you in so doing!

Dear Brothers, in Peters case we see a man zealous for his Lord, but of imperfect character. And we see how his failure had been overruled by God to prepare him for his life-work of feeding Christs sheep. John did not need such preparation and the other nine did not require it. It was only Peter who needed to be thus rebuked by a display of his own weakness. This man was too great, too self-confident, too much Peter and too little a discipleand he must, therefore, come down. Probably nothing could have brought him to his true bearings like his being left to see what was in his heart. We speak with bated breath when we say that to some men, a painful break-down has been the making of them. They became, from that time, free from their former self-esteem and were as cleansed and emptied vesselsfit for the Masters use! A deep sense of our weakness and a humbling consciousness of unworthiness form a considerable part of our qualification for dealing with Christs sheep. Because you are a sinner, you will deal lovingly with sinners. Because you know what backsliding means, you will be very gentle and forbearing with backsliders. Because you have broken your own bones, you will be very careful how you handle those who have broken theirs.

You see, then, that this feeding of the sheep, as I have already shown you, would benefit Peter in the particular condition in which he then was. And it is not hard to see that it would benefit him by keeping his rashness in check. I know some beloved Brothers who are impetuous and, God bless them, I love them none the less for that, especially when they know how to bridle their impetuous spirits and only allow them to dash out against evil! But some are rashly impetuous and strongheadedand it will need considerable discipline to make them into useful, workable men. But when the Lord has done this, they will become those determined, independent, resolute men of mark and mind who are so valuable to the Church of God! Such Brothers need the education of a pastorate to curb and to develop them. You did not know how foolish you were till you had to deal with fools and found that you could not suffer them gladly. You did not know how passionate you could be till you had to meet with quick-tempered people like yourself! You did not know how rash you could be till you fell into the society of a dozen rash men like yourself who egged you on in your fool-hardiness. You have now discovered that where you fancied there was a great deal of strength, there was a vast amount of weakness! I believe that the Peter of the Epistles grew out of the Peter of the Sea of Tiberias and the Peter of the denial, by means of the Grace given him while feeding the flock of God. Peter was a bigoted, narrow-minded Jewhe could not readily believe that any others beyond the chosen nation were to be saved! But when he mixed with mankind and was sent to the house of Cornelius, his heart grew larger, although it was not as large as it should have been till Paul boldly withstood him to his face because he was to be blamed! Feed My sheep is, therefore, Beloved, a commission intended for your own good as well as theirs.

It touched me very much to find our Lord addressing Peter by his old name of Simon, son of Jonas. I do not know why He should not have said, Peter, do you love Me? John writes, Jesus said to Simon Peter. Why did not our Lord call him so? Was it not, in the first place, to remind him of his natural weakness? He is not called Petros, the stone, the rockbut the son of Jonas, the son of a timid doveand it is under that name that he is commissioned to feed the sheep. Brothers, if this morning you are filled with a consciousness of your own weakness and unworthiness, the Master says to you, Still go and feed My sheep. If you are not, in your own opinion, fit for the work, still let the sheep be fed! Do not let them suffer because you are not in a right state of mind and heart. These sheepwhat have they done? Why should they starve? It is only too true that you have sinned, but let not that sad fact rob the people of a full display of the Gospel next Lords-Day. Feed My sheep. Go as Peter, if you can, but when you cannot do so, go as, Simon, son of Jonas.

But I think there was a deeper reason and one which touched me more, why our Lord said, Simon, son of Jonas, do you love Me? This was his old name before he was converted, for when Jesus first saw him, He said, You are Simon, the son of Jonas. Nothing will help you to feed the flock of God, Brothers, like recollecting the time and circumstances when you were first brought to Jesus. If it were possible, which it is not, I would like to be converted every Sunday morning before preaching. At any rate, I would like to feel that tenderness of heart, that admiration for my Savior, that all-absorbing love to my Lordand that wonderment at the Grace of God toward me which I felt when I was converted!

There may have been another reason why Jesus said, Simon, son of Jonas, do you love Me? Perhaps it was because when Simon had discovered that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God, his Master said to him, Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona; for flesh and blood has not revealed this unto you, but My Father which is in Heaven. By repeating that name, our Lord made Peter remember, in addition to his conversion, the many happy seasons which he had enjoyed in which the Lord had manifested Himself to him as He does not unto the world. We are bound to preach of the things which we have tasted and handled. If, like John, we have been in Patmos, let us not cease to talk of Him that walks among the golden candlesticks. Come down from the mountain to tell of what you have seen there. Be filled with recollections of all the blessed communion you have enjoyed with Christ and then speak about Him to othersthus the joy of the Lord shall be your strength. You will then have no doubt of your call to the ministry, but you will say, that which was from the beginning, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of Life, declare we unto you. We speak what we know and testify what we have seen.

III. In the third place, I must confine myself to giving you a mere outline of THE WORK ITSELF, as our time is flying so fast. What have we to do, then? Feed My sheep. In the English, you have the command three times over, Feed My sheep. What are we to do with the sheep? Feed! Feed! Feed! That seems to be the whole of our business, Feed My sheep. Truth to tell, the middle Greek word properly means shepherd them, guide them, lead them, go before them as a shepherd does. The first and last words are the same, feed. In each of the three sentences there is a minute difference, but twice out of three times in the original, the word is feed. If I mention nothing else but feeding as the pastors duty, it will be the very best lesson I could have given you, even if other valuable duties are cast into the shade. Wherever you are weak, be strong in the pulpit! Give the people a good hearty meal whenever you preach! They will put up with a great many defects if you will only feed them. An Englishman is in a good condition if he is fed. Feed him and he will be all right. But if you dress him and do not feed him, he will not care for the clothes you put on him, however fine they are. You may wash him if you like, but you must feed him! There is an inward, powerful persuader which convinces a man that to be happy and healthy, he must be fed!

Now, Gods people are the hungriest people in the worldthey never seem to be satisfied! If you watch a flock of sheep feeding in a clover field, you will be surprised to see how they will eat. They eat, and eat, and eatand so Gods people are a hungering, craving people. It is written, Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. They, shall be filled. It does not say they shall have a nip and a bite, and then be driven away and, therefore, we are to treat them as God would have them treatedfeed them, feed them to the fullest! Never be afraid of being too free with the food, or of giving them too much sound Doctrine and Gospel food!

Some want to drive the flock, but that will never do. We must feed, not drive. We will lead them, you saythat is very good but do not lead lean sheepfeed and fatten them, and then they will gladly follow! Perhaps you wish to govern them. Well, the middle word does mean govern after the Gospel fashion, but if you somewhat govern, yet give two supplies of feeding for one of ruling! You will be sure to succeed if you keep to the feeding. Blessed be God, you have not to invent a new food for His sheep! It is written, Feed them, but it is not written, invent food for them. God has appointed the proper food for His sheephand that out to themand nothing else. The Pope of Rome, who claims to be the lineal successor of the Apostle of whom we are speaking, attempts to feed in a strange manner. I wonder how many of the sheep are able to feed on his allocutions and other specimens of cursing. He seems to be mainly engaged in uttering maledictions upon the wolves! I see no food for the sheep. How is it that he has founded no Bible Societies in Rome for the circulation of the pure Word of God? One of his predecessors has called the Protestant version, poisonous pastures. Very well, then, why not circulate a pure version? Why not spend a part of Peters pence in distributing the Epistle to the Romans? Why not exhort priests, cardinals and bishops to be instant in season and out of season, preaching the Gospel according to the commission of the Lord? Verily, Peter at this day is crucified head downwards at Rome! The tradition is symbolic of the fact, for the Apostle is placed in a wrong position and exalted to honors which are a crucifixion to him.

Brethren, you have to feed Christs sheep. Our Lord says, Feed! Feed! Feed! He begins with, Feed My lambs. My little lambkins, or young Believersthese need plenty of instruction. Feed My sheep comes next. Feed the middle-aged, the strong, the vigorousthese do not require only feedingthey also need to be directed in their Christian course and to be guided to some field of earnest service for Christtherefore shepherd them. Then in the last, Feed My sheep, you have the gray-headed Believers in Christ. Do not try to govern these, but feed them! They may have far more prudence and they certainly have more experience than you have and, therefore, do not rule them, but remind them of the deep things of God and deal out to them an abundance of consoling Truths. There is that good old man. He is a father in Christ. He knew the Lord 50 years before you were bornhe has some peculiarities and in them you must let him take his own coursebut still feed him. His taste will appreciate solid meat. He knows a field of tender grass when he gets into it. Feed him, then, for his infirmities require it. Feed all classes, my Brothersthat is your main workmind that you not only get good food for the sheep, but feed them with it!

A farmer one day, after he had listened to a simple sermon which was the very opposite of what he generally heard, exclaimed, O Lord, we bless you that the food was put into a low crib today, so that Your sheep could reach it! Some Brothers put the food up so high that the poor sheep cannot possibly feed upon it. I have thought, as I have listened to our eloquent friends, that they imagined that our Lord had said, Feed my giraffes. None but giraffes could reach the food when placed in so lofty a rack! Christ says, Feed My sheepplace the food among them. Put it close to them.

Take care, also, that you feed yourselves. Who rules over freemen should himself be free. We will alter the line into Who feeds Christs sheep should himself feed on Christ,. A preacher who is starved in soul will be likely to starve his hearers. Oh, fatten yourselves on Christ, dear Brothers! Ask to have the promise fulfilled, I will satiate the soul of the priests with fatness, and My people shall be satisfied with My goodness, says the Lord. May the Holy Spirit work this in you!

Having fed them, your work should also comprehend all the rest that a shepherd does for his flock. Neglect none of these things. Go before them! Set them an example, encourage them and direct them in difficulty. Let your voice always be familiar to them. Carry the lamb in your bosom, gently lead those that are in circumstances of pain and peril, care for all the flockbe tender with any that may wander, seek after themand bring them back!

Now what does all this involve? Knowledge. You must feed them with knowledge and understanding. Watchfulness. No shepherd can afford to slumber and at one part of the year he must be up all night, for the lambs are being born. When you have a lambing time on, or, in other words, a blessed revival, you will need to be especially watchful! And, as the wolf comes not only at lambing time, but at all other seasons, you should be always vigilant against him.

One of the chief qualifications of a true pastor, and one that is not very common, is a great deal of patience. Perhaps you say, These people are so sinful, and erring, and foolish. Yes, they are like sheep! And if they were not so, they would not need you or any other shepherd! Your calling would be abolished if all Christs people were strong and able to instruct others. Be very patient with them, as a nurse is with the child committed to her to watch, and love, and teach. What an honor this office puts upon you! To belong to the College of Fishermen with Peter, James and John is a great honor. But the work of the pastor is still nobler. Well did they speak of old of shepherd-kings, for the shepherds business is such as is worthy of a king! Indeed, amid his flock he is the truest of kings. What a line of shepherds can be traced right through the Word of God! Your business is one which the first martyr followed, for Abel was a keeper of sheep. Stand like he in the midst of your flock, ready to sacrifice life, itself, at Gods altar! You are following the business of Jacob, who said to Laban, In the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from my eyes. Yours is the calling of Joseph, who even when exalted to a throne, was still the shepherd and stone of Israel. Whatever your position may be, Brothers, be shepherds! You are following the trade of that noblest of woman born, I mean Moses, who kept the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law, in the desert and there beheld the bush on fire out of which God spoke with him. He who led the people like a flock all through the wilderness was ready like a true shepherd to lay down his life for the flock, even asking to have his name blotted out of Gods Book if by that means they might live! You are following the occupation of the men after Gods own heart! If a man in these days is after Gods heart, let him be a shepherd of the flock. He chose David, also, His servant, and took him from the sheepfolds: from following the ewes great with young He brought him to feed Jacob, His people, and Israel His inheritance.

I hope, my Brothers, that like David, that in your youth you have slain both the lion and the bear, and that if an uncircumcised Philistine comes in your path, you will defy and destroy him in the name of the Lord! You are following the trade of Gods only-begotten Son! The Lord had but one Son and He made a Shepherd of Him! Imitate that Good Shepherd of the sheep who loved them and laid down His life for them. Trust that Great Shepherd of the sheep, whom the God of peace has brought again from the dead through the blood of the Everlasting Covenant and, by-and-by you shall see the Chief Shepherd and shall receive a crown of glory that fades not away.

Never forget that it is Christs sheep that you have to feed! Jesus said, Feed My sheep. Many find fault with the churches of the present day but the easiest work in the world is to find fault! My dear Brothers, bad as I know some of the Churches to be, I know no better people than Gods peopleand with all their faults I still love them! I find my choicest companions and my bosom friends among them! I love the gates of Zion, for

*There my best friends, my kindred dwell,*

*There God my Savior reigns.*   
I always feel, in reference to my own people, that if they can put up with me, I can very well put up with them. They are Christs peopletherefore love them and feel it to be an honor to do anything for those who belong to Jesus!

Much honor lies in the fact that our Lord says to each of us personally, Feed My sheep. I think that I see Him here among us. He of the pierced hands and the marred Countenance, with the crown of thorns about His brow stands in this hall and speaks to us. Or, if you will, with all His glories on, He comes among us! He looks on us all and even on me, my dear Brothersand He says to each of us, Do you see those poor tempted people? They are My sheep. I have loved them from before the foundation of the world. Will you feed them for Me? I have called them out of the world by victorious Grace, will you feed them for Me? I have provided abundant pasture for them, will you feed them for Me? I have bought them with My bloodbehold the memorials of My purchase in My hands and My feet, My head and My sidewill you feed them for Me? I have also loved you, and you love Mewill you feed My sheep for Me? I will feed you, will you feed them? Your bread shall be given you and your water shall be surewill you feed My beloved ones for Me? I have gone to prepare a place for them in My own sweet pastures on the hilltops of Glory. Will you feed them till I come again? I will feed them through you by the Holy Spiritwill you be My instruments?

Do we not all reply, Beloved Master, we think it our highest honor to be privileged thus and, cost us what it may, we will spend our lives in feeding Your sheep? Brothers, say not much by way of a vow, but say much by way of prayer! Lord, help us all henceforth to feed Your sheep! Amen.

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COMFORT FROM CHRISTS OMNISCIENCE   
NO. 2669

A SERMON   
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORDS-DAY, APRIL 8, 1900.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, OCTOBER 15, 1882.

**Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You. John 21:17.**

PETER was somewhat pressed. He felt that he was pushed into a corner and compelled to look into his own heart and divulge its innermost secret. To be asked once, in the presence of his Brothers, whether he loved his Lord more than they did, had a tendency to humiliate him, for he had boastfully declared that, though all men should be offended because of Christ, he would not. But to be asked, next, whether he really loved Christ at all, sank him to the ground with holy shame. And when his Master asked him, the third time, Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me? Peter was grievednot angrythat could not be his condition under such circumstances, nor was he rebellious, but, at last, his heart was effectually touched by his Masters skillful hands and he was grieved, just as true love is always grieved when it is questioned, but most of all grieved when it is questioned again, and again, and again. Now, the enormity of his guilt in denying his Lord has come home to himand the grief which he had caused his gracious Master is now reflected in his own deep and contrite sorrow. Peter was grieved because He said unto him the third time, Do you love Me?

Our Saviors thus pressing him closely was no doubt necessary as a salutary discipline to Peter. It was not unkindness, but the highest form of honest tenderness which led our Lord to act in this way. I suppose that if such a thing had occurred in any of our churches as for some leading member to deny that he knew Christ, and to go the length of denying it with oaths and curses, and to commit that great sin three times in the presence of many witnesses, so that the fact could not possibly be doubted, it would have been absolutely necessary, according to the teaching of the New Testament, to exercise discipline upon such a man and I think that he would have been excluded from church fellowship. The Apostle Paul, writing concerning one who had been guilty of gross sin, says that with such a man we can have no fellowshipno, not so much as to eat with him. And he would have said the same about Peter.

Peter had denied Christ with oaths and curses. It was a most heinous sin and surely the purity of the Church would be put in jeopardythe very existence of the Church as a testimony for Christ would be hazarded by the retaining of such a man in its communion. According to such a rule as that, I suppose we must always judge. But the Lord Jesus Christ possessed attributes which we have not. He was Omniscient and, therefore, He could read Peters heart. It was not necessary for Him to do what it might be lawful and even necessary for us to do. He knew that Peters heart was right, notwithstanding all the evil of which he had been guilty. So, instead of refusing to have fellowship with him, the Savior first eats with himChrist literally bids him come to breakfast. And then He exercises what I may call a sort of church discipline upon him, though I mean that expression in no hard or unkind sense.

Paul wrote to Timothy, Then that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear, and our Lord acted in that manner on this occasion. The six other Brothers, who might fitly be regarded as representing the entire Church, were present, and the Savior began gently, but firmly, to probe Peters heart and to probe it again, and yet again, until He perceived that He had touched him in the most tender possible placeand had drawn from him this last and most solemn declaration of the sincerity of his loveLord, You know all things; You know that I love You. Thrice had he denied his Lord. It was right, therefore, that he should thrice confess his love. And so his Master constrained him to do by His thrice-repeated question, Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?

Let us, dear Friends, as we think over this sad incident of Peters sin, and of our Lords gracious way of restoring him to his former office by a gentle act of discipline, put ourselves through a little heart-searching. It may be that, thanks to the restraining Grace of God, we have not sinned as Peter did, but we have sinned in some other way. We have, all of us, sinned quite enough to make us ask, Lord, do we love You? Instead of waiting for Him to put the question to us, we will ask it of ourselvesDo we really and truly love the Lord? Let us also believe that our Lord, as He stands at this moment among us and walks from pew to pew, bows His head over each one of us, and asks, Do you love Me?

As He does so, let us not evade the question, or play tricks with it. Let not, any one of us, say, I hope I do, or, I am afraid I do not. We either do or we do notand the only answer that will be satisfactory will be, Yes, or, No. If we say, No, it will be so far satisfactory that we are speaking the truth and, possibly, we may be helped to start back from so terrible a truth as thatthat we do not love the Lord Jesus Christand that will be good for us, especially if it shall lead us to yield to Him. A man should always know the consequences of what he is doing, that he may do it with his eyes open and, then, perhaps, he will see the folly and the sin of it and take to a better course. But if, dear Friend, you can answer, Yes, to Christs question, then say it. Slowly, thoughtfully, as in the Presence of the Eternal God, say, Lord, I ask You to bear witness on my account, for Your word is faithful and true. You know all things; You know that I love You. If you can say that, it will be a happy thing for yourself, and it will be a blessed thing for those who are round you, for, now, being assured of your own love to Christ, you will endeavor to win others to share that love, that many of you together may be able to say to Christ

*Yes, we love You, and adore;   
Oh, for Grace to love You more!*

Now, coming to the text, I am going to try to do two thingsfirst, to examine Peters reply. And then, secondly, to invite you to examine yourselves to see whether you can each give the same reply.

I. First, let us EXAMINE PETERS REPLY. Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You.   
I begin with the observation that it is quite clear, from his reply, that Peter was no Unitarian. He had no doubts about the Divinity of Christ, for he said to Him, Lord, You know all things. Now, there is no being conceivable as knowing all things except God! And if it is true that Jesus Christ knows all things, then He possesses that Omniscience which is one of the essential attributes of Deity. I find that, nowadays, there is a sad increase of that pestilent heresy which is practically a return to the old Arianism which sought to rob Christ of His true Glory and reduce Him to the level of a mere man. We, at any rate, are not tainted with that fatal errorGod grant that we never may be! No, He who as Man, is our Brother, is also God, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, whom we worship and adore! And we think and speak of Him as possessing every attribute that is essential to the Deity and, therefore, as possessing this onethat He knows all things. He searches the hearts and tries the reins of the children of men, for He is, assuredly, very God of very God, or, as Paul says, in his Epistle to the Romans, He is over all, God blessed forever.   
My next remark upon our text is that Peters mention of Omniscience in connection with Christ, and in connection with our declaration of love to Him, may be regarded as a fact very full of awe, because the Christ with whom we have to deal knows everything of which we are thinking. He reads all that is in the very core and center of our soul! We are in the Presence of One whose Infinite knowledge takes in, at one glance, the whole of our livespast, present and future.   
My dear Friends, if we remember that fact, it becomes a very solemn thing for us to make an appeal to Him to bear witness that we do really love Him. Peter said to Christ, Lord, You know all things, which in his case meant, Lord You know that when the damsel said to me, You, also, were with Jesus of Galilee, I denied it and said, I know not what you say. And when another maiden said, This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth, I denied with an oath, and said, I do not know the Man. And then, as if to settle the matter once and for all, and make my accusers believe that I could not be one of Your followers, I took to profane swearing and, with oaths and curses, like any son of Belial or lewd fellow of the streets, I did blaspheme and swear.

Yes, the Master had read the inner thoughts of Peter, as well as heard his words. Jesus knew all about how mean and cowardly he was to be afraid of a couple of silly maids and of those who stood with the throng in the High Priests palace. Yet Peter says, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You. As we think of poor Peter and his answer to Christs question, let us remember that Jesus also knows everything that we have done since we were converted as well as beforeall those times in which our thoughts have been impure and unclean, or our desires have wandered beyond the bounds of that which is right and properor our temper has been hasty and hot, or our spirit has been angry and proud. He sees the whole of our life in a single instant! Gods mind does not need a certain space of time to think of one wrong thing which we have done and then, afterwards, to think of anotherit is all present before His eye at the same moment! As when a man rises in a balloon, above London, and sees it all at once spread before him, so God, from His Throne on high, sees our whole life at one glance. Just think of His pure and holy eyes seeing every portion of all your livesyour life at the table, your life in the parlor, your life in the kitchen, your life at your work, your life in the bedchamber, your life everywhereand, as you think of all that being under His immediate gaze, I think it must become a very solemn thing for you to say to Him, Lord, You know all this and yet I dare call You to witness that I do love You notwithstanding all that You have seen. Brothers and Sisters, it is not by any means a trifling matter if our Lord only knows the sin of last week. Will you just think for a minute what it has been? Perhaps some of you may have grievously wronged the Savior during the week. If so, and remembering that He knows it all, can you yet creep up to Him and say, Lord, though I am fully conscious that You know all that has happened, yet, for all that, I do say, You also know that I love You. That is a fact full of awe.   
It is, in the next place, a fact which suggests to us that we should be very sincere, for, if the Lord knows all things, then anything like an attempt to profess a love which we do not possess is utterly foolish, for God will search it through and through and discover its falseness. Then, in addition to being very foolish, it must be very wicked and insulting to the Lord. To tell another human being, whom you do not love, that you love him, would be a most cruel thing to do, and also a most impudent and impertinent thing. But to voluntarily express to God an affection which you do not feel is a very near approach to blasphemy! If it is not blasphemy in words, it certainly is in thought and intent. God knows, Friend, whether, when you joined the Church, you were really a follower of Christ. That night, when you were baptized, He saw all that was done and He knew exactly whether it was to you only an outward form, or whether you were really, in a spiritual sense, dead and buried with Christ. And when this service is over, it will be vain and futile for you to come to the Communion Table and eat the bread, and drink of the cup, unless in your very soul you are trusting Christ and believing in Him unto salvation. If you are determined to deceive someone, deceive your equalplay tricks with your fellow creaturesbut never think to deceive the Most High who sees through you as if you were made of crystal and, at this moment, is watching each beat of your heart and reading not only what is on your tongue, but what is in your mind and will come forth from your lips, by-and-by! Oh, let us never, in our testimony, talk beyond our own line, or boast of virtues which we never possessed! And in our prayers, let us never pray as if we had an experience which we have never felt, but let us say to Jesus, Lord, You know all things. Let us be intensely sincere before Him and it shall be a blessed thing if, being so, we then dare to say, yet You know that I love You.   
Further, dear Friends, this is a fact which not only fills us with awe and suggests to us sincerity, but it is a fact which inspires us with hope. At times, the Grace that is really in us is scarcely visible to ourselves. I have often rejoiced that Gods Omniscience has enabled Him to spy out Grace in me which I could not seeand I feel sure that there must be some of you who sometimes are led to question whether there is any Grace in you or not. You ask, Where is that grain of mustard seed? Fie on you! Fie on you! You ought to have watered it till it grew into a tree! But remember that even when you cannot see the Grace that is in you, God can! When you are brought into such a state of diffidence and despondency that you are half afraid there is not any real love to Christ in your soul at all, yet, if it is there, He can see it, for He put it there, and He values it very highly and has a quick eye to spy it out.   
Lord, You know all things; therefore, I do bless You that You know every place where I have been and You know my secret love passages with You. That is a blessed thought. I have no doubt that when Peter said to Christ, You know all things, he not only remembered his sin, but he recollected his going out and weeping bitterly. And he also remembered that look that Jesus gave himsuch a look as you and I could not give to anyone. I do not know what Peter said to the Lord while he was weeping bitterly, but there must have been many a sigh, many a groan and many a tear in that time of anguish. Peter no doubt got away into a corner, all alone, and he was ready to cover himself with sackcloth and ashes, as he there groaned, wrestled and cried. He did not know what to do with himself and while he was thus praying, perhaps his Lord let in the light of the Gospel and made him recollect some such promise as this, He that covers his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesses and forsakes them shall have mercy. And Peter had some comfortable gleams of hope even amid the darkness and, after a while, he even dared to speak to his Lord, and tell Him how he loved Him.   
And now Peter says, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You, for between You and me there has been some love passages which nobody knows but Yourself and myself. My eyes, all full of tears, have met Your eyes all full of love. And my heart all breaking has touched Your heart which was pierced upon the tree. Your wounded hands have been laid to my sores and Your weeping eyes have looked my tears away. You know, Lord. You know all things; You know that I love You. So, dear Friends, you see that there is something exceedingly sweet about that Omniscience which has read the secret motions of our spirit towards the Lord. Even when they have been so feeble that we could scarcely see them, ourselves, God has seen them!   
And do you not think, dear Friends, that there is something very blessed in Peters plan of bringing in Christs Omniscience to answer his Lords question about his love, inasmuch as it meets our inability to speak? Some of us can speak fast enough, but others have the holy gift of silence which is a great blessing. They cannot say much, but they can look up to their Savior and say, Lord, You know all things; You know that we love You. I have heard of a young Christian woman who was asked to tell before the church the story of her experience, but she could not utter a word, till, just as she was going out of the room, she turned around and said, I cannot speak for Jesus Christ, but I could die for Him. Then the one who was in charge of the meeting, said to her, Come back, dear Sister, you have said quite enough for us to know that you love the Lord.   
No doubt there are many who find it easier to live for Christ than to speak for Himthey have not that gift of speech. Let me remind you who must always be the silent members of the Church, that you may be blessed in your silence by reflecting upon this factGod knows all about what you cannot explain to your fellow Christians. His Omniscience sets aside the necessity of your being able to express your love fluently and you, also, can say, Lord, You know all things; You know that we love You.   
And is not this fact a sweet encouragement to any of you who are persecuted for Christs sake? Our enemies do not burn us now, or stretch us on racks, but they still have many methods of showing their malice. They know how to torture us and some of them are very ingenious in the art of tormenting. I have known some sayungodly parents will say it to their daughterssometimes, wicked men will say it to their gracious wives You know very well that all your idea about being religious is that you want to be different. You go to your place of worship because you like to be different from everybody elsethat is the only reason you have. Possibly, you do not know what to say to them, but you can always say this to your Savior, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You.   
Then, again, if there is some little fault to be found with you in the family, down they come upon you, crying, Ah! that is your Christianity, is it? You are one of those who have professed to be religious and joined the Church! Mark you, Friends, they will do a hundred times worse things, themselves, and think nothing of it, but if they can catch you tripping in the slightest degree, they magnify your little slip into a grievous fall! Now, it would be quite fair for them to do so if you set up to be perfect, but as you never did that, it is an unfair thing to charge you with insincerity because of imperfection. Do not let them have the opportunity of saying even that, if you can help it. Yet, sometimes, when you have given them no occasion for finding fault with you, they will make one invent an accusation for which there is no foundation. Well, if they do so, never mind. Let them say what they will, but lift up your eyes to Heaven, and say, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You.

A man of Godas upright a Christian man as I knowcame to me, not long ago, in great trouble because somebody had said that he had been drunk. He was dreadfully cut up about it, for he had been a teetotaler for many years, and nothing of the kind had occurred. Well, I said, you are only tarred with the same brush as others of us. And then I added, As for me, I have had all manner of false and cruel things said about me! I remember that an influential daily paper said of me, at the time of the Surrey Gardens accident, We would place in the hand of every right-thinking man, a whip to scourge from society such a ranting charlatan. Yet I am still here, notwithstanding all that was said. Moreover, when most abused, I used to go to bed at the same hour as I would have done if they had not slandered meand I believe that I ate my dinner with as hearty an appetite as if everybody had been praising me.   
One gets by degrees into such a condition that it does not matter what people say. And, after all, does it ever really matter what they say? Let them throw mud at you till you are covered with it from head to footthe kind of mud they fling has a tendency to come off when it is dry and to make the garment that it once sullied look even brighter than it was before! Do not fret yourselves about these slanderers and persecutors, but just get alone and say to the Lord, You know all things. They do not and it is a good thing for us that they do not! If they did, then they might find plenty of fault with usand find some real faults in usbut they do not know everything, and they generally hit on the very thing of which we are quite innocent, but, Lord, You know all things; You know that we love You.   
This seems to me to be a blessed text for you to take home and to carry with you wherever you go in the midst of a ribald world, for it will often remind you of a precious Truth of God You know all things; You know that I love You. Of course He does! If you do really love Him, it is His own love in you returning to where it came! And He knows that it is there. If you do love Him, it was He who made you love Him! This plant of paradise never grows of its own accord in the dunghill of our nature neither does it grow anywhere unless it is planted by the hand of God. He who gave you that love watches over it to bring it to perfection. Being a plant of His own right-hand planting, He will water it every moment and, lest any hurt it, He will keep it night and day. Having loved the Lord here on earth, you shall love Him, by-and-by, in Heaven, where, with all the blood-washed company, you shall find it the very Heaven of your Heaven to live forever adoring Him whose eternal love, Sovereign Grace and almighty power have at last made you perfect and brought you Home to love Him even as He loves you, according to your capacity.   
II. There I must leave the text, so far as it especially concerns Peter, and come now to speak briefly upon the second part of the subject, which is, TO INVITE YOU TO EXAMINE YOURSELVES TO SEE WHETHER YOU CAN EACH GIVE THE SAME REPLYLord, You know all things; You know that I love You.   
First, some say the same as Peter did, though they ought not to do so. They say that they love Christ. Yes, oh, yes, we love Him! Let us talk to one of these glib speakers for a few moments. When did you begin to love the Lord? Oh, III always loved Him. When were you converted and renewed in heart? Oh, I do not know that I ever was. Stop, then, Friend, before you say again that you love the Lord. Do you truly trust the Savior? Are you resting the whole weight of your soul upon Him? If you say, No, then you do not love Him, for the only love which Christ will accept is born of faith. Love is the flower which grows out of the root of faith.   
Perhaps you think that you are very good and that you will probably get to Heaven by your goodness. If that is your notion, then I am sure you do not really love Christ. You admire your beautiful selfyou have been so good and so excellent that you do not want to be saved by the sinners Savior! You want a special, particular Savior for youa saintSavior, not a sinners Savior. Then I know you do not love the Christ of the Biblethe Christ of Calvary. You may love a sort of antichrist of your own inventing, but you do not love the Christ of God. Let me ask you another question. You say that you love Christ, well, then, for what do you thank Christ? Well, I believe that there are some imperfections in me, and that Christ makes up for them. Do you? Then, in your esteem, He is only a makeweight, just to compensate for your deficiencies. His seamless robe of righteousness is to be torn to patch up your old rags! How many of you want to make Christ a kind of extra horse to drag the load up the hill? That is all you think of Himbut do you imagine that Christ and your poor team are to be joined together like that? Is it to be partly self-salvation and partly salvation by Christ? If that is your idea, you insult the Saviorit may be unwittingly, but I am sure you cannot really love Him.   
I have heard of a very excellent manone of the holiest and best of menwho, when he lay dying, said, Lord, when I estimate my works, I have to remember that Your estimate is so very different from mine that I think it best to leave this business altogetherand only trust my Savior. I have heard of another who said, when he was dying, that he began to sort out his works and some he thought were good, and some were bad. But after he had sorted them a little, he felt that the good ones were so very like the bad ones, when he came to really look closely into them, that he pitched the whole lot overboard and just trusted himself to Christ. That was a very wise and sensible thing to do! And I am sure that no man among you loves Christ unless he is trusting to Him only, and to Him wholly.   
What is your view of Christ, dear Friend! Is He your Master as well as your Savior? This is a question which I want to put very pointedly, for I heard a person ask, the other day, Is Baptism essential to salvation? Listen! This man means to do only that which is essential for his own salvationthat is all. To get into Heaven is all that he cares about, so he asks, concerning one thing or another, Is it essential to salvation? A soldier in her Majestys army says, when an order is given to him, Is this essential? Shall I be shot if I do not obey it? Drum him out of the regiment, for what is the good of him? I look upon Christ as my Lord and Master and if He bids me do something, though there may be in it nothing whatever to my profit, I am bound to do it because He is my Master and Lord! Is it essential to salvation? is a sneaks question! I dare not use a milder term. I am often ashamed to answer those who make such an enquiry. The message to you is, Whatever He says to you, do it. Did you come into the world merely that you might get saved? Is that all? Oh, poor, mean wretch! The Lord save you from being so selfish! How can you even get to Heaven when your sole ambition is, somehow or other, to save your own skin? To get inside the pearly gates and enjoy yourself that is your notion of Heaven! But that is the very thing from which you have to be saved! I hope you will come to have quite another idea. I live not to save myself, but to glorify Him who has saved me. I work not because I hope to escape from Hell by what I do, or to get to Heaven by what I do, but because Christ has saved me and now, out of gratitude to Him, if there is anything He wishes me to do, I do it without a question, saying to Him   
*Have You a lamb in all Your flock   
I would disdain to feed?   
Have You a foe, before whose face   
I fear Your cause to plead?*   
Get rid of selfishness, or else you cannot truthfully say that you love Christ! You are only loving yourself and baptizing selfishness with the name of Christianity.   
But, next, I think that there are some persons who ought to say what Peter did and yet they are afraid to do so. Some of the most beautiful, tender, loving, genuine, true-hearted people in the world are, nevertheless, so timid and so jealous of themselvesand they have such brokenness of spiritthat they dare not say that they love Christ, though I am sure that, if any people in the world do love Him, it is these poor people! There are many who are so hard and harsh towards these dear tender, broken-hearted ones, that I like to cheer them all I can. I wish that they would grow stronger. I wish that they would become bolder. I wish they were braver, but, then, I know that among these who dare not say publicly that they love Christ, are many who love Him vastly more than some who can talk very glibly about it.   
I have told you before of the two friends who were shut up in prison and one said to the other, Oh, I do dread to-morrow morning! I am afraid that when I come to feel the fire, I shall recant. I know that I never was good at bearing pain and I have heard that the pain of being burnt to death is very dreadful. So the other turned round upon him and said, I am ashamed of you talking like that! You know very well it is for Christs cause that we are going to die. I am sure that I shall not have any such fearI could bear a thousand deaths for Christ! I feel such courage in my spirit that I do not dread the pain and I am ashamed that you do. They both came to be chained to the stake and the boastful man recanted and saved his skin. But the poor timid man stood bravely in the midst of the fire and burned to deathand kept saying, Lord, help me! Lord, help me!   
I believe that it often happens that those who are so trembling in themselves, are, nevertheless, sound to the core, while many of your high-flying gentlemen who get perfect in about three minutes and then begin to preach to those of us who have been, perhaps, 30 years in Christ, and tell us that we ought to be as perfect as they arewhich we were before they were bornwill be blown away like thistledown by the first wind that comes! And that the solid, weighty lumps of goldthese humble broken-hearted saintswill endure even to the end. Still, dear Brother, where are you? Mr. Despondency, I mean. I want you to say, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You. Where are you, Mrs. Much-Afraid? I think I have read about you in

The Pilgrims Progress. Mrs. Much-Afraid, Mr. Despondency, Mr. Feeble-Mind and Mr. Ready-to-Halt, who had the crutches, and went limping all his life, yet, once upon a time, when Mr. Great-Heart cut off Giant Despairs head and brought it to the pilgrims, they said that they would all dance, and Ready-to-Halt danced on his crutches and said that he hoped, by-andby, to be where he should not be encumbered with them.   
Come along, all you poor tried souls, let this be a time of rejoicing with you! Say in your spirit, if not in words, Yes, Lord, we cannot hold back any longer! We must say itYou know all things; You know that we love You. And when you have once said it, keep on saying it, my dear Brothers and Sisters, and the Lord keep you up to that blessed mark till, when the trumpet sounds in the morning and you wake up in the endless day, you shall say, Yes, Lord, I did love You and I love You now, and I will love You forever. God grant that we may all say that, for Christs sake! Amen.   
Before we go, let us sing this one verse   
*I will love You in life, I will love You in death, And praise You as long as You lend me breath. And say, when the death-dew lies cold on my brow, If ever I loved You, my Jesus, tis now.*

HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK711, 788, 639, 804. EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: **ISAIAH 26:1-14.**

Verse 1. In that day. Or, rather, as we may read it now, In this day 1-3. Shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open you the gates, that the righteous nation which keeps the truth may enter in. You

will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You: because he trusts in You. Here is the song which we are to sing in this Gospel day. The theme of it is God and the city which He has built, and which He has given to us to be our heritage forever. We have a strong city. Yes, Beloved, a very strong one, for although the devil has exercised all his ingenuity for these thousands of years, he has not been able to destroy it. He has thrown in the bombshell of persecution. He has tried to undermine it with his subtlety and cunning of false doctrine, but he has not yet been able to do anything effectually against the strong city. We have a strong city and she is just as strong, now, after all the desperate attacks that have been made upon her walls, as ever she was. Against her, the gates of Hell cannot prevail!   
The Church of Christ is never in danger. We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. After noticing the security of the city, the Prophet bids us open the gates, that the righteous nation which keeps the truth may enter in. It is the Gospel ministers business to seek to open the gates. It is the Christians business, in some sense, to open the gates. Yes, we should all of us be endeavoring, if possible, to open the gates, that the righteous nationthat is, the righteous peoplemay enter into the Church. But, after all, the Lord Jesus Christ is the great Opener of the gates! He opens the gates to let His people in. And, mark you, they do not all come in at one gate. The command is, Open you the gates. Some come in by means of one Doctrine, and some by means of another. We are not all converted by the same agency. Some come in at the Sunday school gate. Others come in at the gate which is kept by pious parents. Many come in at the gate of the preached Word. But all the gates should be openOpen you the gates, that the righteous nation which keeps the truth may enter in.

The Prophet next describes the peaceableness of this city. The gates are open, but no enemy ever enters in, for he says to the Lord, You will keep Him in peacepeace, as the original has it, in double peace. You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You. There is nothing like staying the mind on God. If you stay the mind on anything else, you cannot have perfect peace, for that something else may fail you. If you trust in horses and in chariots, horses may tire, and the wheels of the chariots may break. But he who trusts in the Lord shall dwell in perfect peace. Let the earth be all in arms abroad, the Believer dwells in perfect peace, because He trusts in You.

4, 5. Trust you in the Lord forever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength: for He brings down them that dwell on high. Some of you dwell so much on high that you do not believe the Doctrine of Original Depravity. You are very good by nature, according to your own ideas. Well, remember this declaration of the ProphetHe brings down them that dwell on high. Others of you boast of your free will capacity and you think you have power to do anything outside the assistance of the Holy Spirit. Ah, but, He brings down them that dwell on high. Others of you do not know what a doubt or a fear is, but you wrap yourselves up complacently in your self-sufficiency and say, We are secure! Ah, but, He brings down them that dwell on high.

5 *.* The lofty city, He lays it low. No one can lay Gods city low, but God can lay the lofty city low.   
5-7. He lays it low, even to the ground; He brings it even to the dust. The foot shall tread it down, even the feet of the poor, and the steps of the needy. The way of the just is uprightness: You, most upright, do weigh the path of the just. God weighs the path of the just in scales. We read elsewhere that God weighs the spirits and weighs our actions. Here we are told that He weighs the path of the just. Those words, which were used by the Prophet when he went to Hezekiah and said, What have they seen in your house? would serve for a very striking text. But it is still more important to consider what God has seen in our house and in our hearts, for God weighs our actions. He weighs our private thoughts and our public deeds. He weighs the path of the just. But, according to the Prophet, the way of the just is uprightness, even after it is weighed! Notwithstanding all the sin that is mixed with it, in the main it is uprightness ascending towards God.   
8, 9. Yes, in the way of Your judgments, O LORD, have we waited for You; the desire of our soul is to Your name, and to the remembrance of You. With my soul have I desired You in the night; yes, with my spirit within me will I seek You early: for when Your judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. Alas, it is often the case that when Gods judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness for a little whileand then forget it. All too often they are like the child who merely learns his lesson by rote and repeats it under the fear of the rodand then forgets all about it on the morrow. They learn righteousness, but, soon, the effect of the warning is all gone and then God sends fresh judgments upon the earth to teach the inhabitants further lessons.   
10-12. Let favor be showed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the LORD. LORD, when Your hand is lifted up, they will not see: but they shall see, and be ashamed for their envy at the people; yes, the fire of your enemies shall devour them. LORD, You will ordain peace for us: for You also have worked all our works in us. Troubled saint, what a precious passage this is for you! Poor, tempest-tossed soul, what a glorious utterance! Lord, You will ordain peace for us. There shall come an ordinance from God that His people shall have peace! You will ordain peace for us: for You also have worked all our works in usso they must be good works, but those works which God did not work in us are bad ones.   
13, 14. O LORD our God, other lords beside You have had dominion over us: but by You only will we make mention of Your name. They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise. Many of us can look back to the time when we made idols of business and of worldly things. But now these lords are dead and they shall not live againthey are buried out of our sightand they shall not rise from their graves.   
14. Therefore have You visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish. And a blessed thing it is when the memory of our sins perish and we have no desire to be enslaved by them again!

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PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #3524 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

DO I LOVE THE LORD OR NOT?   
NO. 3524

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, AUGUST 10, 1916.   
DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.   
Peter was grieved because He said unto him the third time, Do you love Me? John 21:17.

THIS is a pointed question which demands a personal answer and should, therefore, stir up full and frequent self-examination. Do you love Me? It is a probing question that is likely to excite much grief when pressed home to the sensitive, tender-hearted disciple, even as Peter was grieved because the Lord said unto him the third time, Do you love Me? Yet it is a pleasing and profitable question to as many of us as can give a like solemn and satisfactory response to that of Simon Peter, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You.

I. IT IS VERY NECESSARY THAT ALL DISCIPLES, EVEN THE MOST PRIVILEGED, THE MOST TALENTED AND THE MOST FAMOUS, SHOULD OFTEN BE ASKED THE QUESTIONHEAR IT IN THEIR SOULS AND FEEL ITS THRILLING INTENSITYSIMON, SON OF JONAS, DO YOU LOVE ME?

It must have been momentous, indeed, or the Savior would not have repeated it to Peter three times at one interview. He tarried on earth but 40 days after His Resurrection. The opportunities for conferences, therefore, with His disciples would be few. On what subjects, then, should He speak to them but those which appeared to Him of the weightiest import? Of the times or the seasons that must presently transpire, He refrains to divulge a secret. With the fulfillment of ancient predictions that prompted the curiosity of the Jew, or the solution of metaphysical problems that harassed the minds of Gentile philosophers, He did not meddle. I neither find Him interpreting obscure prophecy, nor expounding mystic Doctrinebut instead, thereof, I find Him inculcating personal piety! The question He propounds is of such vital importance that all other questions may be set aside till this one question is positively settled, Do you love Me?

Hence, Beloved, I infer that it is of infinitely more consequence for me to know that I love Christ than it is to know the meaning of the little horn, or the ten toes, or the four great beasts! All Scripture is profitable to those who have Grace to profit by it, but would you both save yourself and those who hear you, you must know Him and love Him to whom Patriarchs, Prophets and Apostles all bear witness that there is salvation in none other, and no other name given under Heaven whereby we must be saved! You may whet your appetite for logic, but you cannot, with your heart, believe unto righteousness while you occupy your thoughts, your tongues, or your pens wrangling about Calvinism and Arminianism, sublapsarianism and supra-lapsarianism, or any of the endless controversies of the schoolmen and sectarians! Do you love Me? that is the moot point! Can you give an affirmative answer? Will your conscience, your life, your God, attest the verity of your love to Him? Then, though you are no doctor of divinity, though you cannot decipher the niceties of systematic theology, though you are unable to rebut one in a thousand of the subtleties of the adversary, yet you have an unction from the Holy One! Your love approves you, your faith has saved you and He whom your soul loves will keep you for time and for eternityyou are blessed! To my mind, I say, the gravity of the question is palpable from the time at which it was put. During the few days of our risen Lords sojourn, He would not have given it such distinct prominence had it not been, in Peters case, the evidence of his repentance, his restoration and the full recognition he received.

But, Brothers and Sisters, what question can more closely appeal to ourselves, to each one of us? Love is one of the most vital of the Christian Graces. If faith is the eye of the soul, without which we cannot see our Lord savingly, surely love is the very heart of the soul and there is no spiritual life if love is absent! I will not say that love is the first Grace, for faith first discovers that Christ loves us, and then we love Him because He first loved us. Love may be second in order, but it is not second in importance. I may say of faith and love, that these are like two roes that are twinsor rather of faith, and hope, and love, that these are three Divine sisters who mutually support one anotherthe health of one betokening the vigor of all, or the decline in one the weakness of all. Do you love Me? Why, the question means, Are you a Christian? Are you a disciple? Are you saved? For if any man love wife, or child, or house more than Christ, he is not worthy of Him. Christ must have from every one of His disciples, the hearts warmest affection! And where that is not freely accorded, depend upon it, there is no true faith and, consequently, no salvation, no spiritual life. On your answer to that question hangs your present state. Do you love Jesus? If the answer is, No, then you are still in the gall of bitterness and the bonds of iniquity! But if the truthful answer of your soul is, You know all things; You know that I love You, then, weak as you are, you are a saved souland with all your mourning and trembling, your doubts and misgivings, the Spirit of God bears witness with your spirit that you are born from above! The sincerity of your love to Christ shows more plainly than anything, the verity of your relation to Him!

Oh, what searching of heart this question demands! Do not flatter yourselves with any false confidence. Many persons have been deceived upon this matter. Alas, they are partial judges who sit in judgment of themselvesfor every defect they have an excusethey find mitigating circumstances to whitewash their basest crimes. No marvel to me, but infinite pity for them that they choose their own delusions and become the dupes of their own infatuation! Their feelings, enhanced by the music of a hymn, or impassioned by the fervor of a sermon, they mistake for an inspiration of faith and loveand when the emotions pass off, as they quickly dothey grow loud in their professions. At first their own hearts were deceived. At length they practice deception on others. O you church members! I beseech you, do not conclude that you are members of the invisible Church because you are members of the visible Church! Though your names may be inscribed on the roll of the faithful, here, do not be too sure that they are written in the Lambs Book of Life! Never take your position before God for granted. Do not shrink from a rigid scrutiny as those who never dare ask the question! Do not disparage selfexamination like those who dare to think it is the devil who sets them to the task when he would beset them with legal terrors! Believe me, Satan is too fond of lulling you into presumption to aid or abet in awakening you to make sure of your condition! There is a gross infatuation which is the counterfeit of faith in God. Its credulous victims believe a lie and they fondly cling to it like limpets to a rock. But sound Believers are not afraid of vigilant self-examinationthey are prepared to endure an even more severe testthey say, Search me, God, and try me. It is your hollow dissemblers who resent all questionings and take umbrage at any suspicions. The man who knows that he has pure gold to sell is not afraid of the chemicals with which the goldsmith tests it, nor even of the crucible into which he may cast it. Not so the impostor who hawks a baser metalhe entreats you to be satisfied with his warranty, though it is as worthless as his wares! Search yourselves! Examine yourselves, whether you are in the faith! Prove yourselves! Know you not that Jesus Christ is in you, except you are reprobates? By the cries of souls who, concerning faith, have made shipwreck, while they dreamed they were sailing gloriously into harborI beseech you make sure work for eternity and take care that your answer to the question, Do you love Me, is well weighed, truthful and sincerelest you should crash on the same reefs and be lost. Forever lost!

And, dear Friends, I am sure the more closely we examine ourselves, the more need for self-examination we shall discover. Can you not recollect much in the tone of your thoughts and the temper of your actions that might well lead you to suspect that you do not love Christ? If this is not so with all of you, I know it is so with me. Mournfully must I confess that when I look back upon my past service for my Master, I could wish to blot it out with tears of penitent compunction, so far as my share in it has been concerned! Wherein He has used me, let Him have all the glory, for to Him it belongs. His be the praise! For me there remains shame and confusion of face because of the coldness of my heart, the feebleness of my faith, the presumption with which I have trusted to my own understanding and the resistance I have offered to the motions of the Holy Spirit. Alas for the carnality of our minds, the worldliness of our projects and our forgetfulness of God in times of ease! It is strange to me if we have not all cause to mourn over delinquencies like these. And if it is so with those of us who still can honestly say that we know we love our Lord, what scruples, what perilous scruples might some of you entertain whose conduct, character and the tenor of your lives may well raise a graver question!

You imagine that you love Christ. Have you fed His lambs? Have you fed His sheep? Have you given that proof which our Savior imperatively requires of you? What are you doing for Him now? It is poor love that spends itself in professions and never comes to any practical result! Let this enquiry, then, pass round

*What have I done for Him who died   
To save my precious soul?*

Alas, then, if instead of having, like the beloved Persis, labored much in the Lord (Rom 16:12), might we not, some of us, suspect ourselves of having so acted as rather to dishonor His name? Are you not tenderly conscious that Christian people full often lend their sanction by a loose conversation and lax habits, to the sins which the world has allowed and applauded? Jerusalem becomes a Comforter to Sodom when those who call themselves people of God conform to the usages of societyand of such society as is corrupt to the core! They say, Ah, you see, there is no harm in it, for the saints, themselves, indulge in it! They are of the same mind as we are! They make a great pretence, but to no great purpose, for they do as we do. God forgive us if we have opened the mouths of the Lords enemies after this fashion! Surely such failures and such offenses make it necessary for us to ask whether we love the Lord or not! And though we may hesitate to answer the question, it is well to raise it, lest, closing our eyes in carnal security, we should go on to destruction! Let us put the question to ourselves again, and again, and again, for the question will not mar our faith, nor even mar our comfort, as long as we are able to fall back upon Peters reply, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You. And now, presuming that we are, all of us, convinced that the question is expedient and becoming, let me remark that

II. IT IS A QUESTION WHICH, WHEN RAISED, OFTEN CAUSES GRIEF.   
Peter was grieved, but the Lord Jesus Christ never grieved one of His disciples heedlessly. This goes again to prove the need of the question. He was rather for comforting, cheering and blessing them. He inflicted no needless pain. He shielded them from bootless anxiety. Yet Peter was grieved. Now why should you and I be grieved when the enquiry turns upon our sincerity? You know that if we do not canvass the matter, ourselves, our foes will be prompt enough to suspect us, especially if we are in a public position. The clearer your character, the keener the assault. Satanand he is the accuser of the brethrensaid, Does Job serve God for nothing? Have You not set a hedge about him? The devils taunting question has become a proverb with the profane! What worse can they say of the Christian minister than this, Is he zealous for nothing? Has he not a motive? Is there not selfishness in the background? Base insinuations will, I suppose, be freely uttered about you whatever may be your position in the world. Of the tradesman who fears the Lord, they will say, Of course, he makes it pay. As for the merchant who consecrates his wealth for the love of Christ, they ask, Do not you see that he is seeking notoriety? Is it not a cheap way of getting up a name? We are sure to have the question raised. Sometimes it sorely grieves us

because of our pride.   
We do not like to have our feelings chafed in such a manner. I cannot help thinking there was some sin in Peters grief. He was grieved as one who felt himself aggrievedIs it not too bad to ask me three times! Why should the Lord thus distress me? Surely the blessed Master might have put more confidence in me than to press a question which stings like a reproach. Yet what a poor simpleton he was to think so! How much harm comes from answering in a hurry? When our profession is canvassed, we ought not to be angry. Did we know our own hearts, we would keenly feel the accusations it would be reasonable to lay against usand the poor defense that conscience could make! When my enemies are finding fault with me, and forging lies to injure me, I sometimes think to myself that though I can exonerate myself from their charges, there are other faults of which they are not cognizant that humble me before God beyond their utmost surmise! Their conspiracies cannot explore the secret of my confessions when I lay the imaginations of my heart before Him against whom only I have sinned. How dare we whisper into the ears of our fellow men the wish, the whim the like, or the hate that haunts ones breast, or anything of the multitude of vanities that float along the rapid current of ones mind! What would they think of us who do not know how rightly to think of themselves? Surely pride is put out of countenance, for the worst opinions our enemies can form of us are probably as good as we dare to entertain of ourselves, taking the evil of our hearts into consideration! The heart is a very sink of evil! If we have not perceived it, we have yet to discover it. The voice Ezekiel heard speaks to usSon of man, I show you greater abominations than these. Little charm you can find, because little cheer you can get out of these sermons which wither your vain conceit! But they are not the less profitable. You prefer the small still voice of a kindly promise, or the rich tones of a glorious prophecyand then you congratulate yourselves upon the happy Sabbath you have spent! I am not quite so sure that your emotions are the truest test of your interests. Is that always the most wholesome food your children get which has most sugar in it? Do they never get surfeited with luxury till they need medicine? Is comfort always the choicest blessing we can crave? Alas, we form so high an estimate of our estate, that to question whether we love the Lord Jesus Christ or not, lowers our dignity, annoys, vexes and sadly grieves us!   
Not that pride is the only incentive. Shame crouches full often in the same obscure corner where pride nestles. Both alike are disturbed by a gleam of daylight. Peter must have felt, when he heard the question for the third time, Do you love Me? as if he could hear the cock grow again. He recollected the scene and circumstance of the dark betrayal hour. Does not the Lord remember my fear and my cowardice, the lies I told, the cursing and swearing I gave way to, and the paltry excuse that edged me on when the taunt of a poor silly maid was too much for an Apostle? Ah, she annoyed me, she irritated me, I was conquered. I became a traitor, a blasphemer, almost an apostate. The tears, the bitter tears he wept on the morning of the crucifixion when Jesus looked upon him, welled up again from his heart into his eyes as the risen Lord looked into his face and made him conscious of how richly he deserved to be asked the question, Do you love Me? Yes, and like bitter memories may cover some of us with shame! Bitter as gall must the recollections be to some of you who have so backslidden as to publicly dishonor Christ. I do not want to say an unkind thing to you, but it is good, sometimes, to keep a wound open. The Bible tells of some sins God has freely forgiven and yet fully recorded. It is no marvel if we cannot forgive ourselves for having in any way brought dishonor and reproach upon the Cross of Christ. The grief is healthy. We sing   
*What anguish does that question stir,   
If you will also go?*   
But what deeper anguish may that other question stir, Do you love Me? Our cheeks may well mantle with a crimson blush when we remember what grave cause for suspicion we have given to our Lord!   
Not that wounded pride and conscious shame are the only sensations. Perhaps fear distressed him. Peter may have thought to himself, Why does my Lord ask me three times? It may be I am deluded and that I do not love Him. Before his fall he would have said, Lord, You know that I love You. How can You ask me? Have I not proved it? Did I not step down into the sea at Your beck and call? I will go through fire and water for You. But Simon, son of Jonas, had learned to be more sober and less loud in his protests. He had been tried. He had attempted to stand alone and he had proved his palpable weakness. He looks dubious, he seems hesitant, he feels scrupulous. He is alive to the fact that the Lord knows him better than he knows himself. Hence the diffidence with which he asserts his confidenceYou know all things; You know that I love You. A burned child is afraid of fire and a scalded child shudders at hot water. So a precocious Peter feels the peril of presumption. His timidity troubles him. He hesitates to give his word of honor. Distrust of self distresses him. He dreams his former downfall over and over again. The hypocrisy of his own heart horrifies him! What can he say? He answers the Accuser, or rather he appeals to the Appellant, You know all things; You know that I love You. His previous guilt causes his present grief. Should like horrors haunt you, Friends, give no place to grievous misgivings! Do not encourage them. Go quickly to the Cross! Behold the crown of thorns! Fly at once, poor guilty Sinner, to the great Atonement which was made by the Lord upon the tree and let that fear be ended once and for all!   
Not that it was all pride, or all shame, or all fearI think there was also love in it. Peter did love his Master and, therefore, he did not like to have a doubt or a dark suspicion cast on his sincerity. Love is a very jealous emotion and keenly sensitive when questioned by those on whom it intensely dotes. Why, Peter seems to say, my Lord and Master, what would I not do for You? Though I was so false and so faithless in that hour of trial, yet I know that I am true in the very bottom of my heart. My fall has not been a total one, nor a final one. There is in my soul, my Lord, a true, deep and honest love to YouI know there is. He could not bear to have that love questioned. What would the wife say if her husband should ask, Do you love me? And if, after she had given a fond assurance of affection, he should repeat the question solemnly, and with an earnest and a penetrating lookespecially if she had done much to grieve him and to make him suspect herI ask, what would she say? Oh, I can understand how her love at last would make her heart feel as if it must burst! With what earnestness she would exclaim, Oh, my husband, if you could see my heart, you would see your name written there! It is hard, even in the conjugal relationship, to have a suspicion cast upon your affection! Because of the tenacity of his love, Peter was grieved. Had he not loved Christ so ardently, he would not have felt the grief so acutely. Had he been a hypocrite, he might have fired with anger, but he would not have grieved after this fashion. I tell some of our dear young people who get into trouble and say they are afraid that they are hypocrites, that I never yet knew a hypocrite who said he was afraid he was one, and those who say that they are afraid they do not love Jesus and are timid and tremblingthough I do not commend them for their tremblingyet I have a much better hope of some of them than I have of others who are loud in their declarations and vehement in asserting, Though all men forsake You, yet will not I. One is comforted to hear the confidence with which some of our young Brothers and Sisters can speak. Their warm expressions of love refresh us. Yet we cannot help feeling that they have got to be tried. Perhaps they will not be less confident in Christ when trial comes. They may be less confident in themselves and it is just possible that, though their voices may be quite as sweet, they will yet not be quite so loud. Years of trial and temptation and especially any experience of backslidingwill pluck some of the feathers out of us and make us feel humble before the Lord. This grief of Peter, what a complex passion it was!   
III. BUT IF IT HAS GRIEVED US TO HEAR THIS QUESTION, IT WILL BE VERY SWEET IF WE CAN TRULY GIVE THE ANSWER, YOU KNOW ALL THINGS; YOU KNOW THAT I LOVE YOU.   
Surely the preacher need not say any more if the hearers would just say what is in their own hearts. Let the question go round. With all your imperfections and infirmities, your wanderings and backslidings, can you nevertheless declare that you do love the Lord? Can you join in that verse   
If you can say that you love Christ from your very heart, how happy you ought to be! That love of yours is only a drop from the fountain of His own everlasting love. It is a proof that He loved you before He made the earth. It is also a pledge that He always will love you when the heavens and the earth shall pass away. I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Jesus hand is on you, or else your heart would not be on Him and that hand will never relax its grip! He, Himself, has said it, I give unto My sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of My hand. Now let your heart say, What shall I do? What shall I render to Him whom I love? And the Saviors answer to you will be, If you love Me, keep My commandments. You know His commandments, as to the holiness of your life, the nonconformity of your spirit to the world, your private communion with Him. You know His commandment concerning your profession of your faith by Baptism. You know His commandment, This do you in remembrance of Me, as often as you break bread and take the cup of fellowship. You know His commandment, Feed My lambs; feed My sheep. Remember thisIf you love Me, keep My commandments.

As for you who do not love my Lord and Master, what can I do but pray for you, that His great love may now overcome your ignorance and aversionuntil, having first been loved of Him, you love Him in return? Jesus Christ would have you trust Him! Faith is the first Grace you need. Oh, come and depend upon Him who did hang upon the Cross! When you rest in Him, your soul is saved and, being saved, it shall become your constant joy to love Him who loved you and gave Himself for you! Amen.

**You know I love You, dearest Lord, But, oh! I long to soar   
Far from the sphere of earthly joy, And learn to love You more?**

**EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: JOHN 21.**

Verses 1-3. After these things Jesus showed Himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias; and on this wise showed He, Himself. There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called the Twin, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee and two other of His disciples. Simon Peter said unto them, I am going fishing. They said to him, We are also going with you. They could not do better. Idleness is the most injurious condition in which a man can be found. A preacher is much better occupied fishing than doing nothing!

3. They went forth, and immediately entered into a ship; and that night they caught nothing. Even Apostles may fish and catch nothing. Do not be discouraged, you who, when you are endeavoring to fish for souls, for many a day catch nothing.

4. But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. Yet He was their old familiar Friend! Was it their unbelief? Let us hope not. Was it that a remarkable change had passed over the Masterthat, after His Resurrection from the dead, there was a glory about Him quite unusual, such as they had never seen before, except when they were with Him on the holy mount? Perhaps so.

5. Then Jesus said unto them, Children, have you any food? Just the kind of language you would expect from Himto call them children, and to inquire even about their temporal needs. For evermore the Lord had an eye to the temporal condition of the 12, as well as to their spiritual. Have you any food?

5, 6. They answered Him, No. And He said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and you will find some. They cast, therefore, and now they were not able to draw it in for the multitude of fishes. Christ knows where fishes are. He knows where you are, then, my Friend, though you do not, perhaps, know where you are yourself! You have got out of your own latitude, mentally and spiritually. You could not describe yourself, but Christ knows every minnow in the brook, and every fish in the lake, and knows where you are. Christ can bring fish where He wants them to be. He brought them into the net. Christ can bring souls into His net tonight. At His will, their will shall sweetly yield itself up, and they shall come into the net!

7. Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved said unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his fishers coat, (for he was naked). He was in his undress.

7, 8. And did cast himself into the sea. And the other disciples came in the little boat, (for they were not far from land, but as it were, two hundred cubits), dragging the net with fish. It is all very well of Peter to be in such a hurry, but somebody must keep hold of the net. It is not always the most venturesome that is the most practical. We are glad to have some splendidly rash brethren, but we are equally glad that the rest are not quite so rash and are a little more prudent.

9. As soon, then, as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread. Christ had provided this. We are to catch fish as if we should have nothing to eat if we did not, but yet we are to depend upon Him as if we never caught a fish ourselves. Do everything as if you had to do everythingbut trust in God as if you had to do nothing! The blending of these two will make a wise Believer. They saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread.

10. Jesus said unto them, Bring some of the fish which you have just caught. I do not need it in order to entertain you, for I already have fish here. Still, bring it. Nothing is given in vain. Use it.

11, 12. Simon Peter went up and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken. And Jesus said unto them, Come and dine. And none of the disciples dared ask Him, Who are You? Knowing that it was the Lord. Inwardly conscious that it was Christs habit to speak as He had spoken. Nobody could have caught His manner, and besides, what secret instinct enabled them to discern their meek and lowly Lord, even through the Glory which surrounded Him?

13, 14. Jesus then came and took the bread, and gave it to them and likewise the fish. This is now the third time that Jesus showed Himself to His disciples after He was raised from the dead. Count the visits of Christ. This is now the third time. We ought to remember Christs visits to us so well and so thoroughly that we could tell how many times He has been with us. This is now the third time.

15-17. So when they had dined, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, Do you love Me more than these? He said unto Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said unto him, Feed My lambs. He said to him, again, the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, Do you love Me? He said unto Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said unto him, feed My sheep. He said unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, Do you love Me? Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, Do you love Me? And he said to Him, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You. Jesus said unto him, Feed My sheep. Nobody can feed Christs sheep unless they love Him, and when we love Christ, the most practical way of showing it is by taking care of His lambsHis little onesand of all those that are HisHis sheep. Love will teach us how to do it. Love will sign our commission and ordain us to the work. The Master went on to say

18. Verily, verily, I say unto you, When you were young, you girded yourself, and walked where you wished; but when you shall be old, they shall stretch forth your hands, and another shall gird you, and carry you where you would not. Peter, you will have to be girded with an iron chain and taken off to prisonand taken off to a cross to die!

19. This spoke He, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said unto him, Follow Me. That is your life business. Follow Me, even though you end, as I did, on a cross. Follow Me. I am a Shepherd. You must be a shepherd, too, and as the sheep follow you, so do you follow Me.

20, 21. Then Peter, turning about, seeing the disciple whom Jesus loved following; who also leaned on His breast at supper, and said, Lord, who is he that betrays You? Peter seeing him, said to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? What about this man?

22. Jesus said unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to you? Follow Me. We ought not to be curious about the future of anybody. We must not be inquiring into what is not revealed! And what the Savior said on this occasion was misunderstoodif the words of Jesus, even when He spoke themwere misunderstood so as to become the foundation of a false tradition, you may judge how little value can ever be put upon tradition in the Church!

23. Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, he shall not die, but if I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to you? The Word of God is to be trustednot traditionfor in the handing of a message from mouth to mouth, it generally varies. It sometimes loses its very essential spirit, and sometimes may be made to say the very reverse of what was said. Stick to the Word of Godand leave the traditions alone!

24, 25. This is the disciple which testifies of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true. And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written, every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen. Such a full lifeso pregnant with meaningso active, and all its activity so intensely real and spiritual, that to write a life of Christ is an impossibility! And though there have been many very admirable lives of Christ in our time, I recommend you to keep to one which is the best of them alland that one is written by four Inspired authorsthe Gospels according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are the best life of Christ out of sight! All others must be but mere helps to the understanding of these four.

Adapted from the C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software.   
PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL USE THIS SERMON TO BRING MANY TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST. Sermon #1539 Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit 1

THE DISCIPLE WHOM JESUS LOVED   
NO. 1539

**DELIVERED ON LORDS-DAY MORNING, MAY 23, 1880, BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

**The disciple whom Jesus loved; who also   
leaned on His breast at supper.   
John 21:20.**

Our Lord loved all His discipleshaving loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end. He said to all the Apostles, I call you not servants; for the servant knows not what his Lord does: but I have called you Friends; for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you. And yet within that circle of love there was an innermost place in which the beloved John was favored to dwell. Upon the mountain of the Saviors love there was a knoll a little higher than the rest of the mountain and there John was made to stand, nearest to his Lord. Let us not, because John was specially loved, think less, even in the slightest degree, of the love which Jesus Christ gave forth to the rest of His chosen. I take it, Brothers and Sisters, that those who display an extraordinary love to one are all the more capable of great affection to many and, therefore, because Jesus loved John most, I have an enhanced estimate of His love to the other disciples.

It is not for a moment to be supposed that any one suffered from His supreme friendship for John. John was raised and they were not lowered, but raised with him. All Believers are the dear objects of the Saviors choice, the purchase of His blood, His portion and inheritance, the jewels of His crown. If, in Johns case, one is greater in love than another, yet all are eminently great and, therefore, if it should so happen that you dare not hope to reach the height of John and cannot look to be distinguished above others as the disciple whom Jesus loved, yet be very thankful to be among the brotherhood who can each say, He loved me, and gave Himself for me. If you have not attained unto the first three, be happy to belong to the host of those who follow the Son of David.

It is a matchless privilege and an unspeakable honor to enjoy the love of Jesus, even if you march among the rank and file of the armies of love. Our Lords love to each of us has in it heights immeasurable and depths unfathomable. It passes knowledge. Yet would I not utter this word of good cheer to make you remain at ease in a low state of Gracefar rather would I excite you to rise to the highest point of lovefor if already the Lord has loved you with an everlasting love, if already He has chosen you and called you and kept you and instructed you and forgiven you and manifested Himself to you, why should you not hope that another step or two may yet be taken and that you may climb to the very highest eminence? Why should you not, before long, be styled like Daniel, a man greatly beloved? Or like John, that disciple whom Jesus loved?

To be loved as John was, with a special love, is an innermost form of that same Grace with which all Believers have been favored. You must not imagine, when I try to exhibit some of the lovable traits of Johns character, that I would have you infer that the love of Christ went forth towards John in any other way than according to the Law of Grace, for whatever there was that was lovable in John it was worked in him by the Grace of God. Under the Law of Works John would have been as surely condemned as any of us and there was nothing legally deserving in John. Grace made him to differ, just as truly as Grace separates the vilest sinner from among the ungodly. Though it is granted that there were certain natural characteristics which made him amiable, yet God is the creator of all that is estimable in man and it was not till the natural had been, by Grace, transformed and transfigured into the spiritual that these things became the subject of the complacency of Christ Jesus.

Brethren, we do not speak of John today as if he were loved because of his works, or stood higher in the heart of Christ on the ground of personal merit, of which John might glory. He, like all the rest of his brethren, was loved of Jesus because Jesus is all love and chose to set His heart upon him. Our Lord exercised a sovereignty of love and chose John for His own names sake. And yet, at the same time, there was created in John much that was a fit object for the love of Christ. The love of Jesus was shed abroad in Johns heart and thus John himself was made fragrant with delightful odors. It was all of Gracethe supposition of anything else is out of place! I look upon this special form of our Lords love as one of those best gifts which we are bid earnestly to covetbut most emphatically a gift and not a wage or a purchasable commodity.

Love is not bought. It never talks of price or claim. Its atmosphere is free favor. If a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would be utterly despised. The most supreme love is to be sought for, then, after the analogy of Grace, as gracious men seek greater Grace and not as legalists chaffer and bargain for reward and desert. If ever we reach the upper chambers of Loves palace, Love, herself must lead us up the stairs! Yes, and be to our willing feet the staircase itself. O for the help of the Holy Spirit while we speak upon such a theme!

I. And now, to come nearer to the text, first, dear Friends, LET US CONSIDER THE NAME ITSELFThe disciple whom Jesus loved. Our first observation upon it isit is a name which John gives to himself. I think he repeats it five times. No other writer calls John, the disciple whom Jesus loved. John has thus surnamed himself and all the early writers recognize him under that title. Do not suspect him, however, of egotism. It is one of the instances in which egotism is quite out of the question. Naturally, you and I would be rather slow to take such a title, even if we felt it belonged to us because we would be jealous for our reputation and be afraid of being thought presumptuous. But with a sweet naiveté which makes him quite forget himself, John took the name which he knew most accurately described him, whether others quibbled at it or not.

So far from there being any pride in it, it just shows the simplicity of his spirit, the openness, the transparency of his character and his complete self-forgetfulness. Knowing it to be the truth, he does not hesitate to say it. He was sure that Jesus loved him better than others and, though he marveled at it more than anyone else, yet he so rejoiced in the fact that he could not help publishing it, whatever the consequences might be. Often there is a deal more pride in not witnessing to what God has done for us than in speaking of it. Everything depends upon the spirit which moves us. I have heard a Brother with the deepest humility speak with full assurance of the Divine love and while some have thought that he was presumptuous, I have felt within myself that his positive testimony was perfectly consistent with the deepest humility and that it was his simple modesty which made the man so utterly forget himself as to run the risk of being thought forward and egotistical.

He was thinking of how he should glorify God and the appearance of glorifying himself did not alarm him, for he had forgotten himself in his Master. I wish we could bear to be laughed at as proud for our Lords sake. We shall never have Johns name till, like John, we dare wear it without a blush. It is a name in which John hides himself. He is very wary of mentioning John. He speaks of another disciple, and, that other disciple, and then, of that disciple whom Jesus loved. These are the names by which he would travel through his own Gospel, incognito. We find him out, however, for the disguise is too thin! But still, he intends to conceal himself behind his Savior. He wears his Masters love as a veil, though it turns out to be a veil of light.

He might have called himself, if he had chosen, that disciple who beheld visions of God, but he prefers to speak of love rather than of prophecy. In the early Church we find writings concerning him in which he is named, that disciple who leaned on Jesus bosom, and this he mentions in our text. He might have been called, that disciple who wrote one of the gospels, or, that disciple who knew more of the very heart of Christ than any other, but he gives the preference to love. He is not that disciple who did anything, but who received love from Jesusand he is not that disciple who loved Jesus, but whom Jesus loved. John is the man in the silver mask, but we know the man and his communications and we hear him say, We have known and believed the love that God has to us. God is love and he that dwells in love dwells in God and God in Him.

The name before us is a name in which John felt himself most at home. No other title would so well describe him. His own name, John, means the gift of God and he was a precious gift from God the Father to His suffering Son and a great comfort to the Savior during the years of His abode among men. Jesus doubtless counted him to be His Jonathan, His John, His God-gift and He treasured him as such. But John does not so much think of his being of any service to his Lord as of that which His Lord had been to him. He calls himself, that disciple whom Jesus loved because he recognized the delightful obligation which springs out of great love and wished to always be under its royal influence. He looked on Jesus love as the source and root of everything about himself which was gracious and commendable. If he had any courage, if he had any faithfulness, if he had any depth of knowledge it was because Jesus had loved these things into him.

All the sweet flowers which bloomed in the garden of his heart were planted there by the hand of Christs love, so when he called himself, that disciple whom Jesus loved, he felt that he had gone to the root and bottom of the matter and explained the main reason of his being what he was. This endearing name was very precious to him because it evoked the sunniest memories of all his life. Those short years in which he had been with Jesus must have been looked upon by him in his old age with great transport, as the crown and glory of his earthly existence. I do not wonder that he saw Christ, again, in Patmos, after having seen Him once in Palestine as he did see Himfor such sights are very apt to repeat themselves. Such sights, I say, for Johns view of his Lord was no ordinary one.

There is at times an echo to sights as well as to sounds and he who saw the Lord with Johns eagle eyeswith his deep-seated inner eyeswas the likeliest man in all the world to see Him over again in vision as he did see Him amid the rocks of the Aegean Sea. All the memories of the best part of his life were awakened by the name which he wore and, by its power, he often renewed that intimate communion with the living Christ which had lived on during the horrors of the Crucifixion and lasted to the end of his days. That charming name set all the bells of his soul a-ringingdoes it not sound right musical? The disciple whom Jesus loved.

That name was a powerful spring of action to him as long as he lived. How could he be false to Him who had loved him so? How could he refuse to bear witness to the Gospel of the Savior who had loved him so? What leagues of journeying could be too long for the feet of that disciple whom Jesus loved? What mobs of cruel men could cow the heart of the disciple whom Jesus loved? What form of banishment or death could dismay him whom Jesus loved? No, in the power of that name John becomes bold and faithful and he serves his loving Friend with all his heart. I say, then, that this title must have been very dear to John because he felt himself most at home in it. The secret springs of his nature were touched by it. He felt his whole self, heart, soul, mind, memory all comprehended within the compass of the words, The disciple whom Jesus loved.

It was a name which was never disputed. You do not find anyone complaining of John for thus describing himself. General consent awarded him the title. His brethren did quarrel with him a little when his fond mother, Salome, wanted thrones for her two sons on the right and the left hand of the Messiah, but the love of Jesus to John never caused any ill will among the Brethren, nor did John take any undue advantage of it. I believe that the Apostles tacitly acknowledged that their Lord was perfectly right in His choice. There was something about John which made his brethren love him and, therefore, they did not marvel that their Lord should make him His most intimate friend. The truly loved one of God generally receives the love of his brethren. Yes, and even the love of the ungodly, after a sort, for when a mans ways please the Lord, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him.

While David walked with God all Israel loved him and even Saul was forced to cry, You are more righteous than I. John was so loving that he gained love everywhere. We may well be eager after this choice blessing since it, alone, of all known treasures, excites no envy among the brethren, but rather makes all the godly rejoice. Inasmuch as saints wish to be greatly loved, themselves, they are glad when they meet with those who have obtained that blessing. If we would smell of myrrh and aloes and cassia, we are glad to meet with those whose garments are already fragrant. You never find John lecturing his brethren, or acting as a lord over Gods heritagebut in all gentleness and lowliness he justified the affection which our Lord manifested toward him.

II. Thus much, then, with regard to the name. Secondly, LET US LOOK AT THE CHARACTER WHICH LAY BELOW IT. I can only give a miniature of John. It is quite impossible, in the few moments of a sermon, to draw a full-length portrait and, indeed, I am not artist enough to accomplish it if I should attempt the task! In the character of John we see much that is admirable. First, let us look at his personality as an individual. His was a large and warm heart. Perhaps his main force lies in the intensity of his nature. He is not vehement, but deep and strong. Whatever he did, he did right heartily. He was simple-mindeda man in whom there was no guile. There was no division in his nature. He was one and indivisible in all that he felt or did.

He did not entertain questions. He was not critical. He was not apt to spy out faults in others and, as to difficulties, mental or otherwise, he seems to have been happily without them. Having pondered and come to a conclusion, his whole nature moved in solid phalanx with forceful march. Whichever way he went, he went altogether and right resolutely. Some men go two ways, or they tack about, or they go towards their objective in an indirect manner. But John steams straight forward with the fires blazing and the engine working at full speed. His whole soul was engaged in his Lords cause, for he was a deep thinker, a silent student and then a forceful actor. He was not impetuous with the haste of Peter, but yet he was determined and thorough-going and all on fire with zeal.

He was exceedingly livid in his beliefs and believed to the utmost what he had learned of his Lord. Read his Epistle through and see how many times he says we know, we know, we know. There are no, ifs, about him. He is a deep and strong Believer. His heart gives an unfeigned assent and consent. There was an intense warmth about John. He loved his Lord, he loved his Brethren. He loved with a large heart, for he had a grand nature. He loved constantly and he loved in such a way as to be practically courageous for his Master, for he was a bold man, a true son of thunder. He was ready to go to the front if he was bound to do so, but in a quiet way and not with a rush and a noisehis is not the dash of a waterfall, but the still flow of a deep river.

Putting all together that we know about his personality, we look upon him as a man who was the reverse of your cold, calculating, slow-moving son of diffidence. You know the sort of persons I meanvery good people in their way, but by no means fascinating or much to be imitated. He was quite the reverse of those dried, juiceless Brethren who have no human nature in themmen who are somewhere about perfectfor they have not life enough to sin. They do no wrong, or rather they do nothing at all. I know a few of those delightful people, sharp critics of others and faultless themselves with this one exceptionthey are heartless. John was a hearty mana man of brain, but of soul, tooa soul which went out to the tips of his fingers. He was a man who was permeated with intense but quiet lifein a word, a man to be loved. His life was not that of an ice-plant, but of the red rose. He carried summer in his countenance, energy in his manner, steady force in all his movements. He was like that other John of whom he was once a disciple, a burning and a shining light. There was warmth as well as light in him. He was intense, sincere and unselfish by nature and a fullness of Divine Grace came upon him and sanctified these virtues.

Let us now view him in his relation to his Lord. The name he takes to himself is, the disciple whom Jesus loved. Jesus loved him as a disciple. What sort of disciples do masters love? You that have ever been teachers of youth know that if teachers had their choice, certain persons would be selected before others. If we teach, we love teachable people! Such was John. He was a man quick to learn. He was not like Thomas who was slow, argumentative, cautious. But having once assured himself that he had a true Teacher, he gave himself right up to Jesus and was willing to receive what He had to reveal. He was a disciple of a very keen eye, seeing into the soul of his Instructors teaching. His emblem in the early church was the eaglethe eagle which soars, but also the eagle which sees from afar.

John saw the spiritual meaning of types and emblems. He did not stop at the outward symbols, as some of the disciples did, but his penetrating soul read into the depths of the Truth of God. You can see this both in his Gospel and in his Epistles. He is a spiritually-minded man. He stays not in the letter, but he dives beneath the surface. He pierces through the shell and reaches the inner teaching. His first master was John the Baptist and he was so good a disciple that he was the first to leave his teacher! You hint that this did not show that he was a good disciple? Indeed it did, for it was the Baptists aim to send his followers to Jesus! The Baptist said, Behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world and John was so good a follower of the forerunner that he immediately followed the Lord, Himself, to whom the forerunner introduced him.

This he did without a violent jerkhis progress was natural and even. Paul came to Jesus with a great start and twist, when he was put upon the lines on the road to Damascus. But John glided gently to the Baptist and then from the Baptist to Jesus. He was not obstinate, neither was he weak, but he was teachable and so he made steady progress in his learning. Such a disciple is one that a teacher is sure to love and John was, therefore, the disciple whom Jesus loved. He was full of faith to accept what he was taught. He believed it and he believed it really and thoroughly. He did not believe, as some people do, with the fingertips of their understanding, but he gripped the Truth of God with both hands, laid it up in his heart and allowed it to flow from that center and saturate his whole being.

He was a Believer in his inmost soul, both when he saw the blood and water at the Cross and the folded grave clothes at the sepulcherhe saw and believed. His faith worked in him a strong and enduring love, for faith works by love. He believed in his Master in a sweetly familiar way, for there is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear. Such a trustful, confiding disciple is sure to be loved of his teacher. John had great receptiveness. He drank in what he was taught. He was like Gideons fleece, ready to be saturated with the dew of Heaven. His whole nature absorbed the Truth as it is in Jesus. He was not a great talkerI think he was almost a silent disciple. So little did he say that we have only one saying of his recorded in the Gospels. Why, says one, I remember two or three. Do you remind me that he asked that he might sit on the right hand of Christ? I have not forgotten that request, but I answer that his mother, Salome, spoke on that occasion.

Again, you tell me that at the supper he asked, Lord, who is it? Yes, but it was Peter who put that question into his mouth. The only utterance that I remember in the Gospel which was altogether Johns is that at the sea of Tiberius, when he said to Peter, It is the Lord. This was a very significant little speecha recognition of his Lord such as the quick eyes of love are sure to make. He who lived nearest to Jesus could best discern Him as He stood upon the shore. It is the Lord, is the gladsome cry of love, overjoyed at the sight of its Beloved! It might have served John as his mottoIt is the Lord. O that we were able amid darkness and tossing to discern the Savior and rejoice in His Presence! Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see Godand such was the beloved disciple!

One great trait in Johns character as a disciple was his intense love for his Teacher. He not only received the Truth of God, but he received the Master Himself. I take it that the leaning of a mans faults often betrays his heart more than his virtues. It may seem a strange observation to make, but it is true. A true heart may as well be seen in its weakness as in its excellence. What were the weak points about John, as some would say? On one occasion he was intolerant. Certain persons were casting out devils and he forbade them because they followed not with the disciples. Now, that intolerance, mistaken as it was, grew out of love to his Lord! He was afraid that these interlopers might set up as rivals to his Lord and he wanted them to come under the rule of his beloved Jesus.

At another time the Samaritans would not receive them and he asked his Master if he might call down fire from Heaven on them. One does not commend him, but still it was love to Jesus which made him indignant at their ungenerous conduct to their best Friend. He felt so indignant that men should not entertain the Savior who had come into the world to bless them, that he would even call fire from Heavenit showed his burning love for Jesus. Even when his mother asked that he and the brother might sit upon thrones at the right hand and the left hand of Christ, it was a deep and thoughtful faith in Jesus which suggested it. His idea of honor and glory was bound up with Jesus! If he gives way to ambition it is an ambition to reign with the despised Galilean. He does not want a throne unless it is at his Lords side.

Moreover, what faith there was in that request! I am not going to justify it, but I am going to say something to moderate your condemnation. Our Lord was going up to Jerusalem to be spit upon and to be put to death and yet John so thoroughly threw himself into his Lords career that he would gladly share in the fortune of his great Caesar, assured that it must end in His enthronement. He is content, he says, to be baptized with His baptism and to drink of His cuphe only asks to share with Jesus in all things. As a good writer says, it reminds one of the courage of the Roman who, when Rome was in the hands of the enemy, purchased a house within the walls. John heroically asks for a throne at the side of One who was about to die on the Cross, for he feels sure that He will triumph!

When the cause and kingdom of Christ seemed ready to expire, yet so whole-hearted was John in his faith in God and his love to his beloved Lord that his highest ambition was still to be with Jesus and take shares with Him in all that He would do and be. So, you see, all through John loved his Lord with all his heart and, therefore, Jesus Christ loved him. Or let me turn it the other waythe Lord loved John and, therefore, John loved the Lord Jesus. It is Johns own explanation of itWe love Him because He first loved us. I must ask you to look at John, once more, as an instructed person. He was a beloved disciple and remained a disciple, but he grew to know more and more and, in that capacity I would say of him that doubtless our Lord Jesus loved him because of the tenderness which was produced by Grace out of his natural warmth.

How tender he was to Peter, after that Apostles grievous fall, for early in the morning John goes with him to the sepulcher. He is the man who restored the backslider. He was so tender that our Lord did not say to John, Feed My lambs, for He knew he would be sure to do it. And He did not even say to him, Feed My sheep, as He did to PeterHe knew that John would do so from the instincts of his loving nature. He was a man who, under the tutorship of Christ, grew, moreover, to be very spiritual and very deep. The words he uses in his Epistles are mostly monosyllables, but what mighty meanings they contain! If we may compare one Inspired writer with another, I should say that no other Evangelist is at all comparable to John in depth.

The other evangelists give us Christs miracles and certain of His sermons, but His profound discourses and His matchless prayer are reserved for that disciple whom Jesus loved. Where the deep things of God are concerned, there is John, with sublime simplicity of utterance, declaring unto us the things which he has tasted and handled. Of all the disciples John was most Christ-like. Like will gravitate to like. Jesus loved John for what He saw of Himself in himcreated by His Grace. Thus I think you will see that, without supposing John to have possessed any merit, there were points in his personal character, in his character as a disciple and in his character as an educated, spiritual man which justified our Savior in making him the object of His most intimate affection.

III. Very briefly, in the third place, LET US REVIEW THE LIFE WHICH GREW OUT OF THIS EXTRAORDINARY LOVE OF CHRIST. What was the life of John? First, it was a life of intimate communion. John was wherever Christ was. Other disciples are away, but Peter and James and John are present. When all the disciples sit at the table, even Peter is not nearest to the Lord Jesus, but John leans his head upon His bosom. Their communion was very near and dear. Jesus and John were David and Jonathan over again. If you are a man greatly beloved you will live in Jesus, your fellowship will be with Him from day to day.

Johns was a life of special instruction. He was taught things which no others knew, for they could not bear them. At the latter end of his life he was favored with visions such as even Paul, himself, though not a whit behind the chief of the Apostles, had never seen. Because of the greatness of his Lords love to him, He showed him future things and lifted up the veil so that he might see the Kingdom and the Glory. They shall see most who love most. They shall be taught most who most completely give up their hearts to the doctrine. John, therefore, became a man in whose life there was amazing depth. If he did not say much as a rule while his Lord was with him, he was taking it all in for future use. He lived an inner life. He was a son of thunder and could boldly thunder out the Truth of God because, as a thundercloud is charged with electricity, so had he gathered up the mysterious force of his Lords life, love and truth.

When he did break out, there was a voice like the voice of God in him a deep, mysterious, overwhelming power of God was about him. What a flash of lightning is the Apocalypse! What awful thunders sleep within the vials and the trumpets! His was a life of Divine power because of the great fire which burned within. His was not the flash of crackling thorns beneath a pot, but the glow of coals in a furnace when the whole mass is molten into a white heat. John is the ruby among the twelvehe shines with a warm brilliance reflecting the love which Jesus lavished on him. And his life was one of special usefulness. He was entrusted with choice commissions involving high honor. The Lord gave him to do a work of the most tender and delicate kind which, I am afraid, He could not commit to some of us.

As the Redeemer hung upon the tree dying, He saw His mother standing in the throng and He did not commit her to Peter, but to John. Peter would have been glad of the commission, I am sure, and so would Thomas and so would Jamesbut the Lord said to John, Behold your mother! And to His mother, Woman, behold your son! And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home. So modest, so retiringI was going to say, so gentlemanlywas John that he was the man to take charge of a broken-hearted mother. Said I wrong that he was a true gentleman? Divide the word and surely he was the gentlest of men. John has a delicate air and considerate manner, necessary to the care of an honored woman. Peter is good, but he is rough. Thomas is kind, but cold. John is tender and affectionate.

When you love Jesus much, He will trust His mother to youI mean His Churchand the poorest people in it, such as widows and orphans and poor ministers. He will trust them to you because He loves you much. He will not put everybody into that office. Some of His people are very hard and stony of heart and more fit to be tax-collectors than distributors of alms. They would make capital officers in an army, but not nurses in a hospital. If you love Jesus much, you shall have many delicate offices to perform which shall be to you proofs of your Lords trust in you and renewed tokens of His love. Johns life was, moreover, one of extraordinary heavenliness. They call him John the Divine and he was so. His eagle wings bore him aloft into the heavenly places and there he beheld the Glory of the Lord.

Whether in Jerusalem or in Antioch, in Ephesus or in Patmos, his conversation was in Heaven! The Lords Day found him in the spirit, waiting for Him that comes with cloudsso waiting that He who is the Alpha and Omega hastened to reveal Himself to him. It was the love of his Lord which had thus prepared him for visions of the Glory. Had not that love so enkindled his own love as to hold him faithfully at the Cross all through the agony, he might never have been able to gaze upon the Truth of God. He had lovingly followed Him who had been pointed out to Him as the Lamb of God and, therefore, he was made meet to see Him as the Lamb in the midst of the Throneadored of angels and redeemed saints, whose harps and viols are engrossed with His praise! O that we, too, could be freed from the grossness of earth and borne aloft into the purer atmosphere of spiritual and heavenly things!

IV. We close by saying, very briefly, LET US LEARN LESSONS FOR OURSELVES from that disciple whom Jesus loved. May the Holy Spirit speak them to our inmost hearts. First, I speak to those of you who are still young. If you wish to be the disciple whom Jesus loved begin soon. I suppose that John was between 20 and 25 when he was converted. At any rate, he was quite a young man. All the representations of him which have been handed down to us, though I attach no great value to them, yet unite in the fact of his youth. Youthful piety has the most profitable opportunity of becoming eminent piety.

If you begin, soon, to walk with Christ, you will improve your pace and the habit will grow upon you. He who is only made a Christian in the last few years of his life will scarcely reach to the first and highest degree for lack of time and from the hampering influence of old habits. But you who begin soon are planted in good soil with a sunny aspect and should come to maturity. Soldiers who enlist early under the banner of our David have hope of becoming veterans and attaining to the first three.

Next, if we would be like John in being loved by Christ, let us give our hearts best thoughts to spiritual things. Brothers and Sisters, do not stop in the outward ordinances but plunge into their inner sense. Never allow your soul, on the Lords Day for instance, to be thankful and happy merely because you have been to the place of worship. Ask yourself, Did I worship? Did my soul commune with God? In the use of the two ordinances of Baptism and the Lords Supper, content not yourself with the shell, but seek to get at the kernel of their inner meaning. Rest not unless the Spirit of God, Himself, dwells within you. Remember that the letter killsit is the spirit that gives life. The Lord Jesus Christ takes no delight in those who are fond of broad phylacteries and multiplied sacraments and holy performances and superstitious observances. The Father seeks those to worship Him who worship Him in spirit and in truth. Be spiritual and you are among those who are likely to be men greatly beloved.

Next to that, cherish a holy warmth. Do not repress your emotions and freeze your souls. You know the class of people who are gifted with refrigerating power. When you shake hands with them, you would think that you had hold of a fisha chill goes to your very soul! Listen to them sing. No, you cannot hear them! Sit in the next pew and you will never hear the gentle hiss or mutter which they call singing. Out in their shops they could be heard a quarter of a mile off, but if they pray in the Prayer Meeting, you must strain your ears. They do all Christian service as if they were working by the day for a bad master and at scanty wages. But when they get into the world they work by the piece as if for dear life. Such people cannot be affectionate.

They never encourage a young convert, for they are afraid that their weighty commendation might exalt him above measure. A little encouragement would help the struggling youth mightily, but they have none to offer. They calculate and reckon and move prudently and anything like a brave trust in God they set down as rashness and folly. God grant us plenty of rashness, I say, for what men think imprudence is about the grandest thing under Heaven! Enthusiasm is a feeling which these refrigerators do not indulge. Their chant is, As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen! Anything like a dash for Christ and a rush for souls they do not understand. Mark this, if you follow such people home, you will find that they have little joy, themselves, and make very little joy for others. They are never quite certain that they are saved and if they are not sure of it we may readily guess that other people are not.

They spend, in anxious thought, the strength which ought to have gone in hearty love. They were born at the north pole and live amid perpetual frostall the furs of Hudsons Bay could not warm them. About them you see none of the rich tropical flowers which bedeck the heart upon which the Sun of Righteousness shines with perpendicular beams. These chilly mortals have never traversed the sunny regions of heavenly love where the spices of holy delight load all the air and apples of gold are everywhere within the reach of glowing hearts. The Lord bring us there! Jesus Christ loves warm people! He never shines on an iceberg except to melt it. His own life is so full of love that its holy fire kindles the same flame in others and thus He has fellowship with those whose hearts burn within them.

The fitness for love is love. To enjoy the love of Jesus we must overflow with love. Pray for earnest, eager, intense affection. Lay your hearts among the coals of juniper till they melt and glow. Dear Brothers and Sisters, if you want to be the man or woman that Jesus loves, cultivate strong affection and let your nature be tender and kind. One who is habitually cross and frequently angry cannot walk with God. A person of a quick, hot temper who never tries to check it, or in whom there is a malicious remembrance of injuries, like a fire smoldering amidst the embers, cannot be the companion and friend of Jesus whose spirit is of an opposite character! A pitiful, compassionate, unselfish, generous heart is that which our Lord approves. Forgive your fellow as if you never had anything to forgive. When Brethren injure you, hope that they have made a mistake, or else feel that if they knew you better they would treat you worse! Be of such a mind towards them that you will neither give nor take offense. Be willing to lay down, not only your comfort, but even your life for the Brethren! Live in the joy of others, even as saints do in Heaven. Love others so as to forget your own sorrows. So shall you become a man greatly beloved.

Last of all, may the Spirit of God help you to rise to heavenliness. Do not be miserable money-grubbers, or sordid earthworms. Do not be pleasure hunters and novelty seekers. Do not set your affection upon these childrens toys which will be so soon broken. Be you no more children, but men of God! Oh to find your joy in Christ, your wealth in Christ, your honor in Christ, your everything in Christthis is peace. To be in the world but not to be of it. To linger here as if you were an angel sent from Heaven to dwell, for a while, among the sons of men, to tell them of Heaven and point them the waythis is to abide in Christs love.

To be always ready to fly, to stand on tiptoe waiting for the heavenward call, to expect to hear the trumpet ring out its clarion note, the trumpet of the coming of your Lordthis is to have fellowship with Christ! Sit loose, I pray you, by this world, but get a tighter grip of the world to comeso shall Jesus love be shed abroad within you. Throw your anchor upward into the placid sea of Divine Love and not like the seamen, downward, into a troubled ocean. Anchor yourselves to the eternal Throne and never be divided, even in thought, from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. May it be my privilege and yours, Brothers and Sisters, to lean these heads of ours on Jesus bosom till the day breaks and the shadows flee away. Amen and Amen.

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FOLLOWING CHRIST   
NO. 3057

A SERMON   
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 1907.

**DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,**   
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON, ON LORDS-DAY EVENING, MAY 11, 1873.

*What is that to you? You follow Me.   
John 21:22.*

[Other sermons by Mr. Spurgeon on FOLLOWING CHRIST are as follows#403, Volume 7 THE BROKEN COLUMN; #1530, Volume 26FOLLOWING THE RISEN CHRIST; #2273, Volume 38FICKLE FOLLOWERS and #2324, Volume 39 THE FOLLOWERS OF THE LAMB   
Read/download the entire sermons, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.]

ONLY a moment or two before, our Lord had said to Peter, Follow Me, yet He found it necessary to repeat that command from which it is clear that the Lord Jesus, Himself, might be here and might speak to us in the most plain terms and yet His words might not make the impression upon our hearts that we sometimes think they would. Yet even though Jesus Christ Himself should speak to us, we should not feel the full force of His words unless the Spirit of God applied them to our hearts. This reflection may teach us not to indulge in idle regrets that Jesus is not here now in bodily Presence, or to say, I wish that I had been living on the earth in Christs day. The fact is, if the Holy Spirit shall bless the word that is spoken to you by the humblest Christian alive, it may be quite as useful to your soul as though the Master, Himself, had been here and the Truth of God had fallen upon your ears direct from His own lips!

Peters mind seems to have been distracted from the command to follow the Savior by a very simple incident. Turning about, it is said, he saw John followingand the sight of his fellow disciple awakened his curiosity and he put to the Master the speculative inquiry as to Johns future, Lord, and what shall this man do? To which the Master replied, in the words of my text, What is that to you? You follow Me. This teaches us that the presence of even the holiest man may sometimes call us off from following our Master. It is certain that thousands of serious impressions have been lost through idle chit-chat after sermons. The Sabbaths services lose many of their benefits to us through the common habit of talking on the way home from a place of worship about anything and everything rather than the one subject that ought to engross our minds. Some of the best people in the world may, involuntarily, turn our minds from that line of thought in which the Savior would have them run, so let us constantly pray, O Lord, keep our eyes, keep our ears, keep our hearts from wandering away from You for, if not, we shall soon forget the sound even of Your own voice and the impressions which may have been made upon us!

I think we have greater reason to ask the Lord to impress more deeply upon us the Truth of God we have received than to ask Him to give us more Truth, for what we already know might suffice us if we did but know it better. And if we kept in mind the things which we have already heard, we might almost be satisfied even if we heard no more. One sermon a Sunday, really cut into the soul as with the point of a diamond, would be of more real, permanent value to us than two sermons which we hear, but speedily forget because we happen to meet an acquaintance on our way home, or have our thoughts diverted by some other simple means.

Dear Friends, do not let our thoughts be thus diverted at this time, but let us come to the principal point and keep to it. And that point is thisthat the main business of our life is to follow Jesus. And, secondly, to effect this, we had better avoid all idle speculationsand indeed, questions not altogether idle had better be left alone that we may keep to the one main business of our life. The reasons for doing this are very clearand with them I shall close my discourse.

I. First, then, THE MAIN BUSINESS OF OUR LIFE IS TO FOLLOW THE LORD.   
I can truly say to every one of you that the main thing you have to do in this world is first to follow Christ until you find Him as your Savior or, in other words, the first thing for you to do is to look to Him, to trust in Him. We live in vain if we do not live unto God and if we do not live by faith in Jesus Christ, the one and only Savior. Live in vain, did I say? It were better for you, dear Hearers, and for me, that we had never been born if we should live and die without faith in Jesus Christ! You may neglect your business, you may neglect what you willbut do not neglect your souls. First, first, FIRSTbeyond and before everything elsemust be the matter of your own personal salvation! On board a vessel that is going down, a man may forget his luggage and many precious treasures that he has with him. It is for his life that he is concerned. Even Satan spoke the truth for once when he said, Skin for skin, yes, all that a man has will he give for his life. Let it be so with you in the highest sense. Make your soul your first care, for what shall it profit you if you gain the whole world and lose your own soul? So the first thing for you to do is to follow Christ for life, for salvationlooking to Him by faith, in obedience to the Apostolic command, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved.

Procrastination often comes in to cause the solemnities of the Gospel to seem less serious. There is plenty of time, we say. We are quite young as yet and we have many years in which to think of these things. Where the sere and yellow leaf is beginning to fall, there is something else to put away thoughts of eternity. There is another daughter to be married, so a few more hundreds of pounds must be saved up for her. And then when you have retired to your country house, you will think about making your peace with Godas if it were nothing to you that you are condemned already because you have not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God, and as if it were a matter of no importance to be an enemy of God and to be unsaved for 50 or 60 years of sinas if it were a small thing to have the leprosy of sin still eating into your immortal spirits! Why, if there were no Hell, sin would be, to a right-minded man, such a vile thing that he would long to escape from it and dread it as he now dreads the pains of Hell. Oh, that all here had even half such a sense as Christ had of the solemnity of the things of which I am speaking! That would drive us to our knees and we would not dare to go out of this house unsavedand all through this building we would hear the cry that arose on the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem, Men and brethren, what shall we do?   
Keeping more closely to my text, I have to say that after we are saved, the main business of our life is still to follow Christ. When sin is pardoned and the eternal safety of the soul is ensured, the next thing is to seek the purity of the soul and to secure a character that shall be worth having throughout eternity. There is no character which is worth having which is not fashioned according to the Character of Christ. He is absolute perfection! In Him is nothing redundant and from Him nothing is omitted which ought to be there. To be perfect, we must be like Jesus. Looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith, we are to conquer this sin and to overcome that passion and, in the power of Gods Spirit, to cultivate this tender Grace and that other bolder virtue! The one thing we are to aim at is to tread in Christs footsteps, to do what He did and, as far as He is imitable by us, to do it as He did it and to be as He was in the midst of the sons and daughters of men. If I am a Christian, I am not to be following Calvin, or Arminius, or any other earthly leaderI am to mold my doctrinal opinions, my thoughts, words, character and acts after the model of Christs!   
The same Law applies to the whole of our life-service. If we would do what we were created to doif, being trees of Gods planting, we are to bear the fruit He meant us to bear, we must follow Jesus Christ! We are sent into the world, under Him, upon the great errand of seeking the lost   
*Tis all our business here below   
To cry, Behold the Lamb!*some from the pulpit, but every Christian from some place or other. To each individual Believer, Christ has given a position which nobody else can so well occupy and from that position he can influence some other person or persons whom God will bless through him. I do not believe that any Christian was created merely to keep a shophe was created to serve God in his trading. Notwithstanding all mans sin, a man is such a noble work of God that he cannot have been intended merely to measure off yards of silk, or to weigh pounds of sugar, or to sweep street crossings, or to put on crowns, robes and diamonds. There is something grander than that for man to do! The little birds are made to sing Gods praises and I, who am of more value than many sparrows, must be meant to sing Gods praises too! This is especially true concerning us who profess to have been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ and to have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit. Our life has an outlook towards the Infinitethere are windows in our life that look towards God. Look out of them, O Christian! With your windows open towards God, live in the light of His Countenance and seek in all things to please and honor Him! It is your life-work to honor God, to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, to be the instrument by which God shall illustrate His almighty powerthe black foil from which He shall display the brightness of His Grace. You are to be the means of spreading abroad in this world the savor of Christs namebut you cannot do this unless you follow Christ.   
And, mark you, for each one of us there is a special vocation in which we can follow Christ. I do not believe that all of you would be following Christ if you were to attempt to preach. Even Christ never attempted to do what His Father did not intend Him to do. A man once asked Him to officiate as a lawyer or a judge, but He replied, Who made Me a judge or a divider over you? One beauty of Christs life was that He kept to His calling and did not go beyond His commission. And you will be wise if you do the same. If you are a servant, you can follow Christ by ministering to the comfort of all who are in the house. If you are a mother, you can follow Christ by training up your children for Him. Every man has his own particular calling and every Christians calling should be especially for God. One is called to the foreign mission field let him go, in Gods name, to the regions beyondlet him not stay at home. Another is called to go from house to house to visit the sick, to care for the poor and so onBible-woman, City Missionary, I greet you in Christs name and bid you keep to your own work and never run away from it! One is called to teach an infant class and another to care for the lads or the lassesand all are fitted for the work to which they are called by God. And to each one the Master says, Follow Me and keep to the work which My Father has given you to do, even as I pleased not Myself by selecting My own work, but did that which My Father had appointed for Me.   
II. Now secondly, IN ORDER TO FOLLOW CHRIST IT WILL BE A WISE THING TO LET A GREAT MANY OTHER THINGS ALONE.   
Peter wanted to know about JohnWhat shall this man do? But Jesus said, What is that to you? You follow Me. From this answer of Christ, we learn that we are not to be curious as to what God is going to do with other people. I will tell you what thoughts have been passing through the minds of some of us. One has said, I am a poor humble believer in Jesus. I have to struggle with poverty and need, yet God graciously helps me and I can tell of many instances of His delivering mercy. Well, dear Friend, God is greatly glorified by this testimony! But when you go on to ask about those rich people who have everything that heart can wish, What is God going to do with them? I can only reply, What is that to you? Follow you Christ and be not curious about others. It is equally wrong if a rich man says, There are those poor people who are converted, but who cannot give much to the cause of God and who need education to enable them to teach otherswhat will the Lord do with them? That is nothing to do with you, my Brother. You have to follow the Lord, yourself, and to mind your own business! Someone else says, Theres such-and-such a manreally, I cant see any ability in him! He tried to preach the other day and I was glad when he stopped, for it was very poor talk. I must confess that I have sometimes felt like that when I have listened to a friend, but I have said to myself, What is that to me? God knows His own servants better than we do and He knows where to place them, and how to use them to the best advantage. Possibly, someone says, concerning a fine orator, A man who blazes away at that rate thinks too much of himself for God to bless him. But Christ says, What is that to you? You follow Me. God has all sorts of stones in His Temple and some of them are of such a strange shape that I am glad the placing of them is not left to me, for I could not do it! I am thankful that God never sent me into the world to make people perfect, but to use them as I find them. And I believe that He also uses them as He finds them and gradually prepares them for higher uses and for the place which He means them to occupy in His Temple above. So do not say, I am wondering what this man will do and what that man will do, and what others around me will dobut do what you can for Christ and, as for othersleave them to the Master!   
Further, this rule also applies to the character of others. How much some people are concerned because a certain man is so purse proud! It seems to be a sort of consolation to them to think how much better they are than he is. Another is very frivolous and they frequently bring his character into their conversation, apparently as a means of showing how superior in sobriety they are. To everyone of that stamp, Christ seems to me to say, What is that to you? You follow Me, and then the imperfections of your neighbor will not lie so near to your heart. I have heard of a minister who, wishing to bring the Truth of God home to the hearts and consciences of his people, said that he should like to pass a Reform Actthat everybody should reform one person and then all would be reformed. He meant that they should all reform themselves, but one man said, The minister is quite right! Everybody is to reform one and I am going home to reform our Mary. That is often our ideathat we must reform somebody elsebut if we could bring ourselves to feel that weeding our own garden, watering our own plants and fulfilling our own vocation is what God requires of us, how much better it would be for the entire Church of Christ!   
I think the same rule applies, to a large extent, to remarks concerning the general condition of Christian Churches. There are some of my Brothers who assure me that these are the most terrible times through which the world has ever passed. They cannot discover any ground for congratulationeverything seems to wear to them a most gloomy aspect. It may be so, yet I think I can see much reason for thankfulness as well as much cause for sorrow and regret. We are constantly told that this is a crisis, but I recollect that when I first came to London, 20 years ago, [1853] I was told that it was a crisis and it seems to have been a crisis every few weeks since! Some people appear to imagine that the future of the universe depends upon a meeting which they propose to hold in a month or soyet so far God has managed the affairs of the universe without any help from them and He still reigns as universal King and Lord notwithstanding all the efforts of the Pope, the Devil and

Essays and Reviews! I have come to the conclusion that instead of trying to set all my Masters servants right at once, my first and most important work is to follow my Lordand I think, my Brothers, that it will be wise for you to come to the same conclusion!   
Suppose a man is set by his master to plow a field? His main business is to go up and down that field until he has plowed it all. But suppose that, instead of doing so, he gets into a comfortable corner under the hedge and tells his fellow plowman that the whole system of farming adopted by his master is a mistake, that this field is being sown with the wrong sort of seed, that his master does not understand the best manure to use and that if he were make me his manager, the whole farm would pay much better that it now does? If his master comes while he is talking like this and asks, John, what have you been doing? and he replies, I have been expounding to William a better plan of farming than you have adopted, his master would probably say to him, I shall have to discharge you unless you give up these speculations. Get on with your plowing at once and leave the management of the farm to me. And I would say that to many ChristiansGet on with your plowing! Get to your own proper work! Teach that class in the Sunday school. Speak to sinners about Christ whenever you can and try to win them for Himbut leave those greater and deeper things to your Master. Go on following Him with all your heart and serving Him with all your might. He has His special servants whom He calls to great works of reform, those whom He uses as His speaking trumpets to proclaim the Truth upon the solemn matters with which the most of us have not so much to do.   
The same rule applies to many theological questions. For instance, the puzzling problem concerning the origin of evil. I am not so much troubled about how evil came into the world as about helping to get it out! Practical common-sense seems to say, If there is a thief in the house, let us catch him, or else get him out. And after that we will try to find out how he got in. Our Lord Jesus Christ did not come into the world to tell us how sin was brought here, but He came to show us the only way in which sin can be taken out of the worldand that is by the door which He opened in His own side. It is by His death that sin is to be expelled from the earth!   
Then there is that great and weighty question concerning the relation between Divine Sovereignty and human responsibility. You may go to one place of worship and you will hear about very little except Divine Sovereignty. And you may go to another place and you will hear about little except human responsibility. Or you may have heard me preach

about both Truths of God [See Sermon #77, Volume 2DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY; #194, Volume 4HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY and #207, Volume 4SOVEREIGN GRACE AND MANS RESPONSIBILITYRead/download the entire sermons, free of charge, at

http://www.spurgeongems.org.] without any attempt to reconcile them, as I believe that they have never been at enmity against one another and, therefore, there is no need for any reconciliation! It has been a great temptation to many good men to get to fighting about these Truths when they would have been better employed in preaching the Atoning Sacrifice of Christ. I believe that before the foundation of the world, God chose in Christ all those whom He will eternally save. And I equally believe that whoever believes in the Lord Jesus Christ shall be eternally saved, that salvation is all of Grace and damnation is all of mans sinthat God will have the glory of every soul that is savedand that every lost soul will be responsible for its own ruin.

I think my text also applies to those prophetical studies in which so many seem to lose their way. I am not much encouraged to follow their example when I see how the students of prophecy denounce each other and disprove each others theories. There are some prophetic Truths that ought to be constantly preached, as for instance that the Lord will surely come again and that there will be a Final Judgment when the righteous shall have the full glories of Heaven, and the wicked shall know the woes of Hell. But as to the dates of the various events foretold in the prophecies that are still unfulfilled, I think I have something better to do than to puzzle my brains over them. Oh! say some, but we now have the right theory. So others thought 20 years ago! But it did not prove to be right, nor did the theory that was held a hundred years ago, or 200 years ago, or even more! Yet men go on building up their card house of speculation and Time comes and pushes it all over with his finger! I advise you to study Matthew, Mark, Luke and Johnand to preach the crucified Savior of which the Gospels and Epistles will tell you! And when you get to the Revelation, keep it in its proper place and ask the Holy Spirit to teach you the meaning of its mysteries. May God save this generation from the follies of some of the generations that have preceded itand may we be most of all concerned about being born-again, about faith in Jesus, about preaching His Gospel and following Him all the days of our life!

III. Now, lastly, THERE ARE MANY REASONS WHY WE SHOULD CONFINE OUR LIFE-WORK TO THE FOLLOWING OF CHRIST. And those reasons are these.

First, our powers are limited. Mine are, I know, and I should like to use what powers I have in the work of following Christ in preaching the Gospel and seeking to bring others to follow Him.

Next, our time is limited. We may all of us live but a very short time. And at the longest it will be but a brief life. I have heard of a minister who used to say that he would be thankful, in his last hours, that he had been enabled, by Gods Grace, to spend the greater part of his time in inviting sinners to the Savior. And I should like to liveand I should like you, dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, to live in such a way that when we come to die, we may be able to say, There, that is the kind of life I would like to have lived, now that I am at the end of it. Suppose anyone should live to fight for the Baptist denomination? When he dies, men would say, Well, he was a thorough Baptist and he fought well for his denomination. But that would be a poor wreath to lay on his coffin! Would you care to have a long Latin inscription on your tombstone recording the fact that you were always hammering away at some important Doctrine? Or would you wish to have it said, There lies a man who charmed a few Christian people with the deep spirituality of his teaching, but that was all he did?

I covet and I think I am right in doing so, the honor of having it said of me, That man lived to snatch sinners like brands from the burning. I hope some of you will have it said when you are gone, That woman lived to bring her children to Christ. That girl lived to talk to those she met with about the dear Savior who had been so precious to her that she wished all others to enjoy the same blessing. Oh, that each one of us might live to glorify God! To be like an arrow shot from Christs bow by His own pierced hand! To feel an impetus given to us to bear us right on to the center of the target of the Glory of God, nothing turning us aside, either to be thought good, or to be thought great, or to be thought learned, or to desire to gain honor or esteem among our fellow menbut just to glorify God by the conversion of sinners through the Holy Spirits blessing resting upon our labors!

Having but little strength, it is best for us to use it all in one direction. Some men know too much to be powerful for anything. They are like water that is spread over the meadows and not like the stream that runs along in a narrow channel and, therefore, concentrates its energy and renders real service to mankind. This one thing I do, is a good motto for any man, if he does that one thing well. And the one thing that I will seek to do shall be to glorify God by following Jesus and doing the work He has given me to do! For, my Brothers and Sisters, suppose that you and I should make out the mystery of predestination? Suppose we should become adepts at prophecy? Suppose we should become exceedingly learned in a thousand subjects and yet should go down to our graves without having ever glorified God? We should find no apology for our neglect in all that we had done! Nobody will be lost, as far as I know, through my getting a wrong theory of prophecy, but thousands may be saved if I know the Truth concerning Christ and Him Crucified and preach Him with all my might! I do not know that I shall love the Savior any the less if I make a mistake about some of the great mysteries of the Kingdom, but I do know that if I give myself up wholly to His service and am the means of bringing others to do the same, I shall have no regrets compared with those I should have felt if I had neglected this allimportant matter. I charge all of you, men and women, in these evil days to keep close to Jesus! Follow Him with the utmost care, reverence and love. Follow Him with intense ardor and with all your heart, soul and strengthand make that the one thing for which you live! Do not let anything divert you from the straight path of obedience to your Lord, for to that you are called above everything else! If men come to you talking about mental culture and modern thought, stand firm to thisthat you will follow Christ wherever He leads you!

I wonder what God would have each of us here do? You may think I am falling into Peters error if I press this point upon you. I wonder what there is for us to do as a Church? Do you think, dear Friends, that we are doing all that we ought to do for this neighborhood? We have heard about what our missionaries have been doing in foreign lands and most of us have something to do with that. But I think the principal point for us isWhat is to be done in Newington? What is to be done for Christ all around this region? You tract-distributors, are you earnestly attending to your work? You Sunday school teachers, are you faithfully doing your work for God? I will not bid you forget the foreign field, but still, our first concern must be our own class, our own immediate neighborhood. Many of you have come from different parts of Londonwhat are you doing for the district where you live? Every Christian should first seek the good of those nearest to his own door. Some of you have come from the countrywhat are you doing in your own village? You say that you have been hearing a man of God preach the Truth. That is quite right, but is that working for God? There is a young man over there who professes to be a follower of Christ and who often speaks at the debating club. Do you, My Friend, ever preach in the street, or teach in the Sunday school? Then I am ashamed of you! Or rather, are you not ashamed of yourself? There is a man over there who is making money. I do not say that he is doing wrong, but My Friend, have you ever consecrated to God the part which belongs to Him? If you keep it for yourself, it will canker all the rest!

I might say to someone here, You ought to be taking a Bible class for young women. I might say to others, You ought to be teaching in the Sunday school. You come here twice on the Lords day, but you have no business to come here twiceyou ought, once at least, to go to work for Christ. I am pleased with some whose consciences prick them so that they say, Dear Pastor, do not imagine that we are forsaking you! We would be glad to be here, but we have been down at the lodging-houses, or down in Golden Lane, or over at Bethnal Green. That is right and I am glad when I see somebody else in their seats! With four or five thousand members in the Church, if they all come here at each service, where are our converts to come from? Am I to cast the Gospel net into the midst of the fish that are already caught? If you stay away to let a sinner come here in your place and if you are, yourself, seeking to bring sinners to Christ, you are doing two good things! I want everyone of you to be living to do good to your fellow men and seeking to save souls for the Glory of God! The enemies of the faith are very busy and very earnestand they seem to use up all their material. The moment a man gets into the Church of Rome, there is sure to be something found for him to do and I want to see all of you used to the utmost of your power. You are free men and women and, therefore, not to be controlled by me. I do not prescribe what you are to do, but cannot you, as independent men and women, obey the sacred dictates of the Spirit of God and each of you drop into your proper place?

Give up all speculating, I beseech yougive up reading books merely for the sake of curiosity, and, in Gods name, get to work for Him! The graves are filling, our cemeteries are filling, and Hell is filling too! Meanwhile, the dupes of Satan are compassing sea and land to do all the mischief that they can. If you really are what you say you are, the servant of Him who wept over Jerusalemif you are bought with the blood He shed on Calvarys CrossI charge you to consecrate yourself, this very hour, to that form of Christian work to which your Master calls you and follow Him through evil report and good report! Follow Him in the path of duty and let nothing turn you aside from your life-work of glorifying God! May God bless you all, for Jesus sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON:   
**JOHN 21.**

Verse 1. After these things Jesus showed Himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and on this wise showed He Himself. Jesus loved to show Himself to His people. Of old, His delights were with the sons of men. So now that He had risen from the dead, He was not ashamed to visit His brethren and He did not disdain to make Himself known to themand He will still show Himself to us after a spiritual fashion, if we sincerely desire to see Him.

2. There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of His disciples. As John was the writer of this record, he did not put his own name there, but merely mentioned the sons of Zebedee.

3. Simon Peter said unto them, I am going fishing. They said unto him, We will also go with you. Men who are in a right state of heart cannot willingly be idle. So, if these Apostles cannot preach for a time, they will go back to their old employment and seek to catch fish.

3. They went forth and immediately entered into a boat and that night they caught nothing. Brothers and Sisters, without Christs Presence, that is what always happensthey caught nothing. But notice what the next verse says.

4. But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. We must remember that a great change had taken place in Him and that the disciples were at some distance from the shore. They saw a person standing there, but they were not sure who it was.

5. Then Jesus said unto them, Children, have you any food? This is not an exact translation of our Saviors words. He might too readily have revealed His identity if He had spoken like that. His question was more like a common fishermans salutation, Lads, have you any food?

5. They answered Him, No. Jesus likes us to admit that we do not possess anything of our own before He gives us the blessing He is waiting to bestow. He lets us see that the table is bare before He loads it with His bounty so that He may have all the praise and glory for what He gives us.

6. And He said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you shall find some. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes. This is another proof of the difference between Christs Presence and Christs absence.

7. Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved (again John does not mention his own name) said to Peter, It is the Lord. It is only He who could spy out the fish and only He who could fill the net with them. It is just His way of acting. It is the Lord. The eyes of true love are very quick. Peter was not the first to recognize JesusJohn wasfor He loved Him most.

7. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment (for he had taken it off) and did cast himself into the sea. He had such reverence for his Master that he would not appear before Him without a sufficient covering, yet he was in a hurry to get to Him. Peter always was in a hurryyet he was grandly impetuous as a rule. I wish that some slowpokes had a little of his pace!

8, 9. And the other disciples came in the little boat, (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits) dragging the net with fishes. As soon as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there and fish laid thereon, and bread. How that fire must have reminded Peter of his denial of his Lord! He saw his Master by the light of the charcoal fireand that is how he saw Him on the night when he denied Him.

10, 11. Jesus said unto them, Bring of the fish which you have now caught. Simon Peter went up and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty-three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken. On the previous occasion when Peters net was miraculously filled by Christ, we read that the net broke. That was Peters own net, but this time I suppose it was not Peters, but one that he had borrowed and probably he had no time to mend it, so the Master took care that it should not break. He always has His own ways of workingand they always fit the circumstances of the case and show His thoughtful care of His people.

12. Jesus said unto them, Come and dine. The Revised Version is more correctCome and break your fastCome and have your breakfast.   
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12-15. And none of the disciples dared ask Him, Who are You? knowing that it was the Lord. Jesus then came and took the bread and gave it to them, and likewise the fish. This is now the third time that Jesus showed Himself to His disciples, after that He was risen from the dead. So when they had dined. When they had broken their fastbut not until then, for Christ does not talk to men when their hunger might make them inattentive.

15. Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, Do you love Me more than these? He had talked as if he didAlthough all shall be offended, yet will not I.

15. He said unto Him, Yes, Lord; You know that I love You. He was wise in not measuring his love in comparison with that of his fellow disciples, or in speaking of the quantity of it, but he affirmed that even Christ knew that he did really love Him.

15-17. He said unto him, Feed My lambs. He said to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, Do you love Me? He said unto Him, Yes, Lord; You know that I love You. He said unto Him, Feed My sheep. He said unto Him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, Do you love Me? Here is a lesson for all who would be pastors of Christs flock. The first necessity of a true pastor is love to Christ. The second necessity of a true pastor is love to Christ. And the third necessity of a true pastor is love to Christ. A man who does not love the Great Shepherd cannot properly feed either His sheep or lambs. If his own heart is not right towards the Divine Owner of the sheep, he cannot be a true under-shepherd to Christs flock.

17-19. Peter was grieved because He said unto him the third time, Do you love Me? And he said unto Him, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You. Jesus said unto him, Feed My sheep. Verily, verily, I say unto you, When you were young, you gird yourself, and walked where you would: but when you shall be old, you shall stretch forth your hands, and another shall gird you, and carry you where you would not. This spoke He, signifying by what death he should glorify God. Peter was to stretch out his hands and be nailed to a cross as his Lord was.

19. And when He had spoken this, He said unto him, Follow Me. That is to be your rule, whether you feed My sheep or lambs, or whether you stretch out your hands upon a cross and die as a martyrFollow Me. That is also the rule for all of us who love the Lord. O Lord, help us to obey it!

20-25. Then Peter, turning about, saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on His breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrays You? Peter seeing him, said to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus said unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to you? You follow Me. Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, he shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to you? This is the disciple which testifies of these things, and wrote these things. And we know that His testimony is true. And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.

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